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## **ACHIEVEMENT FIRST SCHOOLS OUTPERFORM NEW YORK CITY BY 9 PERCENTAGE POINTS ON 2013 NEW YORK STATE TEST**

*High-Performing Public Charter School Network Focuses on Increasing Rigor, Embracing Common Core*

August 9, 2013 – BROOKLYN, N.Y. – Achievement First, a high-performing network of 25 non-profit, college-preparatory public charter schools in Connecticut, New York and Rhode Island, today announced its commitment to further increase the rigor of its curriculum after learning the results of the 2013 New York State Test. The first year of Common Core-aligned assessments set a new benchmark and impacted scores throughout the state, including at Achievement First.

Across our schools, proficiency rates were lower than the 2012 assessments by an average of 30 percentage points in ELA and 41 percentage points in math. Achievement First students achieved an average of 46 percent proficiency in math and 28 percent proficiency in ELA, compared with New York City proficiency rates of 30 percent in math and 26 percent in ELA.

“Achievement First fully embraces the Common Core, and we applaud the state for holding our students to more rigorous, college-ready expectations,” said Doug McCurry, co-CEO and superintendent. “The new test introduces even higher standards, and as a result, overall scores decreased significantly. We know there is more we must do to prepare our students for success in college. We are committed to further increase the rigor of our curriculum to ensure that our students achieve true college readiness as outlined by the Common Core.”

The new Common Core-aligned assessments are an incredibly important step toward improving education for all students. The Common Core focuses on critical thinking, aligns a K-12 curriculum to college readiness standards and focuses on fewer standards in greater depth. We believe that the advent of the Common Core—and the definition of proficiency as true college readiness—is the most exciting challenge in American education, and we will work tirelessly to make sure that all of our students reach this higher bar.

For a full list of scores, visit <http://www.nysesd.gov/>.

### **ABOUT ACHIEVEMENT FIRST**

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, currently operates 14 public charter schools in Brooklyn. The mission of Achievement First is to close the achievement gap and deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all children, regardless of race, economic status or zip code. With its college-preparatory focus, the Achievement First approach is attaining breakthrough academic gains throughout its network of 25 public charter schools. In the 2013-14 academic year, Achievement First will educate more than 8,100 students in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods in New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island.



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Achievement First's approach to teaching and learning enables every student to succeed at the highest levels. This involves:

- Providing students with more time on task and intense intervention when they are struggling so that no child falls through the cracks;
- Recruiting and developing successful teachers and school leaders and empowering them to use student data to strategically drive instruction;
- Creating a joyful school culture where it is “cool to be smart” that emphasizes character education and focuses students on college.

For more information, please visit <http://www.AchievementFirst.org>.

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