

## Achievement First – East New York

### Standard 1: High Academic Attainment and Improvement

**Renewal Expectation: Students' academic performance meets or exceeds local, state, and federal standards.**

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
1.F	Alternative/Internal Assessment(s)	Percent of Students Who Meet Standard at Levels to be Determined in Contract	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator
1.G	School-Specific Educational Goal(s)	Attainment of School-Specific Educational Goal(s)	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator

**Interim Expectation: School has systems in place to assess and track student learning, and makes organizational decisions based on student need.**

**Interim Indicators:**

What systems does the school have in place for administering interim assessments?

Check one (1)

School has comprehensive system in place for administering interim assessments	✓
School administers interim assessments in some grades/subjects	
School does not administer interim assessments	

**Comments:**

The school continues to administer and utilize multiple student performance assessments to assess students' progress toward ELA and math standards. This includes use of formal baseline metrics provided by the DRA and Terra Nova as well as data generated by running records and teacher observation of students. Formal interim assessments are used to measure students' progress in reading, grammar and mathematics every six weeks. This year, attention was given to the development of interim assessment to measure student progress in social studies. These teacher-developed assessments are intended to include an assessment of students' contextual knowledge and required content of the social studies expectations.

The school plans on further developing the interim assessments in social studies to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate and appropriately monitor student progress. A priority for the upcoming year will be to develop comparable assessments for measuring progress in science.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

## Achievement First – East New York

How is student progress tracked?

Check one (1)

School has comprehensive system in place for tracking data	✓
School tracks some assessment data	
School does not track assessments data	

**Comments:**

The School has a well developed system for collecting, warehousing, and analyzing interim student data. The information gathered from the interim assessments is recorded by each class teacher on a data analysis sheet which provides results analysis in individualized strands for each student, clearly reflecting individual strengths and areas for development. In addition to the class-level data, data is tracked centrally by the principal and by Achievement First Inc.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

Does interim assessment data inform instruction?

Check one (1)

Individual student data informs lesson plans and/or individual student learning consistently	✓
Individual student data informs lesson plans sometimes	
Individual student data does not inform lesson plans	

**Comments:**

The school continues to carefully monitor the student data that is generated and uses it to inform ongoing instruction. Specifically, after each round of interim assessments (every 6 weeks), teachers meet in grade level teams to analyze results from the item analysis. These structured meetings ensure the identification of concepts that have not been understood or require further reinforcement in either whole class settings, small group settings or through a school-wide focus.

In between the 6-week assessments, teacher generated data is used to adjust the pacing of lessons or to refine the flexible groups that allow for individualized and targeted instruction.

Particular attention is given to the performance and progress of students in greatest need of improvement. Students identified as having particular weaknesses in reading or math or other area are grouped into smaller classes, or provided with small group instruction focused on addressing a specific weakness. Finally, teachers meet in child study teams once a month where the special education teachers share their work with other staff so that progress is monitored and possible interventions are shared.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

## Achievement First – East New York

Do student performance data inform organizational use of resources?

Check one (1)

Student performance data informs how school allocates resources	✓
Student performance data does how school allocates some resources	
Student performance data does not inform how school allocates resources	

**Comments:**

The school continues to allocate and align resources based around high expectations of student performance and progress. The school is able to do this because progress is carefully monitored through the ongoing collection of data. Since much of the data on academic progress is broken down into strands reflective of the entire curriculum, the school can do detailed analysis of individual achievement and it be reflective about school-wide performance. The needs revealed by data influence decisions on staffing and scheduling. Changes are implemented as necessary to support ongoing progress. Examples of such modifications include: the adjustment of class groupings, the changing of teaching assignments for a small group, and additional tutoring after school or on Saturday.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

