

## Vice President of Great Teaching, Middle Schools

**Start Date:** July 1  
**Team:** Middle School  
**Location:** Brooklyn, NY, New Haven, CT, or Providence, RI

### About Achievement First:

Achievement First, a non-profit 501(c)3 charter school management organization, operates 37 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 14,500 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](http://www.achievementfirst.org).

### Summary

We are hiring a Vice President to work with our Middle School Instructional Teams which focus specifically on curriculum design, assessment strategy, instructional coaching at our schools, and professional development for our teachers and school leaders. At Achievement First, we have spent years refining our academic programs, and the next four years are about great teaching fueling an exceptional student experience. With a particular focus on our middle school program (Grades 5-8), the Vice President of Great Teaching, MS will work in partnership with our middle school Regional Superintendents (who manage our principals) and Achievement Directors (who manage our curriculum / assessments and deliver PD to school leaders) to ensure that we have the vision, curriculum and assessments, and dean and teacher skill to teach in a way that transform teaching and learning at Achievement First. The Vice President will work across our two different instructional models (Classic and Greenfield), to determine the strengths of our program and ultimately move our middle school approach to one common model. The Vice President of Great Teaching, MS will report to the lead middle school Regional Superintendent and manage MS Achievement Directors in both of our instructional models. Moreover, the Vice President of Great Teaching, MS will partner with the Vice Presidents of Great Teaching for ES and HS to ensure that our vision for great teaching at the middle school level aligns with our work at the elementary and high school levels.

This is an opportunity to work closely with some of the leading education reformers in the country while gaining insight within a top charter school management organization. The ideal candidate has content knowledge steeped in Common Core and is a strong leader of people. A background as either a school leader or district/network content leader is also necessary.

**Responsibilities of the Vice President of Great Teaching MS will include but are not limited to:**

- **Partner with other members of the network-wide Great Teaching Team (which includes elementary and high school VPs of Great Teaching), to create and continually evolve a common vision of great teaching at Achievement First. In this work, the Vice President would work with the team to:**
  - Define great teaching by refining our Essentials of Great Teaching, the rubric we use to coach and evaluate teachers
  - Align on the vision for strong disciplinary thinking in each core subject area
  - Design clear benchmarks for academic independence habits (e.g. homework, study skills, note-taking or annotation on text/video/speech, help-seeking, personal organization) at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade levels
  - Curate or create high-quality common PD for all curriculum designers, school leaders, and teachers. While most PD will be content-specific, there will be some universal PD, even if it needs to be adjusted some for different academy levels.
  - Support the creation of a high-quality video bank that shows excellent teaching for all parts of our Essentials of Great Teaching rubric
  - Ensure we have clear guidance for grading across 5-12
  
- **Help determine our vision for Great Teaching and ensure the Middle School curriculum fully supports our vision of Great Teaching**
  - Ensure that our middle school curriculum aligns seamlessly with K-4 and 9-12 curricula to create one aligned K-12 program; this will require intentional and frequent collaboration with VPs at the elementary and high school levels.
  - Audit curriculum in all grades/subjects of middle school, evaluating our program overviews, scopes & sequences, unit overviews, assessments (interim assessments, unit tests, weekly quizzes as relevant), daily lesson resources, and fundamentals of instruction documents (documents that describe what strong instruction in that content area looks like)
  - Based on this audit, support achievement directors in designing multi-year plans to ensure all curricular resources fully support our vision of Great Teaching as defined in AF's Essentials of Great Teaching and meet or exceed the rigor bar of the Common Core. Our curriculum in MS should prepare students to score advanced on Common Core exams, setting them up for AP success in high school.
  - Ensure that our curriculum provides a strong Leading for Racial Equity lens for the predominantly black and Latinx students AF serves.
  - Identify and leverage external experts to help vet our curriculum.
  - Serve on multiple curriculum review committees across multiple grade levels. While the primary lens will be middle school, the VP of Great Teaching, Middle will also serve on cross-academy-level curriculum teams.
  
- **Manage content directors to drive strong results**
  - Achievement Directors and schools set clear, quantifiable, and actionable goals using our internal school performance measure called the AF Report Card. Ultimately, the success of the VP of Great Teaching, MS will be defined by supporting schools and Achievement Directors to meet those goals.
  - Manage content directors (from two school models: classic and Greenfield) to consistently do the following to excellence:
    - Develop high-quality curriculum (program overviews, scopes and sequences, assessments, unit overviews, daily lesson resources, fundamentals of instruction)

- Run high-quality summer PD that defines the vision of excellence for intellectual preparation, looking at student work, and content execution
  - Run high-quality PD for academic dean and principal cohorts during the school year
  - Evaluate the quality of intellectual preparation, student work, and teaching happening in schools, naming clear and precise praise and action steps (based on clear gaps)
  - Lead effective data debriefs of weekly quiz (as relevant), unit (as relevant), interim assessments, and state/national exams. Pick out strong examples to highlight, batch feedback for the group, and individual trends/actions for particular schools.
  - Effectively coach principals, deans, and teachers in using the key levers (observation & feedback, real-time coaching, intellectual prep, looking at student work, Friday PD) to drive achievement
  - Cultivate and codify bright spots and future leaders with special focus on building strong, diverse pipelines for school and network leadership positions.
  - Work with content directors across both models to determine the strengths of programs from each model and identify a common approach for future years.
  - Run high-quality PD for achievement directors to learn and practice the key skills necessary to effectively support schools.
- **Lead process (with project management “quarterback”) to build one “hybrid” MS model**
- Five years ago, AF launched the Greenfield model in an attempt to maximize the college success factors: academic preparation, independence, personal why, and socio-emotional strength. This model has some very promising elements, and it has a different curriculum than the classic middle schools.
  - It is time for AF to bring the two models together over the next 2-4 years. This will involve deeply evaluating each subject area to determine if the “hybrid model” for that subject will be classic, Greenfield, or some combination in the future.
  - This will involve deeply engaging stakeholders from across the organization (achievement directors, school leaders, (both Greenfield and Classic) and include Greenfield and classic achievement directors and school leaders.

### Skills and Characteristics

- Strong content expertise in at least one subject area
- Proven track record of driving student achievement results
- Experience designing high-quality curriculum
- Strong coaching skills
- Extremely organized and detail-oriented
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Strong skills in working across multiple stakeholders with a variety of perspectives, this includes both the ability to present information clearly and the equally important ability to listen carefully
- Strong meeting facilitation skills- particularly in explaining a challenge and moving towards resolution
- Highly motivated and capable of seeing projects through from beginning to end
- Excellent people leadership and ability to manage change
- Results-oriented and willing to do “whatever it takes”
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment; flexible, able to work autonomously as well as take direction as needed
- 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
- Content expertise in at least one content area
- We would prefer a candidate with two or more years of school leadership (e.g., serving as a principal) or two or more years of highly successful content leadership experience at the district level (e.g., overseeing ELA/Math/Science/History for a district).

Occasional weekend or 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**

Send resume and a sample lesson or unit plan that you have developed to:

Brittany Kirkland

[Brittanykirkland@achievementfirst.org](mailto:Brittanykirkland@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/>.