**The Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees**

The role of the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees is to ensure that the schools of the Achievement First Brooklyn region are achieving our mission: to provide all of our students with the academic and character skills necessary to graduate from top colleges, succeed in a competitive world, and to serve as the next generation of leaders in our communities.

As the holder of the charters for all Achievement First Brooklyn schools, the Board contracts with Achievement First to deliver on the promises made in each school’s mission statement. Achievement First provides comprehensive management services designed to ensure that an excellent academic program is in place, that the school is fiscally and operationally sustainable, and—most importantly—that scholars are reaching the highest standards of academic performance and character development.

The Board is a champion for Achievement First schools, a steward of the mission, and a strategic partner for Achievement First. It must ensure that Achievement First is delivering outcomes consistent with the mission, that public funds are being responsibly spent, and that every school meets its legal obligations.

Specifically, the Board’s Roles and Responsibilities are as follows.

***Ensure that Achievement First is effective in supporting all schools to deliver high academic achievement and character development for scholars.***

*Via the Academic Committee(s):*

* Understand the performance outcomes by which Achievement First defines success (as defined by the AF School Report Card).
* Understand the performance outcomes for which each school is held accountable by the authorizers (as defined by the Accountability Plan for each school).
* Review annual performance against these targets, in the form of the AF School Report Card and the authorizer Annual Report.
* Review interim performance in the form of a Board Dashboard containing data on key performance indicators of student learning and school culture, and discuss the programmatic implications of this interim data with network and/or school leaders.
* If performance targets are not met or interim progress is not sufficient, the Board must understand and have confidence in the improvement strategies put in place by the school and by Achievement First.

***Serve as Champions for Achievement First Schools and Strategic Partners on Key Network Priorities:***

* In personal networks and public forums, act as persuasive advocates for Achievement First, AF schools, the charter school movement broadly, and policies that increase the number of high quality public education options for families.
* Through personal visits to schools, committee work with network leaders, and Board meeting discussions, maintain an in-depth knowledge of the AF educational model as well as personal connections to scholars, families, and/or school staff.
* Drawing on Trustees’ unique perspectives and expertise, serve as “critical friends” to the network on key initiatives (e.g. trustees with Human Capital development expertise react to an evaluation of the Teacher Career Pathway; Trustees with financial expertise consult on long term financial model; Trustees with political expertise advise on advocacy strategy; Trustees with analytical expertise advise on trends in academic/character/culture data).
* Engage people from each Trustee’s personal network in the mission of Achievement First, particularly as relates to community and political influencers, potential donors, and college and university contacts.

***Contribute to the financial sustainability of Achievement First schools and the Network overall***

* As a Board, secure [tbd] total in either direct Trustee contributions (“Give”) or contributions solicited by Trustees in partnership with the AF Development Team (“Get”). This target will increase to [tbd] over the next five years, subject to Development Committee approval.
* The Development Committee, which will consist of Trustees as well as dedicated supporters who are not Trustees, will have primary responsibility for raising the bulk of the annual target. It will also be responsible for ensuring 100% Board giving, and approving annual giving targets. Each new member of the Development Committee will have an individual Give/Get target of [tbd].
* Each Trustee will make an individual financial gift of personal significance. In total, each Trustee is responsible for securing at least [tbd] in support for AF schools or Achievement First, through personal giving (“Give”), solicitation of contributions (“Get”), or in-kind donation (e.g. space for events, pro-bono professional services, hosting high-impact experiences for scholars). This target will rise to [tbd] over the next five years, subject to Development Committee approval.

