

Advocacy Associate – Brooklyn, NY

Start Date: July 1, 2019
Team: External Relations
Location: Brooklyn, New York

About Achievement First:

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 charter school management organization, operates 36 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 of America's children. We know that every child—regardless of race, zip code, or economic status—deserves access to great schools. Achievement First currently educates more than 13,300 students in historically underserved neighborhoods, with over 90% of our students identifying as Black or Latinx. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary

The Achievement First (AF) Advocacy Associate is responsible for executing AF's work to increase family engagement, internal and external advocacy, and community relations. The position will include significant time interacting with school and Network staff, families, AF leadership, and external partners to build positive and productive relationships between AF and local/state elected officials, Community Education Councils, Community Boards, and local community partners through active and engaged parents. The Advocacy Associate will report to the Director of NY External Relations.

Responsibilities of the Advocacy Associate will include but are not limited to:

Advocacy (~90%) - Help advance AF's policy and budgetary priorities, work in concert with like-minded partners, and support our schools in building stronger cultures of advocacy so that our scholars and schools continue to secure the freedom, funding, and facilities they need to grow and succeed.

- **Elected/Local Leader Engagement:** Plan and execute AF's elected official outreach program.
 - Keep elected/local leaders informed of important news, highlights and happenings about our schools and network on a regular basis to strengthen our external narrative.
 - Cultivate relationships with elected/local leaders who represent each AF school and ensure they are familiar with and knowledgeable about the schools in their neighborhoods through regular school visits/tours, meetings with parents, alumni, and staff, and other regular communications including letter writing campaigns, phone calls, and other touch points.
- **Partnerships & Community Engagement:** Collaborate across the charter school sector with other networks, like-minded advocacy partners and organizations on advocacy-related initiatives.
 - Build mutually beneficial partnerships and attend community meetings in Brooklyn along with school-based staff and parents including Community Education Council meetings, Community Boards, etc.
 - Plan and execute voter registration efforts at the school level for families, staff, and high school seniors.
 - Liaise with public charter schools and advocacy partner organizations (KIPP, Uncommon, NYC Charter Center, Northeast Charter School Association) to coordinate advocacy efforts.

- Coordinate AF’s participation in sector-wide advocacy actions including leading logistics for all mass actions including preparing communications, briefings, and resources to ensure maximum participation.
- Promote advocacy events and efforts to schools, staff, families, and region.
- **Support Advocates:**
 - Identify, empower and connect our AF Team & Family with opportunities (ex. community events, meetings, space hearings, etc.) to advance the interests of our schools and network.
 - Develop and implement the AF Ambassador program to train, support, and activate school-based point people who will support the day-to-day efforts to meet the advocacy goals.
 - Support school-based parent/alumni groups to ensure they are meeting regularly and advocating for their school using a variety of tactics (writing letters, making phone calls, attending community meetings, etc.)
 - Encourage, equip and empower school-based staff with materials, tools, resources, and in person support to increase the level of engagement and build strong cultures of advocacy within their school communities.
 - Plan and coordinate events to introduce staff, families and alumni to our advocacy work.
- **Systems & Data Management:** Develop and manage data tracking, reporting and planning systems.
 - Ensure all data pertaining to advocacy work is captured in the database including outreach to elected officials, parent/alumni participation, and other relevant metrics.
 - Assess efficacy of engagement strategies, training and outreach efforts in order to make adjustments as necessary.
 - Develop systems to plan and track advocacy efforts and parent engagement across the region.

Student Recruitment (~10%) - Support student recruitment efforts by informing families and communities of the high-quality public education option available to them at AF, and partner with schools to ensure all available seats are filled on the first day of school.

- **Planning and Execution:** Develop, coordinate and execute a robust student recruitment campaign that leverages a variety of grassroots, school/community-based, and marketing activities and initiatives.
- **Family Engagement:** Inform, educate, engage, and directly respond to families about the educational opportunities and space available at AF schools.
- **Community Engagement:** Inform, educate and engage local community-based organizations about AF, including scheduling visits, tabling and leading presentations.
- **Enrollment Lottery:** Support the successful planning and administration of the enrollment lottery for our Brooklyn schools and the post-lottery communication with families.

Skills and Characteristics

- Belief in Achievement First’s mission, model and approach
- Strong work ethic and comfort-level working in a dynamic and fast-paced environment
- Creative problem solver with excellent written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills
- Highly-motivated, detail and results-oriented (capable of managing multiple projects toward strong outcomes from beginning to end)
- Self-directed, highly organized and able to work independently and as a team
- Solid technical skills and experience with Microsoft Office and Google Suite
- Maturity, humility, open to feedback, and a “growth mindset”

Educational Background and Work Experience

- Demonstrated commitment to underserved, low-income and/or communities of color
- Bachelor's degree, required
- 3+ years of work experience, required
- 2+ years of related experience, strongly preferred (advocacy/political campaigns/governmental affairs, community engagement/organizing or student recruitment/application management)
- Resident of and familiarity with Brooklyn, preferred
- Bilingual Spanish-speaker, preferred
- Knowledge of New York City public schools and/or the education landscape, preferred

The position will require some early morning, late evening and weekend work, along with regular travel to schools and community sites.

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:

Aiyana Knowles

Director of NY External Relations

AiyanaKnowles@achievementfirst.org

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, we will unfortunately only be able to notify those who advance to a phone interview. All other applicants will be considered for other open roles at Achievement First

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/>.