



JOB SPECIFICATION

ORGANIZATION: Achievement First
POSITION: Vice President of College and Career Success
LOCATION: NYC Metro Area, CT, RI or Remote
REPORTS TO: Chief of Schools, High School

Background

Achievement First (AF) serves 15,000 students in 37 schools in five communities across Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island. All students come to Achievement First through blind lottery. The majority are Black, Latinx, and children from low-income families who will be the first in their families to graduate from college. The mission of Achievement First is to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all of America's children. AF believes that every child—regardless of race, zip code, or economic status—deserves access to great schools. At Achievement First, students realize their potential and develop the skills they need to graduate from college, succeed in a competitive world, and serve as the next generation of leaders in their community.

For more information about Achievement First and their mission, model, and schools, please visit their [website](#).

Opportunity

Achievement First has an incredibly strong track record of alumni college completion. For the AF classes of 2013 to 2015, the average 6-year graduation rate is 45%, which is 3.5 times higher than the national average for students in the lowest family income quartile. Achievement First has recently shifted from an emphasis on college acceptance and completion to supporting and preparing all graduates to succeed in their chosen post-secondary journeys. The Vice President (VP) of College and Career Success will be the most senior leader at AF focused on this body of work, which is central to the organization's mission. Through their leadership, Achievement First will become one of the best public school systems in the country at having graduates complete college and will provide excellent support to students and alumni as they explore their career aspirations. 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 resources with all educators free of charge. The Vice President of College and Career Success will serve as a leader in the broader education community, collaborating with a national network of practitioners and sharing Achievement First's practices through this work. The VP will set the vision and direction for the network's college and career success work, leading the organization through change, and creating the systems, structures, and strategies to support change, while serving as a model and thought leader to other charter schools and school systems. The ideal candidate has deep college and career expertise, a commitment to racial equity, background in and appetite for change management, and is a strong leader and influencer of people and teams.

The VP of College and Career Success will be expected to:

- Build strong relationships with key stakeholders including the network College and Career Success Team, organizational leadership, school-based leadership, students, and families; in concert with these key

stakeholders, create and deliver on a multi-year operational plan (aligned with AF's multi-year strategic plan) to support and prepare all graduates to succeed in their chosen post-secondary journeys;

- Initiate critical change management efforts in support of the organization's mission, vision, and college and career success work;
- Ensure the right team and team structure is in place to carry out the short- and long-term priorities for college and career success;
- Serve as a leader in the national education community, collaborating with a national network of practitioners to learn about and share college and career success best practices in order to continually improve and evolve this body of work and organizational outcomes.

The VP will report to the Chief of Schools, High School and directly manage a team of four network leaders.

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Set the multi-year vision and strategy for the network's college and career success work, ensuring that AF supports and prepares all graduates to succeed in their chosen post-secondary journeys;
- Create a multi-year strategic operational plan (aligned with AF's strategic plan) in collaboration with the College and Career Success Team, organizational leadership, students, families, and other key stakeholders; invest key stakeholders in K to Career outcomes and train and engage academy leaders in school-based practices aligned to those outcomes;
- Provide accountability by establishing clear goals and priorities aligned with the plan and reporting relevant data across the organization and stakeholder community.

Organizational and External Leadership

- Represent the College and Career Success Team internally and externally;
- Serve as the organizational liaison for AF's alumni success model, a collaborative partnership with KIPP to support AF alumni in their college and career pursuits; leverage collective knowledge, experience, scale, and networks, in partnership with the Director of Alumni Success to drive strong support and outcomes for AF alumni;
- Partner with and influence other leaders and functional teams at AF to ensure students are equipped with essential skills, tools, and mindsets for college and career success throughout the K-12 continuum;
- Serve as the strategic point of contact for college and career success at AF in order to ensure strong strategy and cohesion across all Network Support teams; Serve as member of High School Leadership Teams and the High School Program Team;
- Provide leadership in the national education community, representing AF's mission, vision, and values and collaborating with other networks and school systems and to share AF's college and career best practices;
- Create, execute, and maintain formal college partnerships with colleges across the country;
- Build and maintain relationships with Deans of Admissions at colleges and universities across the country.