***Ensure that AF is hiring and developing exceptionally qualified candidates for principal, and ensuring that they perform at high levels:***

*Via the Leadership Committee:*

* Understand and have confidence in the following:
	+ The criteria and selection process for principals-in-residence and principals.
	+ The training process for prospective principals
	+ The number and quality of prospective principal candidates in the pipeline.
* Review & vote on the approval of one candidate recommended by Achievement First for each principal opening.
* Understand the “Professional Growth Plan” (PGP) process and the criteria against which principals are evaluated.
* Review the PGP evaluation document (or an executive summary) and discuss with the principal’s supervisor. Ensure that the process and the resulting document are reliable documents, and that they are sufficient for Achievement First to take appropriate professional action (e.g. continue employment, provide targeted training and support, increase responsibilities, increase pay, issue formal or informal performance warning, etc.)

***Ensure that public funds are wisely spent by each school:***

*Via the Finance Committee:*

* Review and approve school budgets jointly proposed by Achievement First & school leaders.
* Review and approve requested modifications to any Board-approved budget
* Review and approve audited financials on an annual basis
* Review and approve proposed expenditures of cash reserves

***Ensure that each school is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations***

* Annually review & approve core school policies (or updates thereof) contained in the Family Handbook.
* Review and act appropriately on recommendations from Achievement First staff and legal counsel on legal and compliance issues.

***Ensure that complaints from the public and from enrolled families are effectively addressed.***

* Any member of the public is entitled to bring a complaint that alleges a violation of the law or the charter directly to the Board, and the Board must investigate and respond to this allegation in a timely fashion.
* The Board must also ensure that school’s family complaint process is effective in addressing complaints. The Board has two specific responsibilities to achieve this:
	+ The Board must reinforce each school’s complaint process by insisting that any parent or guardian who brings a complaint before the Board follows the procedure described in the Family Handbook. If a parent or guardian brings a complaint before the Board without having followed the policy (and if the complaint does not allege a violation of law or of the charter), the Board must refer the parent back to the complaint process, and must not respond to the complaint.
	+ If the Board has reason to believe that there may be a gap in implementation of the family complaint process, such that legitimate concerns are not being appropriately addressed at the school level, the Board must discuss this concern with appropriate school or network staff. It is the responsibility of school and network staff to manage an effective complaint process. Rather than attempting to assess or resolve individual complaints (unless they allege a violation of law or charter), the Board must establish confidence that the process is functioning effectively.

***Ensure that the expulsion process is carried out in alignment with the mission, as well as with applicable laws.***

* Per each school’s charter, only the Board has the authority to expel a student, and expulsions may take place only as a last resort in egregious situations.
* Because many expulsions involve complicated education law, the Board can (and in most cases should) delegate the authority to conduct and rule on suspension hearings to a hearing officer chosen by the Board.
* In the event that the Board delegates this authority, the Board then becomes the body of appeal. If a family appeals the decision of a hearing officer, it is the responsibility of the Board only to determine whether appropriate procedures were followed for the hearing and that the due process rights of the student were respected.

**Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees**

Trustee Job Description

* Act responsibly and in the best interests of Achievement First schools on matters before the Board, including recommendations from Achievement First, Inc.
* In order to be a powerful advocate for Achievement First schools and to be able to render responsible judgment on issues coming before the Board, spend at least six hours per year visiting an Achievement First school, attending Achievement First school events, and/or participating in advocacy or community outreach events with AF scholars and families.
* Drawing on individual judgment and professional expertise, participate actively and contribute to the roles and responsibilities of the Board, as defined in the By-Laws, the Academic & Business Services Agreement, and summarized in the document, *The Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees*.
* Engage actively in at least one Board committee or working group, which will meet in person or via phone at least quarterly, and in some cases more frequently.
* Commit to securing [tbd - $1,500] in support for Achievement First schools or network initiatives through any combination of direct financial contribution (“give”), soliciting financial contributions from others (“get”), or providing in-kind donation (e.g. pro-bono professional services, hosting internships or other high impact experiences for scholars, providing space for events, etc.)
* Attend 80% of Board and Committee meetings, and make every attempt to provide 24 hours’ notice if an unexpected conflict arises.
* Review pertinent materials, which will be provided by Achievement First at least one week before each Board meeting or committee meeting, and be ready to speak to these materials at the meeting.