

## Mission Statement

The mission of Achievement First Hartford Academy is to strengthen the academic and character skills needed for all students to graduate from top-tier high schools and colleges, to achieve success in a competitive world, and to serve as the next generation of leaders in their communities.

Achievement First Hartford Academy has three overarching goals:

**Academic excellence:** To accelerate the learning of our students so that they achieve academic breakthroughs that are essential for success in high school, college and life—especially with an emphasis on reading, writing, math and science.

**Public citizenship:** To develop students who take responsibility for themselves, their school and their community by embodying the REACH values of Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship and Hard Work.

**Partnership in public school reform:** To develop and share an instructional program that consistently produces dramatic student achievement gains and to work with like-minded organizations and traditional public schools to promote excellence in public education.

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## Letter from the Directors of the School and Governing Board Chairperson

September 19, 2014

Dear Commissioner,

We are pleased to submit Achievement First Hartford Academy's annual report for the 2013-14 school year and are proud to report another year of progress in our mission to provide all of our students with the academic and character skills they need to graduate from college, to succeed in a competitive world and to serve as the next generation of leaders for our communities.

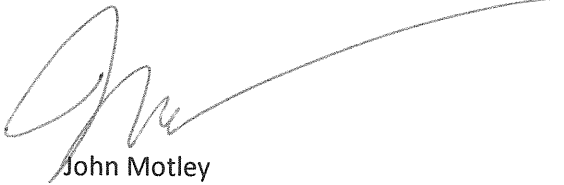
Achievement First Hartford Academy opened in August 2008 with grades kindergarten through one and five, and in the 2013-14 school year, we served over 890 students in grades kindergarten through four and five through nine. As a public charter school, all Achievement First Hartford Academy students are enrolled via a blind lottery run by Hartford Public Schools, and our student body is comparable to Hartford Public Schools. In the 2013-14 school year, nearly 100 percent of our students were African-American or Hispanic and approximately 100 percent were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In 2014-15, we are celebrating the opening of Achievement First Summit middle school, the second middle school under the Achievement First Hartford Academy Charter, led by principal Ben Cruse.

In 2013-14, our school rolled out a new curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, which will help ensure that all of our scholars are prepared to succeed at the college of their choice. The materials for this curriculum have been developed by teachers across the Achievement First network, in close partnership with network staff and national experts. This unique process ensures that the curriculum is not only rigorous and engaging, but tailored to the needs of the classroom teachers who bring it to life every day.

Over the course of the 2013-14 school year and during the summer trainings before the 2014-15 year redoubled our efforts to create a joyful, rigorous learning environment. At our elementary and middle schools, students strive to embody the REACH values of Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship and Hard Work. Achievement First Hartford High School focuses on a more mature set of core values—Grit, Independence, Judgment, Integrity and Citizenship. Our goal is to develop well-rounded students, and we teach these character values as explicitly as we teach academics. We are proud – but not yet satisfied – that we reduced the suspension rate by 64 percent in 2013-14, and we look forward to continuing this progress in 2014-15.

As always, we appreciate the opportunity to operate a Connecticut charter school and for the faith that the State Board of Education and the Connecticut General Assembly have placed in us. We hope to continue to build that relationship and to make further strides in providing an excellent education for our students in the 2014-15 school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Motley', written in a cursive style. The signature starts with a large, looped 'J' and ends with a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

John Motley  
Chairman, Board of Directors

## About Our School

### School Program

#### Description of Student Admissions Process

Achievement First Hartford Academy admits students through Hartford's Regional School Choice admissions lottery, which includes traditional public schools, charter schools and magnet schools across the City of Hartford. The lottery application asks parents/guardians to list their top five school choices, one of which may be Achievement First Hartford Academy, and students are assigned to a school by blind selection. If a student's top school choice(s) is full, the student is placed on the waiting list at their school of choice and assigned to attend a different school. Hartford's Regional School Choice Office allows schools to give preference to applicants based on geography or family legacy. Achievement First Hartford Academy gives preference to applicants based on family legacy, meaning that siblings automatically receive a seat in the school if there is a seat available. Achievement First Hartford Academy also gives preference to students based on geography; students residing in Hartford's North End are given preference in the lottery for Achievement First Hartford Academy. The decision to provide preference to students from Hartford's North End, which includes many of the city's most underserved neighborhoods, was made in conjunction with the City of Hartford upon the opening of Achievement First Hartford Academy. Hartford's Regional School Choice lottery for the 2013-14 school year took place in April 2013.

#### Student Recruitment Methods

Prior to Hartford's Regional School Choice enrollment lottery, Achievement First Hartford Academy's student recruitment outreach efforts included multiple direct mailings to Hartford Public Schools students based on a contact list provided by Hartford Public Schools. Additional mailings were sent to grade-eligible families residing in Achievement First Hartford Academy's catchment area—Hartford's North End. In addition, Achievement First Hartford Academy utilized print and radio advertisements, neighborhood canvassing, and partnerships with community organizations, including churches, community centers, daycare centers and after-school programs. Achievement First Hartford Academy also held open houses and information sessions at the school and participated in the city-wide school choice fair, which provided families with an opportunity to learn more about all school options before completing an application. Information about Achievement First Hartford Academy and our student admission process is also available at [www.achievementfirst.org](http://www.achievementfirst.org).

#### Student Transportation

The majority of our students ride buses provided by Hartford Public Schools to and from school.

## Student Information

### Number of Applications, Openings, and Wait list candidates for 2014-2015

Note: Application information for 2014-15 is not yet available.

