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ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ANNOUNCES FIRST GROUP OF STAGE FOUR DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS RECOGNIZED THROUGH AF'S TEACHER CAREER PATHWAY

*Stage Four Distinguished Teachers Earn
Increased Professional Development, Compensation and Recognition*

March 11, 2013 – NEW HAVEN, CONN. – Achievement First, a high-performing network of 22 non-profit, college-preparatory public charter schools in Connecticut, New York and Rhode Island, today announced the first Achievement First team members to be recognized as stage four distinguished teachers. The 51 teachers met or exceeded performance levels described in Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway, a multi-input approach to evaluation and recognition that offers professional development and increased compensation to teachers as they progress through five career stages: from stage one intern to stage five master teacher. These 51 teachers from across the Achievement First network represent 12 grades and areas of expertise including ELA, math, science, history, special education and the arts.

Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway is in its first year of full-scale implementation across the Achievement First network. Stage four distinguished teachers will receive increased growth opportunities—including a self-directed professional development budget, the opportunity to participate in a distinguished teacher cohort, and differentiated learning experiences—as well as increased compensation and network-wide recognition. Advancement through each stage of Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway is based on clear criteria defined by the Teaching Excellence Framework, an internally developed rubric that measures both student outcomes and teacher inputs. Stage four distinguished teachers were selected based on annual effectiveness, measured by frequent lesson observations, impact on student academic growth, and surveys from students, parents, peers and school leaders. The Achievement First Teacher Career Pathway is funded by grants from the federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway was designed to provide a meaningful and rewarding career path for teachers. Years before the national debate about teacher evaluation began, we dove into the question of how to measure something as complex and important as great teaching," said Achievement First Co-CEO and Superintendent Doug McCurry. "While we are fortunate to have many talented teachers, our 51 stage four distinguished teachers were able to shine in all areas of the Teaching Excellence Framework—student achievement, student character development, quality of instruction and contributions to team achievement. Through their example, we will all continue to grow and be ever more effective at delivering on the big promise we have made to our students and families."

To learn more about Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway or to speak with a distinguished teacher, contact Amanda Pinto at amandapinto@achievement.org.

You may also visit PBS NewsHour for background on Achievement First's Teacher Career Pathway: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/american-graduate/jan-june13/amergrad_02-04.html

About Achievement First

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, currently operates 22 public charter schools in Brooklyn and Connecticut, with an additional school opening in Rhode Island in August 2013. 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 22 public charter schools. In the 2012-13 academic year, Achievement First is educating more than 7,000 students in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods in Connecticut and New York (with Rhode Island opening in August 2013).

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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