



AF Bridgeport Academy Board Meeting Minutes - Draft

Achievement First

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM EDT

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/89869355839>

Attendees:

Board Members: Dick Kalt, Marlene Macaуда, Jahneel Small, Ruben Felipe, Dewey Loselle

AF Staff: Lisa Margosian, Amy D'Angelo, Sam Lucky, Liv Levey, Shalia Garnett, Stephanie Fox, Ben Schanback, Ash Rodriguez, Sulafa Bashir, Adrienne Minniefield

I. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm by former Board Chair Dick Kalt, who chaired the meeting in the absence of current Board Chair Raj Lakra.

II. **Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present who wished to make public comment.

III. **Welcome and Agenda Overview**

Amy D'Angelo welcomed the board members and introduced Ash Rodriguez as the new Connecticut Executive Assistant, and gave an overview of the agenda.

IV. **Mission Moment**

The meeting kicked off with a mission moment about attendance incentives for students.. Stephanie Fox presented a successful initiative at Bridgeport Middle School where students with perfect attendance receive trips to Urban Air trampoline park at the end of each trimester. The program has shown positive results, with over 100 students earning perfect attendance in recent trimesters, though Trimester 2 had slightly fewer participants due to snow days. Liv Levey emphasized that this initiative is part of a broader momentum toward improving attendance and student engagement at both Bridgeport Elementary and Middle schools.

V. **Academic Update: Mock Assessments**

The academic update featured principal reports focused on mock assessment results, state test preparation and an update on student attendance.

Elementary School Principal Shalia Garnett reported a 9% proficiency growth in ELA, compared to the previous year, which exceeded the growth goal. She outlined plans for reteaching standards and improving attendance, noting progress with 94% ADA and decreased chronic absenteeism. Samantha Lucky highlighted that Bridgeport Elementary was leading the pack across elementary schools with the highest ELA proficiency and significant growth in math. In response to board member questions, Amy D'Angelo

explained that proficiency goals were set at 60% due to COVID impacts, but the long-term goal is to reach 80% proficiency comparable to top-performing districts in Connecticut.

Middle School Principal Stephanie Fox reported ELA proficiency results showing a 7% growth year-over-year, with notable growth in 7th and 5th grades but a 30% decrease in 6th grade proficiency. The discussion focused particularly on addressing the significant reading gaps in 6th grade. Principal Fox noted that the school implemented several attendance improvements including trimester trips, weekly dress downs, and athletic team requirements that prohibited chronic absences, resulting in attendance increasing from 92.9% to 94.3% and chronic absenteeism decreasing from 25.1% to 17.6%.

There was a further discussion of chronic absenteeism patterns, particularly low Friday attendance due to half-day schedules conflicting with work schedules, and plans to address this through an expanded after-school program

The meeting also covered plans for a new summer school program, in partnership with the National Summer School Institute, offering extended learning opportunities to approximately 100 students across grades K-7.

The group also discussed changes to student promotion policies, with Amy D'angelo explaining that retention criteria had been reinstated after being paused during COVID years..

VI. Finance Committee Report

Ben Schanback, Chief Financial Officer, presented a preview of the FY 27 budget, highlighting some of the challenges facing the organization, noting flat state funding, and increased health benefit costs, leading to difficult budget decisions including adjusted staffing models and simplified budgeting processes. The organization relies on philanthropy for budget balance, with approximately 5% of revenue coming from philanthropic sources, although it was noted that there has been a general shift away from education funding over the past decade.

There was a discussion about energy costs and potential energy efficiency upgrades for school buildings. Ben noted that, while energy cost increases were initially anticipated, the situation has changed and will be closely monitored for the final budget. Board members Ruben Felipe and Dewey Loselle discussed opportunities for energy efficiency upgrades, mentioning organizations like Green Bank and ACES Up that could help implement such programs with upfront costs covered by savings.

VII. Board Resolutions

Mr. Kalt moved on to the approval of the board resolutions through a consent agenda which included the previous meeting minutes, principal renewals, and the annual

health food certification. He asked if there were any questions or comments on the proposed resolutions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Dewey Loselle made the motion and it was seconded by Marlene Macauda. All were in favor and the consent agenda passed.

Consent Agenda

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from February 24, 2026 and March 16, 2026.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors hereby approves the renewal of the following principals, with a final compensation package to be incorporated in the FY27 Budget to be reviewed and approved in June 2026:
 - a. Shalia Garnett, AF Bridgeport Academy Elementary School
 - b. Stephanie Fox, AF Bridgeport Academy Middle School

Healthy Food Certification:

3. Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.
4. The Achievement First Bridgeport Academy Board of Directors will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location"

means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.

VIII. Adjourn

There being no other business, Mr. Kalt requested a motion to adjourn. Marlene Macaуда so moved, seconded by Dewey Loselle. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.