### Number of Applications, Openings, and Wait list candidates 2013/2014

#### **Achievement First Hartford Academy**

#### **Student Recruitment Metrics**

#### **2013-2014 School Year**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Applications</u>	<u>Openings</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Wait List</u>
K	356	90	4:1	266
1	19	3	19:3	16
2	20	5	4:1	15
3	16	1	16:1	15
4	21	1	21:1	20
5	67	40	5:3	27
6	27	7	27:7	20
7	14	1	14:1	13
8	11	0		11
<b>Total:</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>26:7</b>	<b>403</b>

## Curriculum Design and Instructional Method and Modification

### Curriculum Design

Connecticut's rigorous state standards form the backbone of Achievement First Hartford Academy's rich, college-preparatory curriculum. In collaboration with our charter management organization, Achievement First, Inc., Achievement First Hartford Academy has invested considerable time and resources in developing a top-quality, research-proven, standards-based curriculum, which forms the core of our classroom instruction.

Elementary School Program: We believe that literacy is fundamental to success across all disciplines, and our students spend almost four hours a day on reading and writing activities, gaining a solid foundation in phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. In kindergarten and first grade, literacy instruction focuses on the development of strong foundational reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics and decoding, oral language skills, knowledge of concepts of print, knowledge of basic comprehension skills, and reading stamina. Beginning in second grade, all students have a 20- to 30-minute independent reading class aimed at developing avid, active readers. Teachers guide students in identifying books appropriate for their individual reading levels, inspire students to read and monitor their reading. This in-school independent reading is supplemented with 20 minutes of required independent reading at home each night. Students complete an independent reading

journal, and a parent/guardian is required to sign off on the reading log indicating that they supervised the reading.

Achievement First Hartford Academy also uses a proven, research-based math program to provide students with a strong mathematical knowledge base. Math instruction combines direct instruction and cumulative review to ensure that students master and retain concepts throughout the year. We supplement external curricula with practice materials that are directly aligned to the Connecticut State standards.

FOSS Science and Core Knowledge and History Alive! curricula are used to advance students toward critical science and history standards, while providing teachers with diagnostic feedback on their progress.

The following chart outlines our elementary curricula across all subjects. All of these curricula have produced exceptional results at Achievement First Hartford Academy and meet the Connecticut State standards.

<b>ACHIEVEMENT FIRST HARTFORD ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM (Kindergarten through fourth grade)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Academic Area</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Curricula</b>	<b>Content Provider</b>
K-2	Reading	Reading Mastery	Reading Mastery	SRA
K-2	Reading	Word Work	Words Their Way Activities Teacher designed activities	Pearson Achievement First
K-4	Reading	Read Aloud	Linda Hoyt's Interactive Read Aloud Teacher designed lessons	Heinemann Achievement First
K-1	Reading	Computer Based Reading Centers	Riverdeep	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
K-4	Reading	Reading Comp/ Literature	Achievement First designed lessons	Achievement First
K-4	Reading	Guided Reading	Foutnas and Pinnell	Heinemann
K-4	Reading	Independent Reading		
2-4	Reading	Junior Great Books	Junior Great Books	Great Book Foundation
2-4	Reading	Textual Analysis	Achievement First designed lessons	Achievement First
2-4	Reading	Vocab/Word Study	Wordly Wise	EPS
K-4	Writing	Handwriting & Grammar	Achievement First designed grammar scope & sequence and binders	Achievement First
K-4	Writing	Writing	Achievement First designed scope & sequence and unit	Achievement First, Heinemann (Calkins),

**ACHIEVEMENT FIRST HARTFORD ACADEMY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM**  
 (Kindergarten through fourth grade)

Grade	Academic Area	Subject	Curricula	Content Provider
			overviews	Empowering Writers
K-2	Math	Math Meeting	Everyday Counts Calendar Math Achievement First designed lessons	Houghton, Mifflin, Harcour, and Achievement First
K-4	Math	Math Lesson	Envisions with Achievement First	Scott Foresman and Achievement First
K-4	Science	Science	FOSS Science	FOSS
K-4	History	History	History Alive!	History Alive

Middle School Program: Achievement First Hartford Academy’s middle school program is focused on two goals: 1) ensuring that all students, regardless of their incoming achievement level, are mastering grade-level standards by the end of sixth grade, and 2) ensuring that every eighth grader matriculates with the skills necessary for success in a rigorous, college-preparatory high school program. To achieve these goals, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s curriculum is aligned to both Connecticut State and rigorous high school standards.

Our math program is designed to produce students who have mastered all middle school mathematics standards, as well as Algebra I, by the end of eighth grade. Our curriculum combines basic facts knowledge and “automaticity” with procedural computation with a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics. This combination of basic skills and conceptual understanding equips students with the knowledge and skills to solve complex mathematical application problems. Math classes follow a structured lesson plan designed for maximum success. Class begins with cumulative review, followed by the introduction of a new concept. Teachers use I-We-You instruction to introduce new concepts, including modeling the new concept for students, solving problems with students during guided practice and then, giving students time to practice independently. At the end of each class, teachers administer an “exit ticket” that assesses how well students mastered the day’s lesson and use “exit ticket” results to inform the next day’s instruction.

Achievement First Hartford Academy’s middle school reading program is focused on maintaining an obsessive, school-wide focus on reading, increasing the volume of independent reading being done by our students, setting clear and measurable reading goals for all students and regularly tracking their progress, establishing clear and structured interventions for struggling readers, teaching good reading habits and core comprehension strategies as a foundation for teaching state standards and more sophisticated literary concepts, and systematically teaching and reinforcing essential vocabulary. Achievement First Hartford Academy’s middle school reading program includes three key components: reading comprehension instruction, literature class and independent reading.



IQWST and internal Achievement First developed curricula are used to advance students toward critical science and history standards, while providing teachers with diagnostic feedback on their progress. Achievement First currently employs directors of science achievement and history achievement.