## Achievement First – East New York

### Standard 2: Responsive Educational Program and Environment

**Renewal Expectation: A quality educational program enables all students to achieve academically and socially.**

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
2.A	Quality Instruction	Curriculum Aligned with State Standards	The school implements a quality curriculum that prepares students to meet State performance standards ✓	The school has a curriculum that generally aligns with State standards	The school lacks a comprehensive, cohesive curriculum
<p><b>Comments:</b> The school's instruction is aligned to State and City standards and is characterized by high expectations and student engagement. The pace and rigor of the instruction is carefully monitored through the ongoing assessment of student progress as described previously.</p> <p>The school recognizes that an area for further development is the differentiation of instruction within the class groupings that are established. Despite the amount of individualized data on student's strengths and weaknesses, efforts are still underway to ensure that instructional methods result in success for individual students given their specific, identified needs.</p> <p>Finally, provision for physical education and art has been limited and needs to be further enhanced.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> <i>All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.</i></p>					

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
2.B	Orderly Environment	Discipline Practices	The school has documented discipline policies and procedures that are consistently applied and lead to an environment conducive to learning ✓	The school has documented discipline policies and procedures that are generally applied	The school lacks discipline policies and procedures and/or discipline policies and procedures are inconsistently applied that create an environment not conducive to learning
<p><b>Comments:</b> The School has documented discipline policies and procedures that are consistently applied and lead to an environment conducive to learning. An observable shift has been made to use motivational tools and activities to reinforce positive behaviors. Furthermore, family chats for all new students ensure that students and families buy into the rigorous expectations for student achievement and behavior from the beginning. It is recognized that the behavioral expectations need to be reinforced for returning students and families as well. Grade level teams meet regularly and as part of the Child study team to ensure that individual and ongoing student behavior concerns are addressed regularly and consistently by all staff. The school recognizes the need to further engage parents as thought partners in addressing behavioral issues. The school also recognizes the need to find ways to support students with extreme emotional and behavioral issues including more support services.</p>					

### Achievement First – East New York

The school had approximately 10 suspensions to date including 2 long-term suspensions. The available documentation indicated that these actions were consistent with the discipline policy and that appropriate protocols were followed.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

<b>2.D</b>	<b>Adherence to Contract Terms</b>	Legal, Regulatory, and Contract Compliance	The school complies with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and contract terms including, but not limited to, the NY Charter Schools Act, Freedom of Information Law, and Open Meetings Law, and federal IDEA and FERPA. ✓	The school is generally in compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and contract terms. In case of non-compliance, appropriate action is taken to the school into compliance.	The school consistently struggles to comply with applicable laws, rules, regulations and/or contract terms and takes insufficient action to bring the school into compliance.
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<b>2.E</b>	<b>School-Specific Non-Academic Goals</b>	Attainment of School-Specific Non- Academic Goal(s)	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator	To be determined for each Indicator
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**Comments:**

These measures will be evaluated upon receipt of the School's Annual Report for 2006-07 SY.

### Standard 3: Responsible School Leadership and Management

**Renewal Expectation: Leadership furthers the school's mission, program and goals and is strategic to ensure adequacy, alignment and coherence of actions.**

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
<b>3.A</b>	<b>Leadership Quality</b>	Leadership Expertise	Leadership demonstrates exceptional education and business expertise	Leadership demonstrates sufficient education and business expertise and turnover has been stable	Leadership demonstrates insufficient education and business expertise and/or turnover has been damaging to the school
		Leadership Retention	Leadership turnover has been manageable and appropriate	Leadership turnover has been stable	Leadership turnover has been damaging to the school

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		Leadership Execution	Leadership has created and makes continuous progress in strengthening a professional environment for quality teaching and learning.	Leadership is making significant progress in creating and promoting a professional environment for quality teaching and learning.	Leadership has not created a professional environment for quality teaching and learning.
<b>3.C</b>	<b>Strategic Vision</b>	Continuous Improvement Process	The school employs processes for continuous improvement leading to positive enhancements in the school's education program over time.	The school employs processes for continuous improvement leading to some mid-course corrections when needed.	There is a lack of engagement in the improvement process and/or responding to problems that negatively impact the quality of the education program.

