



AF Rhode Island Inc., Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Achievement First

Thursday, June 4, 2026 at 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM EDT

Location: AF Providence HS, 206 Elmwood, Providence, RI 02907

Attendees:

Members: Mayor Brett Smiley (Chair), Maryellen Butke (Vice Chair), Michael Broschart, Janelle Clarke-Holley, James Wiley

Absent: Victor Capellan, Major Charles Lombardi, Nicole Pollock, Macky McCleary

Staff: Tom McDermott, Katie Ballah, Laura Etkind, Michael Rabin, Ben Schanbeck, Lisa Margosian, Jason Russell

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Maryellen Butke called the meeting to order at 6:29 PM. A quorum was present.

II. Public Comment

No members of the public offered comment.

III. Welcome and Agenda Overview

Ms. Butke welcomed all attendees and gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

IV. Mission Moment

The board heard a mission moment from Laura Etkind, AF Managing Director, Special Services.

V. SY 26 Reflections and Looking Ahead to SY 27

The board received an update from Executive Director Tom McDermott on SY 26 results and strategic priorities for SY 27. The board discussed middle and high school mathematics performance and outcomes, student readiness for the transition to high school, SAT preparation, and the region's talent outlook.

VI. Finance Committee Report

The board received the Finance Committee report from Finance Committee Chair James

Wiley, including the proposed fiscal year 2027 budget. Ben Schanback, Achievement First Chief Financial Officer, responded to board questions.

VII. Board Resolutions

Ms. Butke called for questions regarding the consent agenda. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 16, 2026.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby appoints the following committee members:
 - a. Personnel Committee: Michael Broschart
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the financial budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as presented.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the AF Rhode Island Board of Directors hereby approves the following individuals to serve as interim principals, as needed, based on the recommendations by Achievement First through October 31, 2026.

School Name	Principal	Interim Principal #1	Interim Principal #2
AF Envision ES	Cynthia Louis	Emily Travers	Amanda Wild
AF Illuminar ES	Joseph Fink	Steph McSweeney	Des Halaka
AF Promesa K-5	Jennifer Andrade	Colleen Flaherty	Cristina Rosario
AF Providence ES	Breonna Hudgins	Dana Hurley	Chris Cruz
AF Illuminar MS	Katelyn Mike	Elizabeth Boyar	Libby Short
AF Providence MS	Colleen Preusse	Amy Rodriguez	Menalisa Mendes
AF Envision MS	Angela Martinez	Nikki Souza	Nathalie Gilpin
AF Providence HS	Aja Davis	Tyler Simard	Kimberly Kalenda

5. Right to Read Resolution

WHEREAS, Achievement First Rhode Island (“AFRI”) is committed to ensuring that all students receive high-quality literacy instruction aligned with the Science of Reading and the requirements of the Rhode Island Right to Read Act, R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-97.1 and applicable regulations;

WHEREAS, on or about March 30, 2026, the Rhode Island Department of Education (“RIDE”) notified AFRI that as the local educational authority (“LEA”), AFRI had been placed on Probationary Status related to compliance requirements under the Right to Read Act due to one remaining employee having not yet completed the required certification and training requirements; and

WHEREAS, RIDE directed AFRI to develop, approve, publicly post, and implement a corrective action plan outlining the steps the organization will take to achieve full compliance with the Right to Read Act requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has reviewed the proposed Corrective Action Plan and acknowledges the LEA’s commitment to completing all corrective actions, including educator training completion, required family communications, monitoring, and reporting obligations;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors desires to formally approve the Corrective Action Plan and authorize AFRI leadership to take all necessary actions to implement the plan and maintain compliance with applicable Rhode Island laws and regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of Achievement First Rhode Island hereby approves the Corrective Action Plan submitted in response to RIDE’s Probationary Status notification related to the Right to Read Act;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board authorizes the Executive Director, Regional Superintendent, and/or their designees to finalize, submit, publicly post, and implement the Corrective Action Plan and any related documentation required by RIDE;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board directs the Executive Director, or any other appropriate designated member of AFRI leadership to provide updates to the Board regarding implementation progress, completion of all corrective actions, and any additional guidance or requirements issued by RIDE;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board affirms its commitment to compliance with the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act, including ensuring that approval of this resolution occurs during a properly noticed public meeting with the resolution appropriately reflected in the meeting agenda and minutes;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that all actions previously taken by AFRI officers, employees, and representatives consistent with the intent and purpose of these resolutions are hereby ratified, confirmed, and approved.