ACHIEVEMENT FIRST HARTFORD ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM (Fifth through eighth grade)				
Grade	Academic Area	Subject	Instructional Program	Content Provider
5-8	Reading	Literature	AF Created Unit Plans based on the Common Core State Standards	Achievement First
5-8	Reading	Vocabulary	AF Created Tier 2 word lists and assessments	Achievement First
5-8	Reading	Independent Reading	School created reading logs	
5-8	Writing	Grammar	Achievement First designed grammar scope & sequence and binders	Achievement First
5-8	Writing	Writing	Achievement First designed scope & sequence and unit overviews aligned to the CCSS	Achievement First, Heinemann
5	Math	Math Lesson	Envisions with Achievement First supplements	Scott Foresman and Achievement First
6-8	Math	Math Lesson	Achievement First *Scholars in Algebra do use Prentice Hall Algebra 1 text	Achievement First
5	Science	Science	Achievement First	Achievement First
6-8	Science	Science	IQWST	IQWST
6-8	History	History	Achievement First	Achievement First

**High School Program:** At Achievement First Achievement First Hartford High School, the emphasis is on acceptance to and success in college. Our curriculum is designed to combine the academic rigor and intimacy of a private school with the exciting elements of a traditional public school. Students at Achievement First Hartford High School far exceed the baseline of 20 credits mandated by the state for high school graduation. In all, Achievement First Hartford High School graduates earn over 30 credits. The tenets of our high school program include:

- *Rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum:* We believe that the best preparation for college is considerable time devoted to reading, writing and thinking critically about English, math, history and science. This is why our curriculum focuses intensely on these skill sets and subject areas. All students take college-preparatory courses, including at least one Advanced Placement course,

and all courses last 57 minutes. In some cases, scholars receive additional time in math and ELA in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades to ensure their success in high school. In addition, there are no “Ds” at AF Achievement First Hartford High School, passing a class requires a 70 or better.

- *College counseling:* All students take a college readiness seminar, which provides them with the experience and skills essential for success in high school and college. Through the college readiness seminar, students in grades nine through 11 received guidance in drafting resumes, cover letters and applications, as well as interview practice for summer programs and college admission. In grade 12, the college skills seminar guides students through the college and financial aid application and admission process.
- *Summer enrichment programs:* Students in grades nine through 11 are required to participate in a summer program or internship. In addition to helping students become well-rounded individuals that are attractive to top-caliber colleges and universities, summer programs provide students with important opportunities to explore their interests and develop an understanding of the role college plays in pursuing those interests. Many of the summer programs are also hosted on college campuses and are eligible for college credit.
- *Student life programs:* While providing a strong academic foundation will always be our first priority, we also realize that our students need opportunities to have varied experiences, including a fun and memorable high school experience made possible through awards ceremonies, senior privileges, dances and other popular high school rituals. Achievement First Hartford High School offers an expanding extracurricular program including, cross country, basketball, , , track, dance, , student government, Honor Council, and more.

The following chart outlines our current high school program for grades nine and ten, and planned program for grades 11 and 12.

ACHIEVEMENT FIRST HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)				
Subject Area	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Math	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II Or Pre-Calc	Pre-Calc Or AP Calculus
English	Literature 1 and Composition I	Literature II and Composition II	American Literature and Composition III	Honors Literature and Composition
History	Pre-AP World History	World History or AP World History	AP United States History Part II	UCONN ECE American Studies
Science	Conceptual Physics	Chemistry	Honors Biology	AP Biology

### Instructional Methods

Achievement First Hartford Academy’s instructional methods are not driven by the need to “cover” material; they are aimed at real student mastery. We have clear performance standards, based on national and state curriculum frameworks, for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level, and all instruction is purposefully designed to help students meet ambitious educational standards. The tenants of our instructional program are data, consistency and research-based lesson planning.

Achievement First Hartford Academy's instruction is highly data driven, and every six weeks, teachers give interim assessments (IAs) that measure whether students have actually mastered what was taught. Teachers and school leaders spend a "Data Day" after each IA dedicated to reviewing the assessment data and together creating data-driven instructional plans that target whole class, small group and one-on-one instruction to address any gaps in student learning.

Achievement First Hartford is not a series of isolated and idiosyncratic classrooms, inspired by the styles of different teachers. Instead, our team of teachers and school leaders work together to develop a clear instructional model so that every classroom employs common curricula, strategies, systems and templates. This consistency greatly supports student learning, teacher professional development and instructional refinement.

Our teachers follow a research-based lesson planning format that builds on the five phases of learning: acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization and adaptation. After introducing new concepts, teachers consistently revisit them through cumulative review, enabling students to master, generalize and adapt knowledge and skills.

### **Modifications**

Achievement First Hartford Academy remains committed to the instructional vision outlined in our original charter application: high expectations, a rigorous core academic program, regular and systematic use of assessments, and data-driven planning and instruction that address whole class, small group and individual needs. We continuously refine our curriculum design and instructional methods to ensure maximum student learning, but we have not made any significant modifications to the core program vision outlined in our original charter application or in our subsequent annual school reports.

## School Goals

### I. Educational Progress of Students

**Goal A:** Achievement First Hartford Academy students will achieve at high levels in the core subjects.

**Measurable Objective A.1:** The percentage of Achievement First Hartford Academy kindergarteners, first graders and second graders reading at or above grade level (proficient) as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell assessment will be 80 percent. The percentage of Achievement First Hartford Academy kindergarteners, first graders and second graders reading at an advanced level as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell assessment will be 40 percent.

- *Measurement Tool:* Fountas & Pinnell assessment results
- *Benchmark:* Fountas & Pinnell assessment standards for proficient and advanced reading levels
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Only Achievement First Hartford Academy first graders surpassed the Fountas & Pinnell benchmark at the proficient advanced levels,
- *Modification in Goal/Objective for the 2013-14 School Year:* None.
- *Improvements Planned for 2014-15:* School leadership remains focused on driving improvement in ELA outcomes for our K-2 scholars. Through our well established coaching structure each teacher will receive additional observations and feedback to support them in implementing the new more challenging curriculum.

Achievement First Hartford Academy			
Grade	% At/Above Grade Level	Benchmark	Difference
K	67.9%	80%	-12.1%
1	88.1%	80%	8.1%
2	86.5%	80%	6.5%

Achievement First Hartford Academy			
Grade	% At/Above Advanced	Benchmark	Difference
K	23.8%	40%	-16.2%
1	22.6%	40%	-17.4%
2	28.1%	40%	-11.9%

**Please note that in 2013-14, AFHA participated in the field test for the new Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), and therefore does not have test results available at this time. Unless otherwise noted, the results below are the most recent available, from 2012-13 administration of the Connecticut Mastery Test. For 2014-15 and beyond, we will maintain the same targets but use the new and more rigorous SBAC assessment.**

**Measurable Objective A.2:** In grade three, Achievement First Hartford Academy students will exceed district proficiency averages in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) third-grade CMT proficiency scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy third graders outperformed HPS third graders by 24, 13, and 10 percentage points, respectively, in math, reading and writing proficiency.

Subject	AFHA 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade % Proficient	District 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade % Proficient	Difference
Math	83.1%	59.5%	23.6%
Reading	64.6%	51.6%	13.0%
Writing	78.4%	68.1%	10.3%

**Measurable Objective A.3:** In grade four, Achievement First Hartford Academy (Achievement First Hartford Academy or AFHA) students will meet or exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) and Connecticut State fourth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* AFHA fourth graders outperformed HPS fourth graders in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery. AFHA fourth graders also outperformed Connecticut fourth graders in math, reading and writing proficiency and math, writing mastery, but only attained or slightly lagged behind the state in mastery.

Subject	AFHA 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	State 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF-District	AF-State
Math	92.8%	58.0%	83.8%	34.8%	9.0%
Reading	80.6%	52.0%	77.6%	28.6%	3.0%
Writing	86.1%	67.1%	83.5%	19.0%	2.6%
Subject	AFHA Grade 4 % At Goal	District % At Goal	State Percent At Goal	AF-District	AF-State
Math	65.2%	32.0%	65.4%	33.2%	-0.2%
Reading	59.7%	34.6%	62.7%	25.1%	-3.0%
Writing	65.3%	36.5%	63.1%	28.8%	2.2%

Measurable Objective A.4: In grades five through seven, Achievement First Hartford Academy students will exceed district proficiency averages in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools' (HPS) fifth-grade, sixth-grade and seventh-grade CMT proficiency scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy fifth, sixth and seventh graders outperformed HPS fifth, sixth and seventh graders in math, reading and writing proficiency.

Subject	AFHA 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District
Math	89.0%	53.5%	35.5%
Reading	73.0%	53.3%	19.7%
Writing	96.2%	70.6%	25.6%

Subject	AFHA 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District
Math	89.2%	68.7%	20.5%
Reading	72.3%	69.5%	2.8%
Writing	85.2%	43.3%	41.9%

Subject	AFHFA 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District
Math	78.5%	60.6%	17.9%
Reading	72.2%	69.4%	2.8%
Writing	72.8%	64.6%	8.2%

Measurable Objective A.5: In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy students will meet or exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools' (HPS) and Connecticut State eighth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy eighth graders outperformed HPS eighth graders in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery by double-digit margins. Achievement First Hartford Academy eighth graders met or surpassed

Connecticut eighth graders in math and writing proficiency and mastery, but fell short in reading at both levels.

Subject	AFHFA Grade 8 % Proficient	District 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	State 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	86.7%	62.6%	86.1%	24.1%	0.6%
Reading	81.7%	64.2%	85.7%	17.5%	-4.0%
Writing	91.7%	67.2%	85.7%	24.5%	6.0%

Subject	AFHFA Grade 8 % At/Above Mastery	District % At/Above Mastery	State % At Above Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	68.3%	32.5%	65.2%	35.8%	3.1%
Reading	65.0%	48.3%	76.3%	16.7%	-11.3%
Writing	73.3%	36.6%	67.3%	36.7%	6.0%

## II. Accomplishment of Mission, Purpose and Specialized Focus

**Goal A:** In our capstone grades—fourth and eighth—Achievement First Hartford Academy will close the racial and economic achievement gap for our African-American, Hispanic and low-income students.

**Measurable Objective A.1:** In grade four, Achievement First Hartford Academy African-American students and Achievement First Hartford Academy Hispanic students will exceed state proficiency and mastery averages for fourth graders in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Connecticut State fourth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy African-American fourth graders outperformed Connecticut fourth graders in math, reading and writing proficiency and are on par in math, reading and writing mastery. Achievement First Hartford Academy Hispanic fourth graders outperformed Connecticut fourth graders in math and writing proficiency and underperformed Connecticut fourth graders in reading proficiency. Achievement First Hartford Academy Hispanic fourth graders lagged behind Connecticut fourth graders in mastery of all subjects.

Subject	AF African American Students Proficient	State 4th Grade Proficient	Difference
Math	93.5%	83.8%	9.7%
Reading	83.6%	77.6%	6.0%
Writing	86.2%	63.1%	23.1%

Subject	AF African American Students At/Above Mastery	State 4th Grade At/Above Mastery	Difference
Math	67.7%	65.4%	2.3%
Reading	62.3%	62.7%	-0.4%
Writing	66.2%	63.1%	3.1%

Subject	AF Hispanic Students Proficient	State 4th Grade Proficient	Difference
Math	85.7%	83.8%	1.9%
Reading	50.0%	77.6%	-27.6%
Writing	85.7%	63.1%	22.6%

Subject	AF Hispanic Students At/Above Mastery	State 4th Grade At/Above Mastery	Difference
Math	42.9%	65.4%	-22.5%
Reading	33.3%	62.7%	-29.4%
Writing	57.1%	63.1%	-6.0%

Measurable Objective A.2: In grade four, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income students will exceed state proficiency and mastery averages for fourth graders in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Connecticut State fourth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income fourth graders outperformed Connecticut fourth graders in math, reading and writing proficiency. Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income fourth graders were on par with Connecticut fourth graders in math and writing mastery.

