



Diversity & Inclusiveness



Achievement First believes that closing the achievement gap is an economic and moral imperative. It is the civil rights issue of our time. We believe that all children, regardless of race or economic status, can succeed if they have access to a great education. Our mission is to provide all of our scholars with the academic and character skills they need to graduate from top colleges, to succeed in a competitive world and to serve as the next generation of leaders for our communities. In carrying out our mission, Achievement First must ensure that our staff is composed of individuals who, through their talent, commitment and understanding of both scholar needs and effective teaching can ensure all of our scholars succeed in accomplishing these big dreams. Diversity and inclusiveness are critical to this mission in two ways.

We seek to create a diverse and inclusive environment for all staff members of all backgrounds.

Like any world class organization, we need to provide a welcoming, supportive and inclusive environment so that we can attract and retain talented people of any background. We strive to be a welcoming, supportive and rewarding place to work regardless of a staff member's race, religion, socioeconomic status, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, marital status, veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or sex. We strive to model the increasingly diverse, global community for which we are preparing our scholars.

We place a special emphasis on recruiting and retaining talented staff members who share racial and/or socioeconomic backgrounds with our scholars because we believe Black and Latino staff members and/or staff members who were the first in their families to graduate from college can be powerful role models for our scholars. They can also bring an important perspective that contributes to the positive development of our scholars and strength of our team. As we do this important work with primarily low-income scholars of color, it is absolutely critical that we have a diverse team that challenges each other in ensuring we are doing everything we need to do—and doing it in the right way—to ensure we are effectively engaging our families and preparing our scholars to be successful in life.

We seek to make decisions and approach our work in a manner that values diversity and inclusiveness and makes it possible for us to achieve our mission.

We need to support all members of the AF “Team & Family” — regardless of background—in developing the understanding, skills and self-awareness they need to be successful in working with our scholars, families and communities. We know that there are many talented staff members at AF who do not share the backgrounds of our scholars, and yet we all can and must be effective in supporting our scholars’ and schools’ development. We also recognize that staff who share similar backgrounds as many of our scholars and staff from quite different backgrounds both can and should continue to actively build their skills in working with scholars and families in the communities we serve. It is important that our scholars see, know and experience caring people from a variety of backgrounds, and we believe there is a sensitivity, understanding and skill that can be developed over time to ensure success working in and with diverse people and communities.

Furthermore, we believe it is the responsibility of each person at Achievement First to make decisions and complete their work with sensitivity to the needs and backgrounds of our scholars and families. We will regularly review our policies and practices with a broad group of Achievement First stakeholders to ensure our schools and Network Support teams are delivering on the promise of equal educational opportunity.