6. Real Estate Resolutions:

REAL ESTATE RESOLUTION I:

WHEREAS, Marathon Construction, Inc., a Massachusetts corporation ("Marathon"), is the ground lessor of a certain parcel of land located at 218 Blackstone Street, Providence Rhode Island (the "Land");

WHEREAS, Marathon is proposing to construct a school building (the "Building") on a portion of the Land for use by AFRI pursuant to the terms and subject to the conditions set forth in that certain sublease between Marathon and AFRI (the "Sublease"), previously distributed to the Board of Directors of AFRI for review;

WHEREAS, AFRI desires to sublease the Building and a portion of the Land from Marathon pursuant to the Sublease;

NOWHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of AFRI, and AFRI be, and hereby is, authorized and directed, to sublease the Building and a portion of the Land from Marathon pursuant to the terms and subject to the conditions of the Sublease, in substantially the form presented to the Board of Directors of AFRI, with the changes to the rent schedule depicted in the Letter of Intent entered into by AFRI and Marathon and with such other changes, modifications and amendments to such Sublease as Tom McDermott, the Executive Director of AFRI, and any member of the Board of Directors (each an "Authorized Person") may, jointly or severally, in such person's discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of the Sublease by AFRI;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each Authorized Person, be, and hereby are, jointly or severally, authorized and directed, at any time and from time to time, to do all such things and acts and to execute and deliver all such applications, documents and instruments in writing and to expend such fees for and on behalf of AFRI as may be necessary or advisable in order to give effect to and, generally, carry out the intent of these resolutions including, without limitation, to execute and deliver any agreements, instruments and documents required in connection with the foregoing, in the name and on behalf of AFRI, on such terms and conditions and in such form deemed necessary or desirable and approved by such Authorized Person with such changes, modifications and amendments thereto as such Authorized Person may in such person's discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of such applications, documents and instruments in writing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all actions previously taken by any Authorized Person in furtherance of the foregoing resolutions, are hereby ratified and confirmed.

REAL ESTATE RESOLUTION II:

WHEREAS, Hope Development Corporation (the "Sublandlord") and AFRI are parties to

that certain Sublease Agreement dated as of June 30, 2021 (the "Original Sublease"), as amended by that certain First Extension Term Agreement, Second Extension Term Agreement, and Third Extension Term Agreement (each, an "Extension" or collectively, "Extensions" and collectively with the Original Sublease, the "Sublease"), for that certain school building located at 305 Laurel Hill Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02909, are more particularly described in the Sublease;

WHEREAS, AFRI and Sublandlord desire to amend the Sublease to further extend the term and to make certain other changes to the Sublease;

NOWHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of AFRI and AFRI is hereby authorized and directed to enter into that certain First Amendment to Sublease by and between Sublandlord and AFRI (the "Amendment") in substantially the form presented to the Board of Directors, with such changes, modifications and amendments thereto as Tom McDermott, the Executive Director of AFRI, and any member of the Board of Directors (each an "Authorized Person") may, jointly or severally, in such person's discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of the Amendment by AFRI;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each Authorized Person, be, and hereby are, jointly or severally, authorized and directed, at any time and from time to time, to do all such things and acts and to execute and deliver all such applications, documents and instruments in writing and to expend such fees for and on behalf of AFRI as may be necessary or advisable in order to give effect to and, generally, carry out the intent of these resolutions including, without limitation, to execute and deliver the Amendment, and any other instruments and documents required in connection with the foregoing, in the name and on behalf of AFRI, on such terms and conditions and in such form deemed necessary or desirable and approved by such Authorized Person with such changes, modifications and amendments thereto as such Authorized Person may, jointly or severally, in such person's discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of such applications, documents and instruments in writing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all actions previously taken by any Authorized Person in furtherance of the foregoing resolutions are hereby ratified and confirmed.

ACTION: Upon a motion duly made by James Wiley and seconded by Janelle Clarke-Holley, the board approved the consent agenda with all board members voting in favor. No objections or abstentions were noted.

VIII. Adjourn

There being no further business, Ms. Butke called for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Michael Broschart and seconded by James Wiley, the board voted to adjourn, with all members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved