

## Controller – Team Finance

**Start Date:** Immediately  
**Team:** Team Finance  
**Location:** New Haven, CT or Brooklyn, NY (remote during COVID)

**Who are we?** Achievement First (AF) exists to address the legacy of racism in education in America. We know that all children—regardless of race, zip code, or economic status—need and deserve access to a great education. At the core of our approach is the shared journey by our students and staff to fulfill our incredible potential.

**Just the facts.** Achievement First has consistently been rated one of the top charter school networks in the country, AND we are still learning and growing. AF is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that currently supports 37 public charter schools in New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. The mission of AF is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all children. We currently employ more than 2,000 staff -- 47% of whom identify as Black, Latinx, or Multi-racial -- who collectively educate nearly 15,000 students in Brooklyn, NY; Providence, RI; and New Haven, Bridgeport, and Hartford CT. More than 85% of our students qualify for free or reduced priced lunch. Our students are proving what's possible by achieving breakthrough results in terms of academic achievement and long-term college persistence. Achievement First is also an engaged and prominent partner in the broader education-reform movement, partnering with schools and networks across the country and openly sharing all of our resources with all educators free of charge. We currently serve more than 100,000 additional students through our Charter Network Accelerator and Navigator partnership organizations.

**Why work at Achievement First?** First and foremost: you should work at AF if you believe in our values and want to surround yourself with people who share them. We are committed to leading for racial equity. We approach our work with humility, humanity, and the recognition that both what we do and how we do it must model the equity we seek. We strive for excellence by setting a high bar in all areas and pursuing it relentlessly. We care about the whole person. We choose joy and actively seek out moments of humor, gratitude, and deeper purpose. We know that we will go further together and intentionally join forces on both big and small things. We name brutal facts and see our mistakes as opportunities to get better.

Finally, come to Achievement First if you want to help schools redefine what's possible in education. We are working to create some of the best schools in the country – schools that support not just student's academic success but also their social emotional learning, identity development, independence as learners, passions, and life-long fulfillment. AND, at AF, we believe getting better starts with looking in the mirror. We have done a lot of that lately, as we have more aggressively confronted our own biases and unacceptable gaps in our student and staff experience. We are committed to addressing inequity within our systems, culture, and talent with resolve to walk the long road ahead to the true equity and opportunity our kids and families deserve. So, come to Achievement First if reflection, challenge, and growth feed your soul.

**About the Role.** Reporting directly to the CFO, the primary function of the Controller is to lead a team of financial operations professionals and assume responsibility for the accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, fiscal and regulatory compliance, cash and bank management, and audit 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 four groups: 1. Accounting, 2. Financial operations, 3. Budgeting and forecasting, and 4. 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 to open more schools and serve more children in our five-city footprint. The Controller will ensure the high quality execution of the following areas of responsibility:

### **Management**

- Supervise the personnel and functions of the accounting team and financial operations teams, 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 a timely monthly and annual close process
- Maintain a 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, revenue and expense 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 Leadership**

- Ensure the execution of accurate and timely payrolls and processes

- 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 worker's comp, etc.)
- Oversee the effective maintenance and maximize usage of systems: Sage MIP/Abila, Concur, ADP

### **Financial Reporting**

- Maintain a 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

### **Desired Experience and Educational Background**

- Demonstrated ability to lead a large team of accounting and financial 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
- Four-year college degree – preferably in accounting or finance (Certified Public Accountant and/or relevant Master's Degree would be a plus)
- At least 10 years of relevant accounting experience
- 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 cite authoritative literature

To Learn More About AF and Apply:

Please visit our careers site at <https://www.achievementfirst.org/careers/network-support-careers/> to learn more about Achievement First. Interested candidates should send their resume to Victor De La Paz at [victordelapaz@achievementfirst.org](mailto:victordelapaz@achievementfirst.org). In your outreach, please note your preferred geography.

Version Date: October 9, 2020