Team Management and Leadership

- Develop, coach, and retain a high-performing network team and manage them towards ambitious goals;
- Clarify the College and Career Success Team structure, including leadership roles and responsibilities;
- Lead and manage the annual goal setting process and talent practices for the College and Career Success Team including team step-backs, annual performance evaluations, and team meetings;
- Foster an inclusive, collaborative, and accountable culture where everyone is focused on college and career success;
- Create and execute strategies to support talent development and improve staff retention;
- Manage ~\$1MM budget that supports access and success programming for the College and Career Success Team;
- Partner with AF technology teams to design tools to support network and school-based staff; design and oversee college data systems, data management, and data reporting.

Qualifications

The ideal VP of College and Career Success candidate will bring the following experiences, skills, and mindset/values:

Experience

- At least 12-15 years of professional experience, including deep expertise in college access required and expertise in career success highly preferred, with a track record of leading a successful organization in this area;
- Experience successfully building, managing, developing, and supporting inclusive, high-performing, diverse teams;
- Experience leading the vision and direction for an organization and defining strategies to operationalize a vision;
- A track record of motivating others and investing stakeholders in a vision;
- Successful change management experience in the education sector; experience codifying and creating systems to support change efforts/initiatives;
- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited, four-year university required, advanced degree or equivalent preferred.

Skills

- Culturally competent leader with the ability to build an inclusive workplace where diversity is valued and leveraged to achieve the vision and mission of the organization;
- Ability to create strategic and operational plans with clear metrics for success, and lead a team to execute plans with fidelity;
- Able to lead through the adaptive (belief, mindsets, etc.) and the technical (strategy, logistics, etc.) challenges that come with change;
- Visionary leader who envisions the evolution of college and career work that best supports an array of post-graduation possibilities for students;
- Strong organizational skills and project management skills; ability to focus on key priorities and a value placed on both process and outcomes;



- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills; ability to structure and process both qualitative and quantitative data and draw insightful conclusions from it;
- Depth and breadth of knowledge related to the college admissions process and requirements; understanding of current trends in the national landscape for college and career preparation and success;
- Ability to collect different perspectives, make difficult decisions, and stand by them;
- Ability to influence and lead with and without direct supervision/authority; represent/advocate for the team to key leadership and elevate the work across the organization;
- Highly effective communicator;
- Strong financial stewardship, including the ability to manage a team budget and align spending with organizational priorities and goals;
- Superior relationship management skills, including the ability to influence and lead others without direct supervision.

Mindset/Values

- Philosophical alignment with the mission and vision of Achievement First and an appreciation for the organization's history and legacy;
- Results-driven leader with an outcomes orientation;
- Belief in the importance of engaging with and investing in students, families, and other key stakeholders in college and career work;
- Racial equity-driven mindset: deep understanding of the assets and challenges that many historically marginalized communities bring; leverages this knowledge to ensure desired outcomes for students;
- A deep-seated commitment to leading with integrity and transparency;
- Innovative and entrepreneurial spirit; creates the space for teams/individuals to take risks and continuously improve;
- Comfort leading through ambiguity;
- Collaborative and accessible leadership style; present and engaged leader;
- Evidence of well-developed emotional intelligence, humility, and openness/receptiveness to feedback.

Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer and an organization that values diversity. People from all diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Achievement First has a continuing non-discrimination policy which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran or any other protected status. Spanish language proficiency is a plus. You can learn more about diversity at Achievement First here: <http://www.achievementfirst.org/about-us/diversity/>

This position offers a competitive salary range commensurate with experience. For NYC Metro Area based employees the salary range is \$131,000 to \$138,000. For CT, RI, and remote employees the salary range is \$118,000 to \$124,500. Achievement First also offers a comprehensive benefits package.

To apply, please email your resume to Jobs@k12searchgroup.com with a subject line of "Achievement First VP of College and Career Success."