**Interim Expectation: Leadership has systems and structures in place to create a professional, effective, learning organization**

**Interim Indicators:**

Does Leadership create opportunities for staff to reflect on practice and collaborate?		Check one (1)
Staff have opportunities to reflect on practice and collaborate frequently		✓
Staff have some opportunities to reflect on practice and collaborate		
Staff do not have opportunities to reflect on practice and collaborate		

**Comments:**  
 Teachers meet regularly for formal and informal discussions about student instruction, individualized student data and identified school-wide needs. Teachers have opportunities to collaborate across grade levels and within grade level teams and feel supported by the administration to present new ideas and propose modifications to the curriculum, discipline or schedule.

Despite the change in leadership at the end of the first year, the transition to the new instructional leader proved smooth for staff and students. Teachers continue to feel that they are empowered and are an integral part of the school's development.

**NOTE:**  
*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

### Achievement First – East New York

Are there staff evaluations in place?

Check one (1)

All staff are evaluated yearly	✓
Most staff are evaluated yearly	
Staff are not evaluated yearly	

**Comments:**

Teachers are individually accountable for improving instruction and student outcomes and are supported by the school's data recording systems. The school leader spends time in classrooms daily, providing ongoing, informal feedback. In addition, there are formal observations two times per year including a full day observation that provides targeted feedback and recommendations on all parts of the teacher's instructional day.

Principals are evaluated yearly by Achievement First, as per the charter management agreement. AF makes a recommendation to the Board regarding Principal contract renewal. The Board evaluates the principal evaluation process as negotiated in the charter management agreement which includes 360 degree feedback.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

What structures does the school have in place for developing staff professionally?

Check one (1)

School has a comprehensive professional development structure in place	✓
School has some professional development for staff	
School has no professional development for staff	

**Comments:**

The school has continued to utilize Fridays for weekly professional development. It is a half day for students and teachers meet in grade level or content area teams. Each teacher also has a professional growth plan which is reviewed at the end of the year.

The school recognizes the need to further differentiate professional development to ensure that teachers with differing levels of expertise and/or needs are receiving targeted and appropriate support. Toward that end, teachers with particular expertise are playing a larger role in the planning and delivery of professional development/learning sessions.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

## Achievement First – East New York

### Standard 4: Financial Sustainability, Controls & Effective Board Governance/Oversight

**Renewal Expectation: The school is a sustainable organization and capable of achieving long-term success.**

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
3.B	Board Stability	Board Size/Structure and Functions as Stipulated by Contract	Board membership is complete and contributes a broad skill set	Board membership has some unanticipated turnover and/or is reasonably balanced in expertise	Board membership is incomplete and/or not well balanced in expertise

Is the Board size, structure and composition appropriate?

Check one (1)

Board membership is complete and contributes a broad skill set	√
Board membership has some unanticipated turnover and/or is reasonably balanced in expertise	
Board membership is incomplete and/or not well balanced in expertise	

**Comments:** Achievement First East New York Charter School's ("AF ENY") Board is appropriate in size, skills and expertise. The Board is well-equipped with finance, community leadership, former school staff, parent, educator, and legal expertise to respond to upcoming challenges.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

Has the Board adopted a whistleblower policy? If yes, has the school staff received a copy of the policy?

Check one (1)

Board has adopted and communicated the whistleblower policy to staff members	
Board has adopted a policy but not communicated it to staff members	√
Board has not adopted a whistleblower policy at this time	

**Comments:** It is recommended that the school communicate its whistleblower policy to all school staff and post it (as appropriate) where visible.

Has the Board provided effective oversight in all aspects of school? i.e., Operations, Fiscal Discipline, Academic Performance, Hiring (as appropriate), etc.

