

Controller – Team Finance

Start Date: Immediately
Team: Team Finance
Location: New Haven, CT or Brooklyn, NY

About Achievement First

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 charter school management organization, operates over 30 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.

Summary

Reporting directly to the CFO, the primary function of the Controller is to lead a team of financial professionals and assume responsibility for the accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, fiscal and regulatory compliance, treasury, audit management, and risk management functions of our organization. The Controller will ensure that AF has the systems and policies in place to realize effective program implementation and flawless audit results.

The finance team is structured in three groups – accounting, financial operations and budgeting, forecasting and grants management. The Controller will manage the accounting and financial operations teams and work closely with other team leaders at AF and school-based Directors of Operations.

The Controller will work closely with the CFO and the senior finance leadership team at AF, and be involved in presentations to internal and external stakeholders such as the boards of directors and their finance/audit committees, and lenders. This role is critical to the sustainable growth of AF as we continue open more schools and serve more children in our five-city footprint.

Responsibilities of the Controller will include but are not limited to:

Management

- Supervise the personnel and functions of the accounting team, including the annual goal-setting and performance management processes and systems.
- Oversee the accounting operations of school entities as well as the Network Support organization, especially their control systems, transaction-processing operations, policies and procedures.
- Leverage strengths of the current team members; help to clarify roles and responsibilities and develop and implement professional development, of both technical and “soft” skills, in order to maximize and reach optimal individual and organizational goals
- Maintain documented accounting policies and procedures for the entire network of AF and schools and develop the means to ensure compliance
- Oversee all facets of our financial activity subject to annual independent audit with the goal to achieve unmodified opinions without findings

Accounting Leadership

- Oversee the accounting team to ensure the proper execution of all accounting systems and functions to ensure fidelity of data and timely periodic internal and external reporting as the organization continues to grow
 - Oversee all accounts, ledgers, and reporting systems ensuring compliance with GAAP and regulatory requirements
 - Oversee all program and grants accounting; ensure that expenditures are consistently aligned with grant and program budgets throughout the grant/fund period
- Oversee a timely monthly and annual close process
- Maintain reporting calendar and ensure that reporting deadlines are reviewed and met by the accounting team.
- Ensure that monthly account reconciliations and analysis are completed, including but not limited to:
 - Balance sheet account reconciliations
 - Grant and revenue management
 - Ensure that accounts payable are paid in a timely manner
 - Ensure that accounts receivable are collected promptly
 - Ensure that required debt and lease payments are made on a timely basis
- Maintain the chart of accounts and maintain an orderly electronic accounting and compliance document retention system
- Consistent with the organizational priorities, develop, analyze, and make recommendations relating to accounting and financial systems to ensure effective and efficient financial operations
- Oversee all program and grants accounting; ensure that expenditures are consistently aligned with grant and program budgets throughout the grant/fund period
- Maintain continuous lines of communication and keep CFO informed of all accounting issues.

Financial Operations

- Ensure the execution of accurate and timely payrolls
- Oversee the accounts payable and payments systems, and work with existing team to develop a purchasing program
- Work closely with AF Talent Operations team on annual insurance renewals (health, dental, and property and casualty)

- Oversee the effective maintenance and maximize usage of systems: Sage MIP/Abila, Concur, ADP

Reporting

- Maintain reporting calendar and ensure that local, state and federal government reports and tax filings are reviewed and met by the accounting and financial operations teams.
- Analyze financial data and present financial reports in an accurate and timely manner, clearly communicate monthly and annual financial statements; monitor progress and changes and keep CFO abreast of the financial status and cash flow projections
- Oversee cash flow reporting and forecasting and development and oversee cash management solutions at all entities in the network
- Develop and maintain dashboard of key performance indicators of accounting team

Audit Management and Fiscal Compliance

- Manage and coordinate the provision of work papers and other information requested by independent external auditors for the seven annual audits of that comprise the AF CMO Network and schools
- Manage and coordinate the provision of information required for auditors to perform annual AUP, where required
- Manage and coordinate the provision of information required so tax return preparers may prepare the annual IRS Form 990 information returns
- Manage and coordinate the preparation of other tax returns, such as IRS Form 720 for the health reimbursement accounts
- Monitor relevant open regulatory issues that might impact our organizations

Skills and Characteristics

- Demonstrated ability to lead a large team of accounting professionals
- Excellent critical-thinking skills
- Strong, team player with customer service and solutions orientation
- Self-starter who uses strong communication skills to work through challenges independently
- Ability to build trusting relationships with various stakeholders
- Strong understanding of GAAP and those standards and principles unique to not-for-profit organizations
- Exceptional Excel, financial modeling, and data management skills
- Demonstrated ability to navigate complex and first-time accounting transactions, review and site authoritative literature
- Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model

Educational Background and Work Experience

- Four-year college degree – preferably in accounting or finance (Certified Public Accountant and/or relevant Master’s Degree would be a plus)
- At least 9 years of relevant accounting experience

Occasional weekend or evening work and some travel to our other offices and schools in New Haven, Brooklyn, Stamford, Bridgeport, Hartford, and Providence required.

Compensation

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

To Apply

Send resume and cover letter to:

Tina DuBois
Financial Operations Associate, Team Finance
tinadubois@achievementfirst.org

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/>.