

## Director of High School Seminar Partnerships

**Start Date:** July 2018  
**Team:** Team Teaching and Learning  
**Location:** Brooklyn, NY or New Haven, CT or Hartford, CT

### About Achievement First:

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 charter school management organization, operates 34 public charter schools in Brooklyn, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The mission of Achievement First is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all children, regardless of race or economic status. Achievement First currently educates more than 12,600 students in historically underserved neighborhoods, with over 90% of our students identifying as Black and Latino. With its college-preparatory focus, the Achievement First approach is attaining breakthrough academic gains throughout the network. Beyond our students and schools, Achievement First is an engaged and prominent partner in the larger conversation about how to improve public education and student achievement in our country.

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

- 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;
- Providing students with more time on task and intense intervention when they are struggling so that no child falls through the cracks.

For more information about Achievement First's mission, approach, schools and team, please visit our website at [www.achievementfirst.org](http://www.achievementfirst.org).

### Summary

The Director of High School Seminar Partnerships is an integral part of the high school writing team. This position will partner with the writing curriculum team, school leaders and teachers, and external partners to craft and drive the vision behind an exemplary experiential learning pilot program for a new ninth grade seminar course. This new course is an exciting opportunity to leverage the CollegeBoard's new AP Seminar course - the first AP course to integrate process-based writing, group presentations, and high levels of scholar independence - to make learning come alive for scholars through both in-classroom and in-the-field experiences. As an introductory course for the AP Seminar course and to high school more broadly, the new ninth grade course is designed to cultivate both the academic skills and habits our scholars need to persist and the interests and passions that will help them feel excited to be part of the world of thinking, analysis, and argumentation. This position will focus on developing the in-the-field learning experiences that are integral to the course curriculum, where scholars engage in authentic tasks with feedback from professionals in the field.

The pilot version of this ninth grade course will launch in 2018-19 at one of Achievement First's high schools. This position offers the opportunity to be at the forefront of this pioneering instructional work at one of the nation's top charter school networks.

### Responsibilities of the Director of Seminar Partnerships Include but Are Not Limited to:

- **Identify, Cultivate, and Manage Long-term Relationships with Partner Organizations and Individuals, partnering with them for four key purposes:**

- Content Expertise: Consulting partners in constructing curriculum modules to ensure rigorous experience that captures the full depth and range of perspectives and tensions that comprise the core of contemporary issues.
- Guest Speakers: Bringing guest speakers to our classrooms every 1-2 weeks throughout the quarter to give scholars an opportunity to engage with course content through a variety of perspectives.
- Site Visits/Field Lessons: Multiple times a semester, students would leave the school site and learn “on the ground,” gaining new information and perspectives to enhance their ability to develop rigorous arguments and claims.
- Panel Presentations: The curriculum will focus on one contemporary issue per quarter and each quarter will culminate in team presentations where scholars present their research findings and arguments to a panel comprised of Achievement First teachers and leaders as well as external partners who can give voice to authentic expectations from the field.
- **Develop and Oversee Field Learning Experiences**
  - Using principles of experiential learning, design the aims, schedule, and operational plan for each “in-the-field” learning experience.
  - Oversee implementation of field learning experiences, working closely with teachers at each school piloting the course.
- **Design and Implement a Large-Scale Project**
  - Create a detailed project plan and manage the roll-out of this new initiative.
  - Refine and guide the strategy through cross-team collaboration, key stakeholder input and a change management process.
  - Manage data collection and debrief processes to ensure continual improvement.
- **Liaise Between Schools, the Writing Curriculum Team, and External Partners**
  - Work with the writing curriculum team to understand instructional aims of the learning experiences and integrate the learning experiences into the seminar course curriculum.
  - Serve as the primary point person for partner organizations, scheduling and facilitating all interactions needed to develop and build effective learning experiences.
  - Communicate learning experience logistics to schools, and gather feedback from school teams.

### Skills and Characteristics

- Knowledge of and a passion for project-based and experiential learning
- The ability to communicate effectively between and understand the needs of different constituencies
- The ability to see multiple projects with many moving parts through from beginning to end, fully owning a scope of work that includes setting project vision *and* executing operational details
- Exceptional collaboration, strategic thinking, and influencing skills
- The ability to work autonomously as well as take direction as needed
- Willingness to do “whatever it takes” and strong team player
- Ability to embrace change and be flexible and adaptive
- Desire for continuous improvement and feedback
- An acute attention to detail and excellent organizational skills
- Solid technical skills and experience with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher and with Adobe Acrobat
- Preferred: Knowledge of schools and curriculum writing
- Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model
- Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-my-sleeves” attitude

### **Educational Background and Work Experience**

- A bachelor's degree
- 4+ years of experience in education and/or managing projects
- A proven, multi-year track record of strong project or program design, management, and implementation
- We would prefer a candidate with a track record of developing and managing ongoing partnerships and relationships with community-based organizations.
- We would prefer a candidate with experience working in a school setting leading work with multiple teachers, and/or with experience in an organization serving primarily low-income students.

Some weekend/evening work and travel within New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are required.

### **Compensation**

Salary for this position is competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Achievement First offers a comprehensive benefits package.

### **To Apply**

Email a cover letter and resume to:

Gillette Eckler

[gilletteeckler@achievementfirst.org](mailto:gilletteeckler@achievementfirst.org)

In your cover letter please respond to the following:

- Why do you want to work at Achievement First?
- Why is this position of specific interest to you?
- How have your experiences and education prepared you for the demanding work, flexibility, and “whatever it takes” attitude that working with the team of a growing non-profit will require?
- Please elaborate on how the skills you have built and demonstrated would contribute to your work in this role.

Please visit the Achievement First careers site at <http://www.achievementfirst.org/careers/>. Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer and an organization that values diversity. People from all diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Spanish language proficiency is a plus. You can learn more about diversity at Achievement First here: <http://www.achievementfirst.org/about-us/diversity/>.