



## Director of Board Relations & Governance

### THE ORGANIZATION

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.

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 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'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 of our resources with all educators free of charge. We currently serve more than 100,000 additional students through two key partnership initiatives.

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### THE OPPORTUNITY

As the Director of Board Relations & Governance, you will be responsible for owning and refining the framework and processes related to internal governance of Achievement First and the workflows and processes that support Achievement First's seven Network Support and state/regional Boards and their individual committees. In addition to serving on the Chief External Officer's leadership team, you will serve as a strategic advisor to the CEO, Chief of Staff and executive team, providing guidance and identifying and informing appropriate governance pathing for organizational priorities and strategic initiatives.

### Basics

- **Location:** AF Network Support staff are currently working remotely. However, relative proximity to NYC metro area is preferred (i.e., within driving distance)
- **Start Date:** February 2022
- **Position Reports To:** Interim/Chief External Officer
- **Compensation:** XXX
- **Travel:** This role may require occasional travel to board meetings and/or other external engagements

### Responsibilities

- **Manage Board Relations and Engagement (50%).** Develop and provide high-quality execution of workflow and processes to support agenda development, preparation and review of materials, materials distribution and archiving for all Board of Director and committee meetings. Work with relevant school and network leaders to prepare for meetings and calls, provide materials and reports and ensure that board members are well-informed and productively engaged in governance and fiduciary oversight of the organization. Manage event planning and logistics for Board meetings to ensure the smooth operation of proceedings; provide day-of-meeting support, including managing the flow of presenters, in-person or virtual room set-up, and

coordination with catering and technology support as needed. Own Board relationship management, communications, action tracking and process improvements. Periodically design and run strategic retreats to help the board reassess vision and mission, evaluate and establish outcomes, and understand and help shape key strategies.

- **Optimize and Facilitate Board Governance (25%).** Develop a deep understanding of organizational bylaws and governance policies, and recommend and support changes to the bylaws and governance structures, as needed, to strengthen organizational governance and ensure best-in-class practices. Engage proactively with internal partners to gain an understanding and ongoing awareness of organizational priorities and strategic initiatives that require formal oversight and decision-making through the governance framework. Create, maintain and communicate training resources, process documents, and templates to assist organizational leaders in understanding and navigating the governance framework. Develop and manage reporting to provide a broad view of all planned and current activities occurring across the governance framework, and linkages to the various governance bodies.
- **Serve as a Strategic Partner to the CEO and Executive Team (20%).** In strong partnership with the CEO and Chief of Staff, develop and operationalize an annual strategic plan with board goals and strategies that align Board interests, organizational priorities and objectives, and ongoing initiatives that require governance engagement. Regularly work with the Chief of Staff to develop and maintain a Board and Committee meeting cadence that optimizes engagement and effectiveness; provide guidance on and/or identify appropriate governance pathing strategies and needs; and ensure that the CEO and other Cabinet members are well prepared for Board meetings. Broadly, ensure that all Board communications representing the CEO and/or Office of the CEO reflect the CEO and organizations values and interests.
- **Retain and Recruit a Sophisticated Board (5%).** Nurture and maintain strong relationships with Achievement First's ~70 existing board members and manage a portfolio of 30-50 board member prospects in alignment with overall Board, External Relations, and organizational priorities, including Achievement First commitment to Leading for Racial Equity. In collaboration with the CEO, CXO, and Chief of Staff, create succession plans and transition roadmaps for Board leadership that will ensure high retention, strong engagement, knowledge codification and acceleration of organizational outcomes.

## About You

- You have a bachelor's degree and 6-8 years of experience, possibly more, preferably with experience engaging or supporting a mature nonprofit board of directors.
- You are a practiced manager and rising leader, ideally with experience guiding the time and effort of high-performing executives or teams of executives in working together to achieve organizational goals.
- You are a stickler for governance and love to seek out best practices that maximize compliance, engagement and outcomes.
- You lead by engaging others effectively — you shepherd key initiatives and corral resources, but know how to accomplish the work without doing all of the work.
- You see around corners and can anticipate the agenda that's needed today to mobilize and empower the objectives of next month, next quarter and next year.
- You believe outcomes come from smart, thoughtful, inclusive, consistent, transparent and nimble processes; when you are at the helm, team members trust the process will be efficient and fair.
- You have demonstrated experience managing data and building ad hoc reports; you might not know SQL, but you know how to navigate complex sets of data and communicate findings clearly in beautiful and digestible formats.
- You are a natural problem solver, fixer and finder of resources; in moments of tension, you defuse and resolve conflict.
- You are able to balance multiple priorities — overseeing a committee meeting, preparing a school leader for a presentation, building a board member pipeline, preparing a board retreat — gracefully and with practiced personal organization and time management.

- You are highly organized and fluidly manage documents in MS Office and GSuite, and have been known to retitle documents to make them more clear to users.
  - You are an organizer by nature and connect with others easily; you meet people where they are and feel comfortable communicating in person, by phone, and over email, text, Slack, and carrier pigeon.
  - You have strong verbal and written communication skills, with a demonstrated ability to communicate strategically with senior executives.
  - You work quickly, but deliberately and with high quality; you find the rapidly changing context of a social mission (in a global pandemic) motivating and adapt without skipping a beat.
  - You seek to build context; like an ever expanding Wikipedia page, you seek new knowledge to improve your understanding of the space that you work in and to stay one step ahead of the board and organizational leadership.
  - You are humble, mature, situationally sensitive, and discreet; you take pride in supporting leaders worth supporting.
  - You are vaccinated against COVID-19 (see more below for policy details).
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## APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

- **Optional Q&A Webinar:** Join a confidential Q&A webinar with Chief of Staff, Beth Cocuzza, on Thursday, January 20th @ 6PM ET. [RSVP here](#).
- **Deadline to Apply:** Thursday, January 27, 2022 @ 5PM ET
- **How to Apply:** [To apply, please complete this application](#). The application is intended to share the kind of information that would be covered in a phone-screen interview and includes some basic questions, six substantive written questions, and a video submission. We anticipate the application will take approximately 2 hours to complete and suggest planning your time accordingly.
- **Looking Ahead:** If you are selected to move forward, you will be invited to complete a Performance Task, after which there may be 1 or 2 additional interview activities: a 1-hour Phone Interview followed by a Virtual Half-Day Interview, tentatively scheduled to take place the first week of February 2022.
- **For What It's Worth:** Research shows that while men apply to jobs when they meet about 60% of job criteria, women and other marginalized groups tend to apply only when they check every box. So if you think you have what it takes, but you're not sure that you check every box, we still want to hear from you.

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, we will only be able to notify those who advance to the performance task.

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*Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer and an organization that deeply values diversity. Achievement First provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. In addition to federal law requirements, Achievement First complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the organization is located. Achievement First expressly prohibits any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.*

*People from all diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Learn more about diversity and inclusiveness at Achievement First here: <http://www.achievementfirst.org/about-us/diversity/>.*

*Achievement First requires vaccination against COVID-19 for all employees. Reasonable Accommodations based on a qualifying disability or sincerely held religious belief are being considered in accordance with applicable law. Click [here](#) to read our full policy.*