Check one (1)

Board has provided effective oversight in all aspects of school	√
Board has provided oversight in some but not all aspects of the school	
Board oversight has been negligent towards the school	

**Comments:** AF ENY Board-of-trustees has been presented with sufficient financial, educational data and other relevant information during Board meetings to formulate informed decisions and work collaboratively towards school's stated mission. Board approved budget is consistently monitored and compared to year-to-date expenses, variances analyzed and justifications provided by school staff as well as the partner organization, where applicable. The budget preparation process is collaborative and involves Board members, teacher inputs, school leader, business manager and other significant actors. Board has been able to provide effective oversight in all aspects of school operations.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

### Achievement First – East New York

Has the Board experienced internal/external conflicts? Were issues resolved as a team or did any issue threaten the smooth operation of the school?

Check one (1)

Board conflicts (if any) were resolved in timely fashion and had no effect on school operation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board conflicts were resolved with minor disruptions in school operation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board conflicts caused regular disruptions in school operation	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:** *Not Applicable.*

Does the Board evaluate partner organization at least once a year? Has the agreement/contract been amended or renegotiated since its inception? If yes, was OPD notified with a copy of the new agreement?

Check one (1)

Board evaluates partner org. revises agreement as needed & files new copy with OPD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Board is in process of developing a process to evaluate partner org.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board doesn't evaluate partner org. and/ or Board has no formal agreement in place	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:** Although Board's charter management committee is engaged in evaluating partner organization's (Achievement First) performance, Board may assume more direct approach to evaluating partner organization's performance on all aspects as agreed upon in the partnership agreement. As a reminder, please remember to revise agreements (service cuts, etc....), as appropriate.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

Is the Board responsive to grievances or concerns brought by parents and school staff?

Check one (1)

Board has been very responsive to both parents and school staff concerns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Board has been somewhat responsive to grievances and concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>
Board has not been responsive to grievances and concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comments:** AF ENY's Board of trustees has been very responsive to parents' and staff concerns. They were addressed promptly and most complaints did not rise to the Board level. School leadership and the Board of trustees is accessible to parents and school staff as needed.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

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	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
4.B	Financial Compliance	Financial Audit Findings	Unqualified opinion and no findings	Unqualified opinion and only minor finding(s)	Significant findings, on-going Concern and/or qualified opinion

**Interim Expectation: School has systems in place to adequately and accurately manage its financial operations and adequately meet projected fundraising needs.**

**Interim Indicators:**

Does the school have a comprehensive financial control system (procurement, check signing, budget amendment, etc..) in place?

Check one (1)

Board has a comprehensive financial control system in place	
Board has some financial controls in place	√
Board has underdeveloped financial controls in place	

**Comments:** In general, AF ENY has one of the most comprehensive policy procedure manuals and dedicated fiscal staff. The school may consider having bidding procedures tied to a particular dollar amount as agreed upon by the Board of trustees. The school is recommended to have a viable inventory policy that accounts for all fixed assets acquired by Federal, State, Local or private funds and to conduct an inventory at least once a year. Lastly, the school is advised to have signatures (principal, etc..) validating bank reconciliations.

A sampling of invoices, purchase orders, and proof of payment was conducted during the site visit. The school is recommended to stamp all invoices PAID once a payment has been made against a specific invoice. Some invoices reflected sales tax payments to different vendors although the school enjoys a tax-exempt status. The school is recommended to avoid paying any sales tax and use its tax-exempt form wherever possible while conducting school business. It's important to note that the school claimed back its paid sales taxes from the IRS at the end of year and we were presented with a copy of the check at the visit.

In future, the school is advised to keep all documentation related to invoices and packing slips indicating goods received with signatures. One invoice was partial (one detail was missing) and another one had no packing slip attached.

