# AF Brooklyn Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Achievement First
Tuesday, June 2, 2026 at 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM EDT
TFA, 25 Broadway, 12th Floor, GC Room, New York, NY 10004
Zoom: https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/88242606428

## Attendees:

Trustees: Brandon Sorlie, Erica Murphy, Chris Lynch, Paul Cabana, Romy Coquillette, Desiree Dalton, Kevin Miquelon, Amy Arthur Samuels, David Pollak, Kim Cutler-Lee, Avril Gordon
AF Staff: Lisa Margosian, Kristin Damo, Michael Rabin, Jason Russell, Ben Schanback, Michael Diaz, Amy Christie, Yvonne Williams
Guests: Allesica Blakeney, Prentiss Donaldson

### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Board Chair Brandon Sorlie.

### II. Welcome and Agenda Overview

Executive Director Kristin Damo welcomed all attendees, and gave an overview of the board meeting's agenda. She introduced Michael Abouaf as the new head of Financial Planning and Analysis, who had just joined the organization a few days prior.

### III. Mission Moment

Kristin Damo shared a mission moment celebrating the first graduating class of the Empower program, which runs K-12 across the region. The school community, including past members involved in founding the program, came together to celebrate the graduation, demonstrating strong community ties within Achievement First. There was also a cheery acknowledgment of senior signing days,cementing the AFs commitment to guiding students into their college journeys, including a glimpse of some of the schools to which students will matriculate.

### IV. High School Update and College and Career

Kristin Damo and Michael Diaz gave a high school and college update with key discussions centered on the decline in four-year college matriculation rates and the shift from college to career programs, such as Career and Technical Education (CTE). They highlighted the plans to re-emphasize college preparation, with a particular focus on prioritizing the SAT as a college readiness metric.

Board members discussed tracking SAT scores to determine college readiness and subsequent academic success., noting the discrepancies between GPA and SAT test scores, which the team is exploring to better understand why students with a higher GPA might score below the national SAT average.

## V. **SY 26 Reflections and Looking Ahead to SY 27**

Ms. Damo gave a review of SY 26, highlighting some K-8 growth and emphasizing the need for high school improvement. Key priorities set for next year include alignment across instructional leadership and accelerating teacher retention to boost educational standards and accountability.

Ms. Damo shared the strategic priorities planned for next year which emphasized enhancing K-12 program alignment, and called for improving ELA focus , foundational learning, and instructional management. Improving enrollment and persistence will also be a key priority, with new leadership training aimed to bolster informed student choices and family engagement, and other efforts which include targeting digital marketing, and refining aftercare. Additionally, intensifying involvement in New York charter advocacy will be prioritized to bolster support.

The board discussion focused on next year's strategy and the specific metrics that need monitoring and measurement. Leadership stated that the aim was to ensure network support teams are aligned with TopLine goals, emphasizing a clear 'North Star' for metrics post-COVID, which could take several years to achieve, but aim to guide schools' progress with growth targets. The conversation also addressed attendance measurement methods and the importance of school identity and creating joyful classroom environments where students feel a sense of belonging.

## VI. **Public Comment**

Two parents, Allesica Blakeney and Prentiss Donaldson, were present at the meeting in person and made public comment. Ms. Blakeney raised a concern about the sudden changes to the criteria for students attending senior prom, resulting in her niece being ineligible, while Ms. Donaldson shared her safety concern about an unfamiliar individual attending school events and picking up their child without approval. The board chair thanked the parents for sharing their concerns and explained that comments will be followed up between meetings, and a response will be provided by the next meeting rather than in real time.

## VII. **Finance Committee Report**

CFO  Ben Schanback reviewed the fiscal year 2026 Q3 operating results, projecting the organization to have a small operating surplus as of March 31st, despite the lower than expected enrollment. He updated the board on declining cash reserves as a result of significant capital spending on construction projects at Ujima and Legacy.

He then walked the board through the budget for FY 2027, highlighting significant expenses including increasing health insurance premiums and increased rent for new building sites. Efforts to improve the quality of after-school programs have been centralized with the hiring of a New York after-school director,  and surplus spending of $2 million allocated for after-school programs and for the continuation of marketing initiatives.

Board members discussed historical trends in net operating revenue, noting a shift from a prior surplus due to COVID impact, and the need for judicious allocation of funds towards enrollment strategies.

