

**MINUTES**

**Achievement First Brooklyn  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Venue: Endeavor ES & MS 510 Waverly Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11238

Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/89987318491>

Thursday, May 30, 2024 5:30 - 7:30 pm

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:32pm.

Name	Present	Name	Present
Romy Coquillet	X	Kevin Miquelon	X
Christopher Lynch	X	Amy Arthur Samuels	X
Akeem Frett		Josh Vidro	
Jon Atkeson	X	David Pollak	X
Tamika Bradley		Brandon Sorlie	X
Paul Cabana	X		
Desiree Dalton	X		

AF Staff: Shannon Miller, Lisa Margosian, Karolyn Belcher, Xanthe Jory, Michael Rabin, John Sharkey, Tiffany Bostic, LaNelle Alexander, Omar Mayyasi, and Blakely Simoneau

Other guests: Erica Murphy, Andrea Kilpatrick, and Jefferson Finch

**II. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present.

**III. Discussion with Achievement First**

CEO Welcome

Lisa Margosian, CEO, welcomed everyone and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Strategic Planning for AF's Future

Lisa Margosian discussed the multi-year strategic plan, initiated in December with the leadership team, leveraging stakeholder input to evolve Achievement First's education. She shared the revised mission and vision statements that were agreed upon, emphasizing preparing students for college and career readiness, self-awareness, community engagement, and leading purposeful lives. Ms. Margosian also discussed sector challenges such as teacher

shortage, shifting teacher expectations, certification complexity, shift in philanthropy, and declining student enrollment. She then outlined the steps to address challenges related to student outcomes, enhancing instruction rigor, re-centering organizational vision, and defining role clarity. Ms. Margosian also outlined four multi-year strategic priorities, emphasizing the importance of realizing graduate aims, integrating K-12 programs, sustaining the organization, focusing on talent development, and ensuring effective network support.

### Rigorous Core Model

John Sharkey, Chief Academic Officer, discussed how leaders have been working on changing their approach with a focus on instruction and reducing chronic absenteeism rates across the network. The team is planning to dig deeper into areas needing improvement, particularly middle school ELA and certain math and ELA professions in high school, to make strategic shifts and adjustments. A decision was made to make changes to some modules within the curriculum based on feedback and observations from schools, with plans to pilot an accelerated math track. Karolyn Belcher, Superintendent, mentioned that significant growth with the curriculum change can take up to three years, but promising signals are seen after year one.

### Vibrant Schools

Tiffany Bostic introduced herself as the Chief of Support Services and discussed strategic priority two, emphasizing the importance of student wellness and building a strong school culture. Ms. Bostic shared on expanding after school programming, investing in pilots, enhancing social emotional programming, and continuing partnerships with organizations like the Jed Foundation and Cartwell Teletherapy. She provided details on the partnership with Jed Foundation, assessment of mental wellness, recommendations provided, and plans for building a multi-tiered system approach for mental health support in high schools. Ms. Bostic also discussed the partnership with Effective School Solutions at Crown Heights, providing mental health and behavior support to students without having to leave the general education setting.

### Values Aligned Talent

LaNelle Alexander, Chief Diversity Officer, discussed the plan to have DE&I champions in each school through the Leading for Racial Equity Fellowship, aiming to continue the work in the upcoming school year. This highlights the focus on promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion through designated champions in schools. Ms. Alexander mentioned working on operationalizing values with the executive leadership team and focusing on quick wins for team engagement through cultural observances like Black History Month and Women's History Month. This highlights the ongoing efforts to operationalize values and promote team engagement through cultural events. She also discussed the plan to build a DEI leadership

council to address biases through systems, practices, and policies. The goal is to create a diverse council with representation from teachers, principals, and network support staff members.

