

Director of ELA & Humanities, Greenfield

Start Date: Immediate Start Available
End Date: This role is likely a short-term position that is anticipated for the next 2 school years. There is potential, but not guarantee that the role will continue.
Team: Greenfield
Location: Based in the Northeast, ideally Brooklyn, NY, Providence, RI, or New Haven, CT. Flexibility to often work remotely



Watch Our Video:
bit.ly/2TfrRjC

IMAGINE. INNOVATE. EMPOWER.

We believe an ELA/Humanities program should build amazing readers and writers, while also deepening students’ sense of identity and love of reading through a diverse and relevant curriculum. Our interdisciplinary ELA program merges reading, writing, history and independent reading. In 2nd - 6th grade, students will study Queen Nzinga, Dolores Huerta, Benjamin Banneker, Black Lives Matter, class strife in Ancient Rome, poetry of the Middle Ages and connections between Martin Luther and Dr. King, all as they grapple with deep questions in seminar that examine whether or not the “moral arc of the universe” bends towards justice.

We believe success takes a team. Help lead ours.

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.

About Greenfield

In 2015, Achievement First launched an innovative school model that we call [Greenfield](#). Greenfield is a ground-up redesign of middle school with the goal of dramatically increasing college persistence. Achievement First’s four Greenfield middle schools provide rigorous, high-quality instruction within a nurturing school community focused on developing self-motivated learners, problem-solvers and leaders. Our students benefit from:

- Self-directed work powered by a Personalized Learning Platform.
- Rigorous and rewarding core academic classes.
- Twice daily enrichments of scholar choice.

- Hands-on, experiential learning that deepens and extends what students learn in the classroom through two-week long expeditions three times a year.
- Social emotional learning and small-group mentoring to develop social-emotional skills and goal setting skills.
- Student-curated dream teams that consist of teachers, family members and other significant influencers in a scholar’s life. This team works to help scholars achieve scholar goals.
- Intervention built into the fabric of the school day.
- An awesomely powerful community where school, home and the broader community link arms in support of scholar development and achievement.

At Greenfield, we strive to ensure all scholars excel on our four College Success Factors:

- **Academical Preparation:** Our students will ALL achieve at the highest levels – they will be competitive with the best students in the US and abroad and fully prepared for the rigors of college coursework.
- **Academical Independence:** Students can become the agents of their success through ownership and personalization.
- **Social Emotional Strength:** Habits of success can and should be taught. Students need to experience the joy and excellence that comes from enrichment outside of traditional academics.
- **Personal Why:** A deeply held and individually developed personal drive to achieve grounded in personal interests and motivation.

In the next several years, Achievement First plans to incorporate the learnings from the Greenfield model into all 16 middle schools. The Greenfield Team, including the Director of ELA & Humanities, will be instrumental in collaborating with Achievement First Network Support teams on the integrated middle school model.

For more information about Achievement First’s mission, approach, schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

The Greenfield ELA and Humanities Program

The ELA/Humanities program is a comprehensive, spiraled, interdisciplinary, vocabulary and content rich 5-8 humanities program that builds strong close reading, writing, discussion and self-directed learning skills. Our program consists of four instructional blocks:

1. **Self-Directed Learning:** students learn key vocabulary and historical world knowledge reflecting a diversity of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences through a social justice lens.
2. **Close Reading:** students apply humanities content knowledge to the analysis of rigorous texts of mixed genres (also known as close reading) and engage in culminating Socratic seminars that synthesize ideas and promote critical thinking about the unit’s topic.
3. **Writing:** students craft robust argumentative, informational and narrative writing related to the unit’s topic.
4. **Independent reading:** students read quality, engaging books of choice with the option to choose books about the topics they are studying in humanities and science.



We preference self-directed learning as the foundation of our program because executive functioning, agency



and self-direction are keys to college readiness. We believe that self-directed learning can and should begin in elementary school and increase in independence and rigor through middle and high school.

Given our unique model (aligned self-directed learning, reading and writing) most of our curriculum is built in house by leveraging research-based best practices and resources in the field. This year (2020-21) we will be focused on finishing the 8th grade build.

