

Director, Equity & Inclusion

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 (soon to be 41!) 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 is 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 redefining what is 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 student's 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 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 that our kids and families deserve. So, come to Achievement First if reflection, challenge, and growth feed your soul.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

The Director of Equity & Inclusion is a leadership role that will report to the Chief Equity Officer, De-Lea Deane-Allen. In alignment with our organizational strategic plan, the director will serve as the right hand to the Chief Equity Officer partnering with senior leaders across the organization to lead strategy and change management to ensure Racial Equity, Inclusion, and anti-racism are **centered** in **one to two** of the following core functions of the organization (area of focus will be dependent on candidate strengths): Talent Practices and Organizational Culture for Network Support (approximately 200 employees), Talent Practices and Organizational Culture for our schools and Academy levels (40+ schools across NY, CT, and RI), our K-12 Program - including Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction, Special Services, and Student Experience.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

General Responsibilities:

- Stay abreast of research and best practices in the fields of Race, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and [liberatory design](#) and adapt to AF context.
- Develop communication and knowledge management systems to share resources, promising practices and keep staff apprised of key initiatives and activities
- Support and co-develop additional Equity Programing that will emerge as we operationalize our value “Lead for Racial Equity” and ensure we are meeting the needs of our schools and network support teams.
- Provide direct support and consultation to various AF work streams that are directly related to equity and inclusion, including but not limited to AF Lead for Racial Equity Commitments
- The director will partner with senior leaders to lead strategy and change management to ensure Racial Equity, Inclusion, and anti-racism are **centered in one to two** of the following core functions of the organization (area of focus will be dependent on candidate’s area of DEI expertise/experience):

1. **Network Support Talent and Organizational Culture**

- Partner with the Chief of Staff and Chief Talent Officer to develop a strategic plan towards centering Racial Equity in Network Support Talent Practices and Organizational Culture. This plan will include the work it takes to cultivate a race equity culture (as an antidote to white supremacy culture), a culture of inclusion and belonging, and bring a racial equity lens to our talent practices (with a focus on hiring and ongoing high quality performance management).
- Facilitate race and equity professional development and engage in relationships with external partners as needed to deliver training and support to achieve our plan.
- Partner with Chief Talent Officer to evaluate current AF talent policies and practices (with a focus on performance management) and identify what needs to evolve, be changed, or initiated in order to create a more equitable work environment and a culture of belonging. Once a priority has been named, leverage a community-based approach to change management.
- Partner with Chief Talent Officer to align and support Network Support leadership to execute equitable hiring processes across the organization (leveraging DEI best practices) that results in the hiring and retention of diverse staff across teams.
- Coordinate and develop a team of AF Network Support employees committed to creating a culture of belonging that centers anti-racism and Racial Equity and collaboratively implement plan.

- Lead and coordinate AF Network Support consciousness raising efforts, including but not limited to affinity-spaces, emails, and regular book/podcasts/ article discussions.
- Serve as trusted advisor and thought partner to colleagues. Support and advocate for teammates who are being impacted by issues of equity and inclusion. Champion a positive culture including feedback and training for those who need to develop their skills and/or awareness of the impact they are having on others.

2. Talent Practices and Organizational Culture for our schools and Academy Levels (ES, MS, HS)

- Support Talent Team to leverage liberatory design principles as we revise and update our teacher career pathway program (TCP) and associated talent practices so they result in equitable development and promotion of all staff.
- Partner with Talent Team to ensure performance management practices and internal talent planning at schools proactively addresses marginalization, manages unconscious bias and creates a strong and diverse talent pipeline for school and network support leadership roles.
- In partnership with regional superintendents and Chief of Schools (ES, MS, HS) assess the current state of school capacity to engage in courageous conversations about race and intersecting forms of oppression. In response to assessment, create strategy, resources and support to build capacity across schools.
- Coordinate and develop a team of AF school leaders and staff employees committed to creating a culture of belonging that centers anti-racism and Racial Equity and co-create vision and implement plan.
- Facilitate race and equity professional development and engage in relationships with external partners, as needed, to deliver training and support the strategy and vision for equitable talent practices and a race equity organizational culture across schools.

3. K-12 Program

- Partner with Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and VPs of Great Teaching to ensure that our curriculum and pedagogical approach exemplify our value of Lead for Racial Equity by leveraging strong practices and research including culturally responsive teaching and pedagogy.
- Partner with the Chief Program Officer and her team (VP of Special Services, VP of Student Experience, & VP of Academic Operations) to ensure our core program proactively addresses racism and leverages the role of race and culture to support student learning across each function of our school program.
- Facilitate professional development and/or support to teams and leaders to ensure all program components are grounded in key terms, mindsets, and research to move toward our vision for a liberatory learning experience.
- Support pilots and curate promising practices to refine and strengthen our vision of great teaching that centers our value of lead for Racial Equity.
- Facilitate race and equity professional development and engage in relationships with external partners, as needed, to deliver training and support the strategy and vision for creating a curriculum and program that centers our commitment to Racial Equity.

IDEAL EXPERIENCES AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Extremely skilled in building relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders that are grounded in relational trust, accountability, community, and transformation.

- At least 5 years of work experience
- Bachelor's degree required, but education does not replace work experience.
- Experience managing others and/or managing change through others
- Highly knowledgeable in the fields of diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, equity, and anti-oppressive practices including specific knowledge of unconscious bias and addressing LGBTQ and Gender Equity.
- Proven experience in Race, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (REDI) strategy with specific expertise moving from ideation to execution in at least one of the areas of focus listed above (Talent Practices, Org Culture, Curriculum and Pedagogy).
- Systems-level thinker who can craft a vision for how an organization should implement culture change management.
- Strong ability to teach and engage adult learners through professional development sessions, professional learning communities, and/or comparable form of adult learning.
- Able to facilitate conversations and training focusing on anti-racism, equity and anti-oppression.
- Strong problem solving and critical thinking skills; able to formulate hypotheses, gather and synthesize data, develop and assess alternatives and build a case for recommendations
- If interested in focusing on K-12 program or Talent Practices at schools, at least 2 years of teaching experience and at least 2 years experience coaching and supporting other teachers/staff.

Reports to: The Chief Equity Officer

Location: NY, CT, or RI

Compensation: Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience. 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.

TO APPLY: Achievement First welcomes comments, referrals, or expressions of interest. If you would like to refer someone or to apply, please send a resume and cover letter to De-Lea Deane-Allen at deleadeane@achievementfirst.org. In your letter, please explain why you are interested in the position and what experiences make you qualified for this role. We will follow up with candidates to name the next steps in the process from there.

Internal (AF) candidates: If you are interested in applying for the Director of Equity role, first talk to your manager. Then, send your resume and cover letter (recommended by April 9th). In your letter, please explain why you are interested in the position and what experiences make you qualified for this role. We will follow up with candidates to name the next steps in the process from there.

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/>.