Besides Approved Operating Expense (AOE) per pupil funding, the school also receives Other Than Personnel Services (OTPS) grants from Department of Youth & Community Development ("DYCD"). School is recommended to have bids for DYCD related purchases in future or a written explanation of why bids were not obtained. School provided invoices of all DYCD related purchases at the site visit.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

## Achievement First – East New York

Does the school practice segregation of duties to prevent and detect fraud?

Check one (1)

School has a comprehensive internal control system in place to detect/prevent fraud	√
School has a good internal control and fraud detection system in place	
School has an underdeveloped internal control system for fraud detection	

**Comments:** AF ENY has strong mechanisms to segregate duties that deter financial fraud. No employee of the school is allowed to complete all aspects of a financial transaction (i.e., purchase orders, placing orders, receiving goods, receiving invoice, paying invoice, etc...) and recording of expenses.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

Is requisition approval, certification of funds and placing of orders for goods consistent with financial procedures adopted by the school?

Check one (1)

School is following established financial procedures	√
Generally, School is following established financial procedures	
School is not following established financial procedures	

**Comments:** Based on examined documentation and interviews during the school visit, AF ENY is following its written financial policies for requisition approval, certification of funds and placing of goods and services. Appropriate signatures and approvals at correct levels were identified on documentation during inspection.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

Are employees familiar with school's established financial procedures?

Check one (1)

School's employees are very familiar with established financial procedures	√
School's employees have a general sense of the established financial procedures	
School's employees are not familiar with the established financial procedures	

**Comments:** AF ENY's employees are extremely well trained in school's policies and understand established financial guidelines and procedures. This was measured by the triangulated process: interviewing, checking documentation to match what was conveyed during interviewing, and comparing the interview with the written policy manual.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

### Achievement First – East New York

Is the school in good fiscal condition to sustain itself?

Check one (1)

School is in excellent financial condition with superior ability to sustain itself	√
School is in good financial condition with minor concerns	
School has major financial concerns that threaten its ability to sustain itself	

**Comments:** Based on AF ENY's financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2006, AF ENY is in excellent financial condition. The school spent over 80% of its funds on educational programs and less than 20% on administrative expenses. The school continues to enjoy a healthy financial outlook with a strong ability to meet its short term financial obligations with minimal debt/liability on its books.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*

### Standard 5: Strong Culture and Supportive Relationships

**Renewal Expectation:** There is high social trust within the school community and a culture of excellence.

	Indicator	Measurement	High Performance	Middle Performance	Low Performance
<b>5.B</b>	<b>Community Investment in School</b>	Community Partnership Outcomes	The school maintains meaningful relationships with community partners that enhance the academic and social growth of the school's students.	The school has made progress in engaging community partners in the academic and social growth of the school's students.	The school has failed to engage community partners in the academic and social growth of the school's students.

**Interim Expectation:** School has mechanism (s) for incorporating parents and other community partners in the school

**Interim Indicators:**

### Achievement First – East New York

What structure does the school have in place for incorporating parents and other community partners in the school?

Check one (1)

School has multiple structures in place for incorporating parents and other community partners in the school	√
School has a structure in place for incorporating parents and other community partners in the school	
School has no structures in place for incorporating parents and other community partners in the school	

**Comments:** The school continues to enjoy excellence in this category and has several avenues to formulate parental input into the program. AF ENY has various planned parent awareness events and meeting opportunities in place to encourage continued parent and community participation. The school also communicates in languages (Spanish, etc...) other than English to accommodate bi-lingual parents and changing demographic trends of the neighborhood.

Parents hold strongly positive opinions of AF ENY. They praised the user friendly progress reports, teachers' willingness to communicate (email, cell phone, etc..) and provide feedback as needed. They mentioned their kids being independent in their daily homework and described the school as a place where learning continues to be fun for their kids.

Parents were aware of the Board meetings and their rights (appeals process) as parents at the school. They felt good at Board meetings as the Board was very accommodating and responsive to parents' needs and to hearing parental input.

**NOTE:**

*All issues raised in previous oversight report in this category were addressed by the school.*