Subject	AF Low-Income Students Proficient	State 4th Grade Proficient	Difference
Math	92.8%	83.8%	9.0%
Reading	80.6%	77.6%	3.0%
Writing	86.1%	63.1%	23.0%

Subject	AF Low-Income Students At/Above Mastery	State 4th Grade At/Above Mastery	Difference
Math	65.2%	65.4%	-0.2%
Reading	59.7%	62.7%	-3.0%
Writing	65.3%	63.1%	2.2%



Measurable Objective A.3: In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy African-American students and Achievement First Hartford Academy Hispanic students will exceed state proficiency and mastery averages for eighth graders in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Connecticut State eighth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy African-American eighth graders outperformed Connecticut eighth graders in writing proficiency and mastery, and matched or outperformed state in math proficiency and mastery. Achievement First Hartford Academy Hispanic eighth graders outperformed Connecticut eighth graders in writing proficiency and mastery, but lagged Connecticut eighth graders in math and reading proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF African American 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Students Proficient	State 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - State
Math	85.2%	86.1%	-0.9%
Reading	83.3%	85.7%	-2.4%
Writing	90.7%	67.3%	23.4%

Subject	AF African American 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	State 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	AF - State
Math	70.4%	65.2%	5.2%
Reading	64.8%	76.3%	-11.5%
Writing	72.2%	67.3%	4.9%

Subject	AF Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	State 8 <sup>th</sup> % Grade Proficient	AF - State
Math	85.7%	86.1%	-0.4%
Reading	57.1%	85.7%	-28.6%
Writing	85.7%	67.3%	18.4%

Subject	AF Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	State 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade %At/Above Mastery	AF - State
Math	42.9%	65.2%	-22.3%
Reading	57.1%	76.3%	-19.2%
Writing	71.4%	67.3%	4.1%

Measurable Objective A.4: In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy low-income students will exceed state proficiency and mastery averages for eighth graders in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Connecticut State eighth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy low-income eighth graders outperformed Connecticut eighth graders in writing proficiency and mastery and were on par in math proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF Low-Income 8th Grade	State 8th Grade At/above Proficient	Difference
Math	86.7%	86.1%	0.6%
Reading	81.7%	85.7%	-4.0%
Writing	91.7%	67.3%	24.4%

8th grade

Subject	AF Low-Income Students At/Above Mastery	State 8th Grade At/Above Mastery	Difference
Math	68.3%	65.2%	3.1%
Reading	65.0%	76.3%	-11.3%
Writing	73.3%	67.3%	6.0%

### III. Efforts to Reduce Racial, Ethnic and Economic Isolation to Increase the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of the Student Body

**Goal A:** In our capstone grades—fourth and eighth—Achievement First Hartford Academy’s African-American, Hispanic and low-income students will outperform African-American, Hispanic and low-income students in their host district and state-wide, reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation among these historically underserved subgroups by fostering high student achievement that prepares them for success in college and life beyond.

Measurable Objective A.1: In grade four, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s African-American students will exceed district and state proficiency averages for African-American students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) and Connecticut State African-American Fourth-grade CMT proficiency scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy African-American fourth graders out performed HPS and Connecticut African-American fourth graders by double digit percentages in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF African American Proficient	District African American Proficient	State African American Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	93.5%	56.4%	63.6%	37.1%	29.9%
Reading	83.6%	55.5%	56.5%	28.1%	27.1%
Writing	86.2%	66.8%	70.2%	19.4%	16.0%

Subject	AF African American Mastery	District African American Mastery	State African American Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	67.7%	28.4%	37.4%	39.3%	30.3%
Reading	62.3%	35.3%	37.0%	27.0%	25.3%
Writing	66.2%	35.7%	40.8%	30.5%	25.4%

Measurable Objective A.2: In grade four, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s Hispanic students will exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages for Hispanic students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) and Connecticut State Hispanic fourth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy’s Hispanic fourth graders met or outperformed Hispanic fourth graders in HPS and state-wide in math and writing proficiency and mastery but trailed in reading proficiency and mastery as compared with the State.

Subject	AF Hispanic Proficient	District Hispanic Proficient	State Hispanic Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	85.7%	52.5%	68.5%	33.2%	17.2%
Reading	50.0%	43.2%	56.4%	6.8%	-6.4%
Writing	85.7%	64.3%	71.5%	21.4%	14.2%

Subject	AF Hispanic Mastery	District Hispanic Mastery	State Hispanic Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	42.9%	26.1%	43.1%	16.8%	-0.2%
Reading	33.3%	25.1%	37.7%	8.2%	-4.4%
Writing	57.1%	30.8%	43.0%	26.3%	14.1%

Measurable Objective A.3: In grade Four, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income students will exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages for low-income students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results

- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools' (HPS) and Connecticut State low-income third-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy's low-income fourth graders outperformed low-income fourth graders in HPS and state-wide by double-digit margins in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	State Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	88.9%	55.4%	67.9%	33.5%	21.0%
Reading	75.0%	48.4%	58.1%	26.6%	16.9%
Writing	86.1%	34.6%	70.6%	51.5%	15.5%

Subject	AF Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	District Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	State Low-Income 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade At/Above Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	62.5%	28.6%	42.2%	33.9%	20.3%
Reading	55.6%	30.5%	38.7%	25.1%	16.9%
Writing	65.3%	34.6%	42.4%	30.7%	22.9%

Measurable Objective A.4: In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy's African-American students will exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages for African-American students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools' (HPS) and Connecticut State African-American eighth grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* AF Hartford Academy's African-American eighth graders outperformed African-American eighth graders in HPS and state-wide by significant margins in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF African American Proficient	District African American Proficient	State African American Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	86.8%	64.2%	69.4%	22.6%	17.4%
Reading	84.9%	67.6%	71.8%	17.3%	13.1%
Writing	92.5%	72.2%	74.0%	20.3%	18.5%

Subject	AF African American Mastery	District African American Mastery	State African American Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	71.7%	29.2%	37.4%	42.5%	34.3%
Reading	66.0%	51.6%	55.1%	14.4%	10.9%
Writing	73.6%	38.6%	44.9%	35.0%	28.7%

**Measurable Objective A.5:** In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s Hispanic students will exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages for Hispanic students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) and Connecticut State Hispanic eighth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy’s Hispanic eighth graders outperformed Hispanic eighth graders in HPS and state-wide in math and writing proficiency and mastery, but fell short of state performance in reading proficiency.

Subject	AF Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	District Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	State Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	85.7%	53.1%	69.4%	32.6%	16.3%
Reading	57.1%	55.0%	68.7%	2.1%	-11.6%
Writing	85.7%	58.7%	71.0%	27.0%	14.7%

Subject	AF Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	District Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	State Hispanic 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade % At/Above Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	42.9%	24.0%	38.7%	18.9%	4.2%
Reading	57.1%	36.7%	53.2%	20.4%	3.9%
Writing	71.4%	27.5%	42.9%	43.9%	28.5%

**Measurable Objective A.6:** In grade eight, Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income students will exceed district and state proficiency and mastery averages for low-income students in math, reading and writing on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).

- *Measurement Tool:* CMT results
- *Benchmark:* Hartford Public Schools’ (HPS) and Connecticut State low-income eighth-grade CMT proficiency and mastery scores
- *Progress in Meeting the Goal:* Achievement First Hartford Academy’s low-income eighth graders outperformed low-income eighth graders in HPS and state-wide by significant margins in math, reading and writing proficiency and mastery.

Subject	AF Low-Income Proficient	District Low-Income Proficient	State Low-Income Proficient	AF - District	AF - State
Math	86.7%	58.4%	70.3%	28.3%	16.4%
Reading	81.7%	60.1%	70.3%	21.6%	11.4%
Writing	91.7%	63.6%	71.9%	28.1%	19.8%

Subject	AF Low-Income Mastery	District Low-Income Mastery	State Low-Income Mastery	AF - District	AF - State
Math	68.3%	26.9%	39.1%	41.4%	29.2%
Reading	65.0%	42.9%	54.7%	22.1%	10.3%
Writing	73.3%	31.6%	43.7%	41.7%	29.6%

## Efforts to Effectively Attract, Enroll and Retain Students from Among High Need Populations

Achievement First Hartford Academy cannot achieve our mission without being an exemplar of both excellence AND equity. We have made significant efforts to reach out to students who face multiple risk factors, and these are reflected in the demographics cited in this annual report.

In the coming year, we will redouble these efforts. The Achievement First Community Outreach & Student Recruitment Team has shifted staffing responsibilities to have a full time staff member focused on broadening community outreach in Hartford and expanding community partnerships. Additionally, in the 2013-14 student recruiting season, we will be hiring a “parent outreach fellow” to lead on-the-ground, door-to-door recruitment of students to ensure that all families are aware that Achievement First Hartford Academy is an option for them.

We will be employing strategies that have already been proven successful in Achievement First Schools in New York, including:

- Partnering with day cares that serve a high percentage of English Language Learners and students with disabilities.
- Partnering with social service agencies to conduct targeted outreach to their clients.
- Neighborhood “street teams” consisting of current parents who recruit at-risk students in person in the communities we serve, visiting churches, libraries, laundromats, and other locations where they can meet community members.
- Continuing to produce all marketing materials in both English and Spanish (the most common first language other than English in our population)
- Partnering with experts at SDE to ensure that our ESL offerings are of the highest quality, to ensure families are confident their scholars will receive the services they need.

Making sure that Achievement First Hartford Academy is a welcoming environment for ALL the families in our community, especially those with students who face additional risk factors, is among our highest priorities.

