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**ACHIEVEMENT FIRST ANNOUNCES DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS
RECOGNIZED THROUGH ITS TEACHER CAREER PATHWAY**

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

MARCH 3, 2014 – NEW HAVEN, CONN. – Achievement First, a high-performing network of 25 non-profit, college-prep, K-12 public charter schools in Connecticut, New York and Rhode Island, today announced the newest Achievement First team members to be recognized as “distinguished teachers.” These 14 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 “teacher-in-residence” to stage five “master teacher.” Our distinguished teachers have reached the fourth career stage.

This exemplary group of teachers is the second distinguished teacher cohort recognized by Achievement First; the inaugural cohort was named in March 2013. These 14 teachers, who represent elementary, middle and high school, and areas of expertise including ELA, math, science, history and the arts, bring our total distinguished teacher cohort to 59 members. This cohort meets regularly for advanced professional development, and members share insights that help inform the direction of teaching and learning across our 25 high-performing public charter schools.

Our distinguished teachers have set themselves apart in all areas of the Teaching Excellence Framework—student achievement, student character development, quality of instruction and core values/contributions to team. Distinguished teachers will receive increased growth opportunities including a self-directed professional development budget, the opportunity to participate in the distinguished teacher cohort and differentiated learning experiences—as well as increased compensation and network-wide recognition.

Advancement through each career 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. Distinguished teachers were identified based on annual effectiveness, measured by frequent lesson observations, impact on student achievement growth, and surveys from students, families, 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.

“Through Achievement First’s Teacher Career Pathway, we continue to provide a meaningful and rewarding career path for teachers within the classroom, where they make an outstanding impact on our students and school communities. Our new distinguished teachers inspire us all to better push toward excellence every day,” said Achievement First Co-CEO and Superintendent Doug McCurry. “By hearing their insights and following the example they set, we will all continue to grow and be ever more effective at delivering on the big promises 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@achievementfirst.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 25 K-12 public charter schools in Brooklyn, Connecticut and Rhode Island. 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 is educating more than 8,100 students in historically low-performing and underserved neighborhoods.

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 www.AchievementFirst.org