Summary

The Director of ELA and Humanities is responsible for realizing the Greenfield ELA/Humanities vision through team leadership, partnership with schools and strong design. The Director of ELA/Humanities will lead a team of designers to both create and revise curriculum and support schools as they implement the curriculum. The ELA/Humanities lead co-owns achievement results with our design and execution team. The Director of ELA and Humanities will report to the VP of Great Teaching for Middle Schools.

Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:

- **Lead Vision and Direction Setting:** Set the vision and direction of the ELA/Humanities team and manage 2-3 designers and/or teacher fellows who make up & support the team.
- **Design Robust Curriculum, Tools and Resources:** Design and oversee the revision of existing curricular materials based on feedback from Greenfield school staff and anecdotal and achievement data from Greenfield students. Ensure curriculum is tightly aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), PARCC, SBAC and New York State's test and that it builds on our word and world knowledge scope and sequence. Curriculum materials include unit plans, assessments, daily lesson resources, student handouts, and online Self-Directed Learning (SDL) modules.
- **Support Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness:** Ensure curriculum, tools, resources and student experiences are relevant, affirm student identity and foster a diverse array of perspectives.
- **Build and Lead a Thriving Design Team:** Lead a robust ELA/humanities design team, coach designers and provide feedback and coaching to ensure all team products and experiences meet our quality bar and are produced on time.
- **Drive Evaluation and iteration:** Observe execution of the model to inform ongoing school support.
- **Lead / Partner with Schools to Drive Excellence:** Collaborate with our regional superintendent and school leaders to drive strong execution of Greenfield curriculum and to ensure strong student achievement. Plan and lead professional development for school leaders and/or teachers to build core skills that will drive achievement results.
- **Build and Maintain Relationships & Diverse and Inclusive Networks:** Collaborate with Achievement First's broader network support team to maximize network-wide best practices. Foster a collaborative workspace where a diversity of views, backgrounds and perspectives are valued. Fully leverage the diversity of our network, families and community partners.
- **Support Codification and Scaling:** Revise and help codify best practices to aid in scaling of the Greenfield model.
- **Row with the Team:** Report to and serve as a critical thought partner to VP of Great Teaching; Ensure strong partnership with our operations team; Travel to Greenfield and network team meetings and to



visit our Greenfield schools to observe, prototype, or work with small groups of students/teachers to learn about the strengths and weaknesses in our model.

Skills and Characteristics

- **Passion:** You are passionate about ELA and social studies content and pedagogy, and you are eager to share this passion with both students and teachers.
- **Design Heart:** You love to design and plan challenging, hands-on, multi-modal curricula. You have experience in unit and lesson planning, with a focus on clear daily and unit outcomes.
- **Keen Eye:** You have a strong sense of what it takes to execute a curriculum to high quality and the ability to plan and lead professional development and coach execution towards rigorous outcomes. You are a strong critical thinker. You are able to synthesize large amounts of information and work independently to create products that are well-aligned to the program model and vision.
- **High Rigor Bar:** You have a deep expertise and content knowledge in reading, writing and history and have a strong internal compass for rigorous curriculum that is user-friendly for both teachers and students.
- **Leadership:** You have strong people management skills and experience in coaching and training adults.
- **Project Management:** You have strong project management skills (including project planning and execution).
- **Organization:** You have exceptional organizational skills and are able to execute tasks with an acute attention to detail.
- **Entrepreneurial Drive and Spirit:** You are an entrepreneurial and ambitious educator with a passion for innovation and an eagerness to strategically redesign schools.
- **Dynamic:** You embrace change, are a team player, are flexible and adaptive, and strive for continuous development and creative solutions.

Educational Background and Work Experience

- Bachelor's degree from a competitive college or university, master's degree preferred
- A minimum of 7-10 years of relevant work experience as an educator or in a related field working directly with schools, preferably as a school leader, program designer, or design consultant
- Experience with secondary literacy and/or history preferred.
- Proven record of success
 - Training and coaching school level administrators, teachers, and support staff
 - Implementing and/or designing ELA and humanities curriculum
 - Managing and developing a team

Special Work Requirements

Some evening and weekend work may be required. The position is based in the Northeast. Moderate travel between Brooklyn, NY, New Haven, CT and Providence, RI will be necessary (once normal travel resumes- our offices are currently remote).



Compensation

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

To Apply

Complete this application form to submit **both** a cover letter and resume: <http://bit.ly/applyGF>. Applications without a cover letter will not be considered.

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/>.