## Financial Information

### Achievement First Hartford Academy FY15 (2014-15) Budget

	AFHA ES	AFHA MS	Summit MS	AFHA HS
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Public Revenue</b>				
<b>General Operating Revenue</b>				
<b>Per Pupil Operating Revenue</b>	5,071,500	4,140,000	1,035,000	2,425,400
<b>Total Other Public Revenues</b>	375,231	252,859	239,585	259,934
<b>Total Special Education Funding</b>	252,852	359,598	30,000	118,583
<b>Total Public Revenue</b>	<b>5,699,583</b>	<b>4,752,456</b>	<b>1,304,585</b>	<b>2,803,916</b>
<b>Total Private Revenue</b>	-	<b>15,000</b>	<b>530,000</b>	<b>310,000</b>
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,500</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5,701,583</b>	<b>4,769,456</b>	<b>1,836,585</b>	<b>3,116,416</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Personnel Expenses</b>				
<b>Total School Salaries and Wages</b>	3,293,652	2,885,246	986,937	1,803,089
<b>Total Other Personnel Costs</b>	24,380	19,000	-	36,200
<b>Total Salaries and Wages</b>	3,318,032	2,904,246	986,937	1,839,289
<b>Total Bonuses</b>	130,341	40,800	12,750	68,750
<b>Total Taxes &amp; Benefits</b>	584,892	537,666	163,267	326,467
<b>Total Temporary Staff</b>	42,500	22,500	12,100	12,025
<b>Total Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>4,075,765</b>	<b>3,505,212</b>	<b>1,175,054</b>	<b>2,246,531</b>
<b>Non - Personnel Expenses (OTPS)</b>				
<b>Total Program Support Activities</b>	126,020	124,693	42,015	128,295
<b>Total Program Materials &amp; Supplies</b>	279,255	144,515	78,665	140,588
<b>Total Operations</b>	-	30,000	-	-
<b>Total Technology</b>	242,191	172,951	204,042	167,554
<b>Total General &amp; Administrative</b>	151,405	123,991	47,490	93,260
<b>Total Physical Plant</b>	53,000	61,000	79,000	10,000
<b>Total Supplemental Program</b>	-	-	-	26,700
<b>Ancillary Services</b>	73,000	73,000	73,000	73,000
<b>AF Charter Management Fee</b>	559,969	473,446	113,523	258,580
<b>Total Non Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>1,484,840</b>	<b>1,203,595</b>	<b>637,735</b>	<b>897,977</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>5,560,605</b>	<b>4,708,808</b>	<b>1,812,790</b>	<b>3,144,509</b>
<b>Contingencies</b>	69,508	58,860	22,660	39,306
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,630,113</b>	<b>4,767,668</b>	<b>1,835,450</b>	<b>3,183,815</b>
<b>Inter Charter Transfers</b>	(70,000)		-	70,000
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>2,601</b>

The Achievement First Hartford Academy Board of Directors approved the FY15 operating budget at their May 2014 meeting.



## Best Practices: Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction

The 2014-15 school year will mark the fourth year of Achievement First's initiative to revamp its curriculum and instruction to meet the rigorous learning expectations embodied in the Common Core State Standards ("CCSS"). Over the course of 2013-14, Achievement First has worked closely with national experts in each core content area to design standards-aligned curriculum resources that help teachers plan great lessons. These experts include:

- David Liben, Senior Content Specialist, Literacy and ELA, Student Achievement Partners (ELA)
- The Charles A. Dana Center (mathematics)
- BSCS (science)
- Tim Kiern, CollegeBoard advisor and California State University professor (social studies)
- The Achievement Network (math & ELA assessments)

The consensus among these and other experts is that currently there are limited proven national models for Common Core-aligned curriculum resources, and that one of the reasons for this is that good curriculum development is inherently an iterative, cyclical process rather than a linear one. Simply adapting existing textbooks to superficially align with the language of the CCSS does not reflect the magnitude of the shifts required by the Common Core. Achievement First's strategy in the second two years of our Common Core alignment initiative is dedicated to developing truly CCSS-aligned, teacher-friendly resources that help teachers engage intellectually with rigorous content while planning engaging lessons for scholars.

By the start of 2013-14, all ELA and math courses at Achievement First had Common Core-aligned materials, including scope & sequences, unit plans, and sample lesson plans, all shared on the BetterLesson platform. During 2013-14 (and continuing in 2014-15), these materials have been piloted across New York schools. Stipended teachers known as "Curriculum Fellows" (formerly "lead planners") have worked with network staff to refine and improve these materials based on the experience of using them, with the guidance of the experts listed above. The Curriculum Fellow model is designed to allow the curriculum development process to be agile and responsive to teacher needs. The Curriculum Fellow model is the evolution of the "shared planning" initiative described in the AF Brooklyn Academy charter proposal, and while it retains the same basic structure, the role and training of Curriculum Fellows has been expanded so that they not only produce materials, but also lead content-specific training at their schools and during network-wide professional development.

First and foremost, this strategy enables AF to focus on developing and supporting our best teachers to be dynamic curricular and instructional leaders. The Curriculum Fellow role places our best teachers at the forefront of learning about new standards and shifting instructional practices. This focus on curriculum development positions them to be instructional leaders for both the network and their school sites. Building a strong cadre of curricular and instructional leaders enables AF to collaboratively build great instructional resources and to deliver intellectually-engaging training.

This system creates a seamless feedback cycle that includes national content experts, network level experts, and classroom teachers to continually improve curriculum resources. It uniquely positions AF to generate excellent, teacher-proven, Common-Core aligned curriculum that will ultimately be shared "open source" for any teacher in the country to access.

## Status of Charter Renewal Findings and Follow-Up Activities

### Arts Curriculum Recommendation

Arts: Arts curricula documents provided do not consistently contain specific components needed for complete curricular guides. The arts documents provided lack or are unclear regarding details of instructional time, equipment, and other resources that are key to delivering the outcomes listed. Some documents provide very few actual student learning objectives. There is no indication in the documents of how learning outcomes sequence across grade levels. Assessments are often vague, i.e., groups of 5 assessment and whole group assessment.

Recommendation: That the school consult Connecticut's Guide to K-12 Program Development in the Arts to further its work in completing its arts curricula.

In preparation for the transition to the Common Core State Standards, the curriculum development efforts at the network and the school level have prioritized developing a robust set of supporting materials for academic programs. A similar curriculum development effort is under way for the arts, and we will be guided by the Guide to K-12 Program Development in the Arts as we document additional guiding materials for these subject areas.

### Health Curriculum Recommendation

Health: The Health curricula documents provided were reviewed in depth (please see attachments). The reviews of the documents indicate what curricular components are evident and those that are deficient.

Recommendation: That the school consult the review and strengthen the components deemed deficient. It is recommended that the school consult Connecticut's Curriculum Development Guide to assist in this process <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=333744> . Also, you may contact Jean Mee, Comprehensive School Health and Physical Education Consultant at 860-807-2016 or via e-mail at [jean.mee@ct.gov](mailto:jean.mee@ct.gov).

