



AF Bridgeport Board Meeting

Thursday, February 27, 2025 from 5:30 to 7:00 PM EST

Virtual via Zoom: <https://achievementfirst.zoom.us/j/81395360023>

Attendance

Present:

Members: Ruben Felipe, Dick Kalt, Kelia Lanham, Dewey Loselle, Marlene Macaуда, Michael Strambler, RoAnne Thomas

AF Staff: Kate Aufiero, Kiersten Gibson Cooper, Amy D'Angelo, Kristen Damo, Stephanie Fox, Shalia Garnett, Kiah Hufane, Charmayne Joseph, Samantha Lucky, Lisa Margosian, Adrienne Minniefield, Aaron Obrochta, Dumar Paden, Michael Rabin, Ru Sharma

I. Call to Order (Board Business) (Presenters: Michael Strambler)

AF Bridgeport Board Vice Chair, Michael Strambler, called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

II. Public Comment (Board Business) (Presenters: Michael Strambler)

There were no members of the public present.

III. Board Resolutions and Approvals (Decision) (Presenters: Michael Strambler)

The board reviewed the minutes from the October 10th and December 12th meetings. Dewey Loselle motioned to approve the minutes, with Ruben Felipe seconding the motion. All in favor, none opposed or abstained.

BE IT RESOLVED, the AF Bridgeport Board of Directors hereby approves the meeting minutes from October 10, 2024 and December 12, 2024.

IV. CEO Agenda Overview (Inform) (Presenters: Lisa Margosian)

Lisa Margosian provided an overview of the topics to be discussed during the meeting. She outlined the key focus areas, including principal mid-year reviews, a deep dive into talent challenges and strategies, and a financial update. She also highlighted the structure of the agenda, ensuring alignment with the board's strategic priorities.

V. Principal Presentations (Inform) (Presenters: Shalia Garnett, Stephanie Fox)

Principal Shalia Garnett of Bridgeport Elementary shared insights into the school's performance and challenges. Chronic absenteeism remains an ongoing issue, and efforts to improve parent engagement, establish community partnerships, and introduce incentive programs are underway to address this. In reading proficiency, the school has seen a 14% year-over-year improvement, with an impressive 25-point gain in fourth grade. Math proficiency continues to be a focus, with strategies such as student work analysis and daily informal assessments being implemented to drive

progress. Additionally, the school has introduced several family engagement initiatives, including mentoring programs, tutoring services, and attendance-based incentives.

Stephanie Fox, Principal of Bridgeport Middle School, followed with her presentation. She noted that chronic absenteeism remains slightly higher than the previous year, though enhanced family communication efforts are in place to mitigate this trend. Reading proficiency is on track, supported by strong guided reading practices, while math proficiency remains a challenge due to curriculum adjustments and staffing shortages. To strengthen family engagement, the Parent Leadership Council recently organized a successful Valentine's Day dance, and survey results indicate a 78% favorability rating among families.

VI. Executive Session: Principal Mid Year Reviews (Inform) (Presenters: Kristin Damo, Charmayne Joseph, Dumar Paden)

Michael Strambler made a motion to go into executive session. Ruben Felipe seconding the motion. All in favor, none opposed or abstained. The board entered executive session at 6:02 pm and exited at 6:32 pm.

VII. AF: Building a Talent First Organization (Inform) (Presenters: Ru Sharma, Kiah Hufane)

Ru Sharma led a discussion on the evolving talent strategy at Achievement First, emphasizing how recruiting and retaining high-quality educators directly impact student outcomes. She introduced the organization's strategic talent framework, highlighting how school culture, leadership, and teacher stability influence student success.

Kiah Hufane, Head of Recruitment, elaborated on recent staffing trends, noting that elementary school retention rates have rebounded to pre-COVID levels, while middle school retention remains a challenge. The team is prioritizing recruitment efforts for certified teachers, given that certification requirements have shifted significantly. Ru discussed new pipeline initiatives aimed at expanding the teacher talent pool and ensuring a sustainable hiring strategy for future years.

VIII. Finance Committee Report (Inform) (Presenters: Kate Aufiero)

Kate Aufiero, Associate Chief of Financial Planning and Analysis, provided an update on the financial standing of the Bridgeport charter. She reported that the organization is projecting a slight surplus for the year, largely due to increased student meal reimbursements and ESSER funding. However, she cautioned that with ESSER funding coming to an end, the board must explore additional revenue sources, including philanthropy, to sustain key programs. She reassured the board that overall financial stability remains strong, with revenue and expenses trending in line with the budget.

IX. AF 25th Anniversary Summit

Lisa Margosian reminded the board about AF25, a celebration event scheduled for May 29-30 in New Haven, marking the organization's 25th anniversary. The event will bring together students, families, staff, funders, elected officials, and community partners. Board members were encouraged to attend.

X. Adjourn

Michael Strambler asked for a motion to adjourn. Dewey Loselle motioned. Marlene Macaуда seconded. All in favor, none opposed or abstained. The meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm.