

Associate Director/Director of K-4 Science

Start Date: July 2021
Team: Elementary School Teaching and Learning
Location: Brooklyn, NY, New Haven, CT, or Providence, RI

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-price 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 challenges*, 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

The Associate Director/Director of K-4 Science is an integral part of the elementary STEM team that works with superintendents, principals, academic deans, and teachers to craft and drive the vision behind an exemplary academic program. Achievement First approaches science as an inquiry-based discipline founded on determining scientific claims through patterns in repeated evidence and data, and revising those claims upon discovery of new evidence. The elementary Science Associate Director/Director creates the vision, resources, and training for K-4 instruction in Achievement First schools. . This work involves close collaboration with network and school leaders through professional and curricular development, core skill-building, classroom observations, and data analysis.

This role is an opportunity to work closely with some of the leading education reformers in the country while gaining insight into education reform within a top charter school management organization. The ideal candidate has deep content knowledge in Science 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 Associate Director/Director of K-4 Science will include but are not limited to:

- **Manage Program Vision and Implementation**
 - Act as a thought partner with elementary regional superintendents, the network academic team, and school leaders to help synthesize the network vision for Science instruction and contribute to the development of clear programmatic recommendations.
- **Train School Leaders and Teachers in Strong Instruction**
 - Develop professional development sessions that support vision setting for the Science program, implementation of the curriculum, and growth of core skills and knowledge
 - Provide ongoing development that aligns with all aspects of great teaching as we define it in our revised Essentials of Great Teaching
 - Train leaders in how to coach teachers using the Essentials of Great Teaching
- **Develop Curriculum**
 - Create and revise exemplary curriculum materials that are aligned to network priorities
 - Manage lead planners and consultants by providing formal and informal feedback on their materials. Specifically, these materials will include unit plans, assessments, accompanying lesson plans, and student work.
- **Coach School Leaders/Teachers After Observing Instruction**
 - Conduct school observations at varying intervals throughout the year to push content-specific instructional practices, improve implementation of curriculum, gather information on best practices, and pilot new projects
 - Develop instructional eye of deans and principals through focused co-observations and feedback
- **Analyze Data**
 - Deeply analyze student achievement data (student work samples, weekly quizzes, interim assessments, and state tests) to determine how to better develop materials and provide targeted, high-quality teacher training

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 insists 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
- Four or more years teaching elementary school Science
- 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, two or more years of highly successful leadership experience at the district level, or an advanced degree in Science.

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/>.