### Equitable and Sustainable Systems

Michael Rabin, Chief Strategy Officer, gave a preview of upcoming discussions on Charter 11 and Queen's expansion, with plans to provide detailed recommendations in the future. No immediate decisions or actions requested during the meeting. Mr. Rabin said AF recommends returning Charter 11 to SUNY due to concerns about readiness and existing expansion opportunities. With the recommendation to return Charter 11, AF believes it is in our best interest to undergo the Greenlight Process this fall/winter for Legacy MS, providing us with 18-24 months to plan for its opening, should the Board approve it. Mr. Rabin said they will bring a recommendation to the Board this fall/winter on whether to greenlight Legacy MS for a fall 2026 opening. He said that future Queens expansion beyond Legacy MS is still a possibility by repurposing some of our other charters.

### Finance Committee Report

Omar Mayyasi, Interim CFO gave an overview of ESSER funding allocation, with \$6 million remaining to be spent and allocated, totaling around \$32-33 million of extra funding received by New York. He discussed a revenue increase of 5%, personnel salary savings, investments in schools with ESSER money, and a \$1.8 million surplus compared to the approved budget.

The board discussion included the utilization of one-time money for fixing issues at schools, investments made as one-time investments, and absorbing recurring costs within budget asks. The conversation covered personnel costs, budget allocations for strategic initiatives, and contingency planning for unanticipated events. Concerns were raised about approving large expenditures at the real estate level and the need for better financial tracking of commitments. Next step identified is to track commitments already made and understand how they are factored into the next year's budget.

\$5 million is allocated for specific projects, with placeholders for other investments, new projects, curriculum, and programs. The need to make strategic decisions on where to allocate remaining funds for investments in teachers, counseling, and other productive areas was highlighted. Kevin Miquelon expresses concern about the absence of certain investments related to school projects in the budget and seeks clarification on their allocation. Kate Aufiero explains the decision to separate capital investments into a different worksheet from the operating budget for better financial tracking. The board agreed to finish the conversation offline with a group to ensure everyone feels accounted for, and then present the information in different ways at the next board meeting.

## I. Board Business

### Board Resolutions and Approvals: Finance Approvals

Romy Coquette asked for a motion to approve the two finance resolutions to approve the 24-25 annual budget and auditor.

Jon Atkeson moved, Chris Lynch seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the financial budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year as presented.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby ratifies the re-appointment of CohnReznick to perform the financial audit of the 2024-25 fiscal year and prepare the IRS Form 990s.

### Executive Session: Legacy ES and Voyager MS Principals

Ms. Coquette asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the Legacy ES and Voyager MS principals. Chris Lynch moved, Kevin Miquelon seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

The board exited executive session at 7:31 pm.

### Board Resolutions and Approvals: Meeting minutes, principal approvals, membership

Ms. Coquette asked for a motion to approve the first consent agenda which included resolutions on previous meeting minutes, the 24 - 25 Safety Plan, Legacy ES Principal, and Voyager MS Interim Principal.

Paul Cabana motioned, Brandon Sorlie seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the meeting minutes from April 2, 2024.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves the AF NY District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2024-25 School Year.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby appoints Stephanie Cruz as principal of AF Legacy Elementary School effective immediately.
4. y.BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby approves Jalen Saunders to serve as interim principal for Voyager Middle School through June 30, 2025 based on the recommendation by Achievement First.

Ms. Coquillet asked for a motion to approve the second consent agenda related to board positions and membership.

Amy Arthur Samuels motioned, Jon Atkeson seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

1. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby elects Paul Cabana as Vice Chair through the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Tamika Bradley to serve as a Parent Representative for an additional 1-year term ending June 30, 2025.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Desiree Dalton to serve a 3-year term ending June 30, 2027.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Josh Vidro to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2027.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Akeem Frett to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2027.
6. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Achievement First Brooklyn Board of Trustees hereby re-elects Amy Arthur Samuels to serve an additional three-year term ending June 30, 2027.

#### **IV. Adjourn**

Ms. Coquillet asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Amy Arthur Samules moved, Jon Atkeson seconded. All in favor, none abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.