Ben presented for the board's approval the proposed budget for fiscal 2027, totaling $187.3 million in operating spending plus $4 million in reserve spending and $7.7 million in capital spending, which included major projects already approved by the Real Estate Committee.

| **Operating Budget** | FY 2027<br>*($ in millions)* |
|---|---|
| Revenue | |
| Per Pupil Revenue | $158.3 |
| All Other | $29.0 |
| Total Revenue | $187.3 |
| Expenses | |
| Personnel | $120.5 |
| Nonpersonnel | $66.8 |
| Total Expenses | $187.3 |
| **Surplus/(Deficit):** | **$0.0** |

| **Capital Budget** | FY 2027<br>*($ in millions)* |
|---|---|
| Planned Cash Expenditures: | $7.7 |
| Planned Other Sources: | $0 |
| **Total Capital Expenditures:** | **$7.7** |

| **Reserve Spend** | FY 2027<br>*($ in millions)* |
|---|---|
| Afterschool Programming | $2.0 |
| Expanded Marketing | $2.0 |
| **Total Reserve Spend:** | **$4.0** |

VIII. **Executive Session**

Mr. Sorlie stated that the board would go into an executive session to discuss the topics of Enrollment challenge, real estate update and personnel updates. He asked for a motion for the board to enter executive session. The motion was made by Romy Coquillette and seconded by Paul Cabana. All were in favor.

The board entered executive session at 7:15 pm and exited at 7:58 pm, following a motion by Erika Murphy, seconded by Chris Lynch and all were in favor.

IX. **Board Resolutions and Goals**

Mr. Sorlie moved the board on to voting on the proposed resolutions in the consent agenda. He highlighted that the number of trustees was returning to 14 due to Keith Brooks deciding to step down to focus on personal and professional commitments.

Mr. Sorlie then called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was made by Desiree Dalton and seconded by Romy Coquillette. All were in favor and the content agenda passed.

Consent Agenda

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 7, 2026.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Brandon Sorlie to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2029.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Chris Lynch to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2029.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects David Pollak to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2029.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects La-Shaneigh Kimberly Cutler to serve a 1-year term ending June 30, 2029.
6. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Tamika Bradley to serve a 1-year term ending June 30, 2029.
7. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby sets the number of Trustees at fourteen (14).
8. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the financial budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as presented.
9. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the AF NY District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2026-27 School Year.
10. BE IT RESOLVED that the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principal, as needed, for a period of time not to exceed sixteen weeks through October 31, 2026, based on the recommendations by Achievement First.

| School Name | Interim Principal #1 | Interim Principal #2 |
|---|---|---|
| AF Apollo ES | Amanda Mercado | Jessie-Ann Wellington |
| AF Aspire ES | Jayda Harmon | Reanna James |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AF Brownsville ES | Khrystal Jones | Shavonda Hood |
| AF Bushwick ES | Jessica Morales | Jenna Bicierro |
| AF Crown Heights ES | Yoowon Park | Lauren Zima |
| AF ENY ES | Jennifer Pascal | Jelani Brooks |
| AF Endeavor ES | Orobosa Omede | Anika Locklear |
| AF Legacy ES | Aiesha Blyther | Ashley Wilson |
| AF Linden ES | Javan Stewart | Matilde Acevedo |
| AF North Brooklyn ES | Matilde Acevedo | Troye Thomas |
| AF Apollo MS | Warner Radliff | Kiersten Wunn |
| AF Aspire MS | Kaylah Boston | Alisha Wilson |
| AF Brownsville MS | Jasmin Morillo | Julia Scapp |
| AF Bushwick MS | Stephanie Kotnik | Tierra Chavis |
| AF Crown Heights MS | Carolina Garvey | Lakeisha Swaby |
| AF ENY MS | Tiffany Blake | Thaysha Menardy |
| AF Endeavor MS | Orobosa Omede | Celene Hassock |
| AF Legacy MS | Jenn Bauer | Elizabeth Harnett |
| AF Linden MS | Alisha Sealy | Brittany Gil |
| AF North Brooklyn MS | JeQuese Bruce | Prisilla Villalobos |
| AF Brooklyn HS | Sonia Castleberry | Nancy D'Haiti |
| AF University Prep HS | Rebekah Revello | Corina Perez |
| AF Ujima HS | Lucretia Chambers | Dr. Jazmin Gordon-Rose |

11. RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ACHIEVEMENT FIRST BROOKLYN, INC. BY AND THROUGH THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

    - WHEREAS, the Board has been informed that a Principal currently participating in a Performance Improvement Plan is nearing the conclusion of that process; and
    - WHEREAS, timely decision-making regarding school leadership is important to maintaining continuity and effective school operations;
    - NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Achievement First Brooklyn, Inc. by and through the Executive Committee, authorizes the New York Executive Director to take any employment action deemed appropriate for any Principal currently on a Performance Improvement Plan, including but not limited to reassignment, removal from the principal role, or termination of

employment, as determined appropriate and in accordance with applicable Achievement First policies and procedures.

- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New York Executive Director shall inform the Board of any action taken pursuant to this Resolution.

Mr. Sorlie announced to the board members the upcoming meeting dates, with a reminder that board members are required to attend a minimum of four out of five meetings in person each year. He updated the board on the four goals that had been set for this year, which were all accomplished and included school engagement, principal connection, board composition, and succession planning. He then shifted focus to setting new objectives for the next school year which would begin over the summer and at the board retreat in September.

X. **Adjourn**

There being no further business, Mr. Sorlie asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris Lynch so moved, seconded by Romy Coquillette. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.