A sample curriculum unit was provided in the initial response to site visit feedback, and we will continue our curriculum documentation efforts over the course of the 2013-14 school year, until the entire health program is documented. This updated curriculum will be guided by the "Guide to Curriculum Development: Purpose, Practices, and Procedures" as well as the "Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework."

### Board Oversight Recommendation

Recommendation: That the additional approval required for expenditures equal to or exceeding \$10,000 be provided by the Board Treasurer who represents a higher level oversight. We also recommend that accounting policies and procedures be revised to align with Board responsibilities. The Board representatives present at the site visit agreed with our recommendations.

On July 26, 2012 the Board of Achievement First Hartford Academy had voted to revise the fiscal policies to modify the signatories on disbursements and contracts valued at or greater than \$10,000 to be restricted to school and board leadership. This proactive change had resulted from renewal visits to our sister schools in New Haven and Bridgeport. Furthermore, school leaders alone (Principals and Deans) can only sign for previously budgeted and Board approved items, and Deans cannot be sole signatories

without Board Treasurer approval. These policies and procedures reflect the reality that our Board Chairs and Treasurers are not always readily accessible to sign operational documents.

That said, the Board is working with AF Network Support to more closely mirror the State Department of Education's recommendations, and the subject will be specifically taken up during the November meeting.

#### **English Language Learner Recommendation**

Recommendation: Correct the coding of the students eligible for Bilingual education noted above. Present sample letters of parents of bilingual eligible students indicating that they have declined the bilingual programming. In the event that parents have requested Bilingual education submit a plan outlining how the bilingual program will be implemented. Please contact Megan Alubicki, ELL Education Consultant at 860-713-6786 or via e-mail at [megan.alubicki@ct.gov](mailto:megan.alubicki@ct.gov).

As explained in the initial response to our renewal site visit, dated April 30, 2013, we have reviewed the coding of students eligible for Bilingual education and believe that based on statute, Achievement First Hartford Academy is not required at this time to provide Bilingual education to students at any of the individual schools.

#### **Teacher Certification Recommendation**

We continue to work with the recruiting and operations teams to ensure that teachers meeting certification requirements and that requests for CSEP are complete.

## Governance

### Governing Board Meetings Held In 2013-14

During the 2013-14 school year, Achievement First Hartford Academy's Board of Directors met on the following dates:

Thursday, August 01, 2013  
Monday, September 23, 2013  
Monday, December 02, 2013  
Wednesday, January 22, 2014  
Monday, March 17, 2014  
Thursday, April 17, 2014 (special meeting)  
Tuesday, May 27, 2014

### Summary of Major Policy Decisions

In the 2013-14 school year, Achievement First Hartford Academy's Board of Directors continued to provide strong, stable governance for the school. The following summarizes the major policy decisions of the Board during the 2013-14 school year.

- The Board amended the fiscal policies related to authorized signatories to allow only school leadership (Principals and/or Deans) and Board members (Chairman and/or Treasurer) to sign disbursements and execute contracts in excess of \$10,000.
- The Board elected John Motley as Chairman of the Board.
- The Board re-elected Colleen Palmer as Secretary of the Board.
- The Board elected Lankford Wade and Nyema Pinkney to the Board.
- The Board appointed a "PGP Committee" (Professional Growth Plan) to oversee and review the performance appraisal of school leaders for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The Board voted to submit the Teacher Career Pathways plan as an Alternate Educator Evaluation Plan to the State of Connecticut Department of Education.
- The Board re-appointed CohnReznik as the independent auditors.

## Summary of Other Key Accomplishments

The 2013-14 school year saw continued growth and achievement at Achievement First Hartford Academy, and we are pleased to highlight the following successes.

- **Implemented a new, Common Core-aligned curriculum.** As described above in the “Best Practice” section, a unique partnership between teachers, Achievement First network staff, and national curriculum experts has created a complete set of K-12 curriculum resources designed by and for teachers to help scholars reach the very rigorous expectations of the Common Core State Standards.
- **Hartford Community Support:** We are proud to have the support of our parents and community members who spoke in support of replicating the successful AF Hartford Academy model in Hartford to the city’s Board of Education, making it possible for AF Summit Academy Middle School to open in August 2014. Parents and students in search of additional high quality public education choices let their voices be heard, helping to secure the approval of the Hartford Board of Education for a new middle school.
- **Collaboration with Hartford Public Schools** Achievement First partnered with Jumoke Academy to help the Hartford Public Schools secure a \$5 million grant to support collaboration between traditional district schools and charter schools. The grant will support the following activities:
  - A collaborative plan to develop high-impact school leaders building on Achievement First’s Residency Program and increasing Hartford Public Schools’ capacity to implement leadership development programs throughout the district.
  - An increase in the number of effective teachers by sharing the practices developed in the Achievement First Career Pathway program and the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching adopted by the district.
  - Improve student achievement at district and charter schools by implementing the Common Core based curriculum and assessments.
  - Expand on the Jumoke Academy’s capacity to successfully manage and transform low-performing schools.
- **Diversity and Inclusiveness:** We continue to improve on our efforts related to Diversity and Inclusiveness and named it as an organizational priority for the 2013-2014 year. Based on organizational health survey results, AF is gaining ground on improving engagement and retention of Black, Latino and multi-racial staff members relative to other AF staff members. Other important milestones in this aspect of our work:
  - Expanded the First Generation Initiative mentoring program, in which professionals from the community who are first generation college graduates and people of color engage with AF scholars to support their journey to and through college.
  - Launched Employee Resource Groups (called “Community Groups”) for People of Color and First Generation Staff Members and hosted 7 events with over 100 attendees.
  - Over 250 Achievement First staff members participated in a series professional development sessions for Diversity & Inclusiveness.