

Vice President of Great Teaching, Elementary School

Start Date: July 2021 (or earlier if possible)
Team: Elementary School Teaching and Learning
Location: Brooklyn, NY, New Haven, CT, or Providence, RI (Can be Remote Until July, 2021)

Who are we? Achievement First (AF) exists to address the legacy of racism in education in America. Our mission is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all of America's children. That is what we work for every day. We know that all children—regardless of race, zip code, or economic status—deserve access to great schools. At the core of our approach is our 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 more than 14,300 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.

Our focus and reach extend beyond the students and communities that we serve directly. Achievement First is an engaged and prominent partner in the broader education-reform movement, partnering with schools and networks from across the country and openly sharing all our resources with educators free of charge. We currently serve more than 100,000 additional students through two key partnership initiatives. Our Charter Network Accelerator is an intensive cohort-based training program for CMO leaders (with a focus on leaders of color) who are looking to increase the number of top-quality options available to parents across the country; and through our Navigator Program, we provide coaching and support for district and charter schools who want to adopt and adapt our curriculum and instructional practices to help students achieve breakthrough results.

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* and are known to be as warm as we are demanding. *We choose joy* and actively seek out moments of humor, gratitude, and deeper purpose for ourselves and with each other. We know that we will *go further together* and intentionally choose to join forces on both big and small things. We name brutal facts, *embrace challenge*, and see our mistakes as opportunities to get better.

Finally, come to Achievement First if you want to help support schools that are striving to redefine what's possible in education. We are obsessed with getting better and are working to create some of the best schools in the country - schools that support not just students' academic success but also their social-emotional learning, identity development, independence as learners, passion/enrichment/extracurriculars, 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 experience. We are committed to addressing inequity within our systems, culture, and practices and resolve to do the critical work needed to ensure equity for our scholars and staff. So, *come to Achievement First if reflection, challenge, and growth feed your soul.*

Summary

We are hiring a Vice President to work with our Elementary School Instructional Teams, which focus on curriculum design, assessment strategy, and professional development for our teachers and school leaders. At Achievement First, we have spent years developing our academic programs, and we're focusing our next four years on great teaching fueling an exceptional student experience. The VP of Great Teaching, Elementary School will work with other senior instructional leaders to refine our vision for great teaching and to ensure that we have the curriculum, assessments, and dean and teacher skill to take teaching and learning at Achievement First to the next level.

This is an opportunity to work closely with some of the leading education reformers in the country while gaining insight about education reform within a top charter school management organization. The ideal candidate has deep content knowledge in the humanities and in pedagogy, is a strong leader of people, and is driven by a desire to realize an anti-racist vision for schooling. A background as a school leader or district content expert is also preferred, but not required.

Responsibilities of the Vice President will include but are not limited to:

- **Partner with other members of the network-wide Great Teaching Team, which includes elementary, middle, and high school instructional leads, to create and continually evolve a common definition of great teaching at Achievement First. In this work, the Vice President would work with the team to:**
 - Enlist stakeholders in ongoing ES program evolution and revision, with the goal of co-designing a shared, inspiring, and crystal-clear vision of what an AF elementary school/classroom should look like
 - Align on the vision for K-12 disciplinary alignment
 - Help define great teaching by refining our Essentials of Great Teaching, the rubric we use to coach and evaluate teachers
 - Ensure there is clear guidance for how schools' leaders can effectively coach teachers
 - Refine our approach to how teachers and their coaches prepare to teach upcoming lessons
 - Help schools and network leaders understand how assessments fit with our curriculum and how both curriculum and assessments fit in the larger scheme of creating a college-ready educational experience for our scholars
- **Leveraging instructional experts within Achievement First and across the nation, conduct research & design to ensure we have a best-in-class vision for our programs.** This includes:
 - Work to identify the strongest curriculum experts and schools to help us create a vision of excellence
 - Use internal and external experts to audit the curriculum and program, naming strengths and gaps to help us create a multi-year plan to refine our programs
- **With the Great Teaching Team, train network leaders, school leaders, and teachers in strong instruction. This includes:**
 - How to drive discourse for school leaders and content experts on our Teaching & Learning team
 - Ongoing development that aligns to all aspects of great teaching as we define in our revised Essentials of Great Teaching
 - Training for leaders in how to coach teachers using the Essentials of Great Teaching
 - Training for regional superintendents, and our content experts on the Teaching & Learning team, in how to review curriculum for strengths and areas of growth and how to revise our current resources

- **With the Elementary School Teaching and Learning team, serve as the primary K-4th grade vetter of curriculum, consistently reviewing curriculum to ensure it is strong.**
 - Serve on multiple curriculum review committees across multiple grade levels
 - Review and give feedback on content-team plans for curriculum development
- **Support the Achievement Directors for math, science, and the humanities so they can:**
 - Design core curriculum, leading professional development for teachers and leaders
 - Analyze data of state/national exams, Interim Assessments, and ongoing quizzes and unit tests
 - Provide school-based support including trainings on how to intellectually prepare for lessons and how to analyze student work, as well as ongoing content-specific professional development sessions for school leaders and teachers
 - Cultivate and codify bright spots and future leaders

Skills and Characteristics

- *Brings an Equity Lens to the Core Work:* Consistently ensures that the Leading for Racial Equity lens will be a required, explicit part of priority planning, goal-setting, professional development planning, and progress monitoring for school leaders and network leaders
- *Practices Self-Awareness:* Consistently reflects on “How am I positioned (relative to privilege and/or oppression) in all aspects of my identities (e.g. race, class, gender, language) ?How might these identities impact people and our process?”
- *Focuses on Relational Trust and Human Values:* Notices and actively repairs broken trust/relationships; notices and addresses patterns of exclusion in meetings and 1:1 interactions; holds time to address and lean into non-discussables.
- *Designs with not for:* Actively looks for and insist on decision-making that requires us to listen, learn, and co-create with the people most impacted by work/decisions.
- *Utilizes a Growth Mindset:* Consistently identifies and addresses gaps in previous mindsets/skills and perceives the strength and performance of others through a growth mindset. Actively seeks feedback to improve, and demonstrates growth in response to feedback.
- *Employs Strategic Thinking:* Utilizes multiple perspectives and data points to drive to a clear understanding of the current state relative to organizational goals and best practices and pushes for deeper understandings of how and why this came to be. Sets clear, obtainable, and timely goals which move work and the program forward and proactively plans how to involve and invest others in those goals.
- *Analyzes and Responds to Data:* Accurately identifies strengths and gaps based on existing data, considers additional information which may/may not be included in the dataset, and provides specific insights based upon multiple data points.

Educational Background and Work Experience

- A bachelor's degree
- Content expertise in 2 or more content areas
- Two or more years teaching elementary school
- Proven track record of being able to enlist others in a shared vision and fuel investment from stakeholders (students, parents, staff, leaders, board members)
- We would prefer a candidate with two or more years of experience in academic teacher coaching or two or more years of highly successful leadership experience at the district level.

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 to:

Lian States

lianstates@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/>.