

MAY 2013

Promising Practices in Professional Growth & Support:

Case Study of Achievement First

One of a series of ERS publications and tools on teacher Professional Growth & Support, this case study explores how one charter management network implements a strategic approach to improving teaching effectiveness at the system level. It is part of a set of four case studies of organizations with promising practices in this area.

Four organizations with promising practices in teacher Professional Growth & Support have significantly raised outcomes for low-income students. The charter management networks, Achievement First and Aspire Public Schools, and the two reform organizations, Teach Plus and Agile Mind, have successfully increased student achievement with a sustained focus on teaching effectiveness and capacity. In this publication, we will focus on Achievement First's holistic approach to teacher effectiveness, which integrates Professional Growth & Support with key human capital and teaching support functions such as curriculum development, performance evaluation, student assessment, compensation, and career path. In the sister case studies, we explore how Agile Mind's Instructional Guidance Systems for math and science provide school systems with a cost-effective way to gain expertise on Common Core standards; and how both Teach Plus and Aspire Public Schools emphasize teacher teaming around regular student data with support from content experts and teacher leaders. All four of these organizations leverage information and technology to identify priorities for students and teachers.

As these organizations respond to the challenges of Common Core standards, invest heavily in teaching capacity through teacher leadership and collaborative planning time, and capitalize on assessment and evaluation data and technology, they exemplify best practices in Professional Growth & Support. They reinforce what Education Resource Strategies (ERS) terms the Eight Principles of a Strategic Professional Growth & Support System. The eight principles below summarize ERS research and work with partner school systems and are the foundation for ERS' white paper, *A New Vision for Teacher Professional Growth & Support: Six Steps to a More Powerful School System Strategy* and related tools.

In each case study, we describe the mission and background, strategic approaches to Professional Growth & Support, performance results, program costs, lessons learned, and next steps. The distinctive approaches, success factors, and challenges that each organization faces illustrate these principles and the steps that school systems and educational leaders can take to make the most of Professional Growth & Support activities and spending.

Eight Principles of a Strategic Professional Growth & Support System

A strategic Professional Growth & Support system...

1. Integrates all human capital and teaching support functions to support the school system's broader improvement strategy and context
2. Invests primarily in job-embedded teacher growth through school-based content experts, teacher leaders, and time for teacher teams
3. Links results of performance evaluations to opportunities for growth that are ongoing and occur at key career junctures
4. Supports growth throughout a teacher's career by restructuring compensation and career path
5. Organizes sufficient teacher time to meet both individual growth and organization needs
6. Differentiates investments based on school and educator needs and performance levels
7. Ensures accountability and continuous improvement by assigning responsibility and measuring impact
8. Pays for ongoing costs with sustainable funding and leverages external resources, partners, and technology to promote quality and efficiency

Achievement First:

An Integrated Model for Supporting Teaching Excellence

Overview

The Achievement First (AF) network of public charter schools stakes its success on the ongoing development of a corps of excellent teachers—teachers capable of providing *all* students with the academic and character skills required to graduate from college and succeed in the world. Having observed a movement of some of the strongest teachers to administrative positions, AF now offers teachers a variety of opportunities to grow while remaining in the classroom. Since the opening of the first school in 1999 and the creation of the network in 2005, AF’s dedication to excellent classroom teaching has yielded 10-point or more achievement gains above comparable urban students. Ensuring great teaching has meant a significant investment by AF not only in training and coaching, but also in the time, technology, and professional support necessary to replicate success across a fast-expanding network of schools. AF continuously reinforces standards-based and data-driven excellence—during one-on-one coaching, school-based collaborative planning, and network-wide trainings in the summer and throughout the school year. **AF’s effective teaching hinges on its ability to emphasize professional growth at the level of individual, school, and network and to provide multiple milestones and supports in continuous, inter-connected ways.**

| Achievement First Background | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Description | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CMO located in NY, CT, and RI |
| Student Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12- and 13-point increases in ELA and math on 2011 NY state exam• 2.5 times the proficiency on grade 10 CAPT vs. host district• 90% K-2 proficiency on nationally normed reading in CT |
| Reach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7,000 students• 22 schools |
| Student Type | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• K-8 with three high schools• 78% low income |
| PGS Strategy Highlights | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrated Professional Growth & Support system• Flexible use of people, time, technology, and dollars• Robust teacher evaluation, coaching, and career path to leadership |

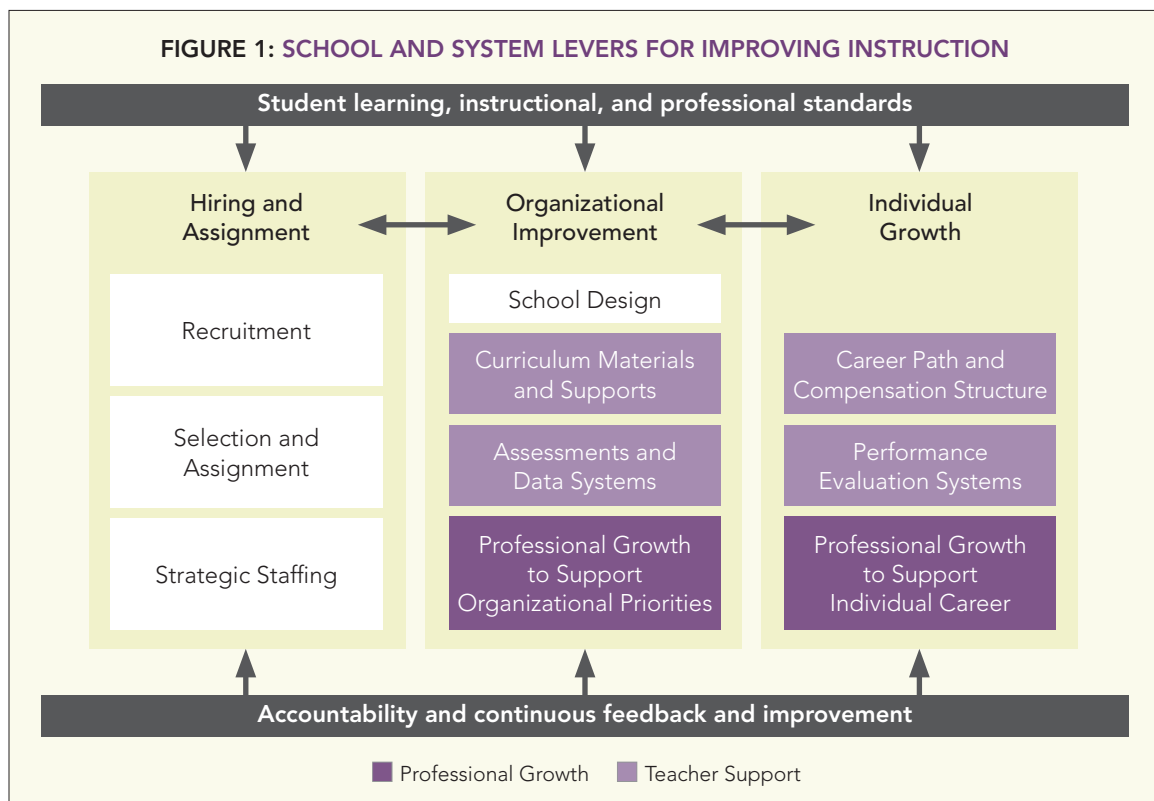
Mission & Program

After the founding of its first school, Armistad Academy, AF set out to prove that urban students can achieve at the same high levels as their affluent suburban counterparts. AF sees the achievement gap as “the civil rights issue of our times” and firmly believes that this gap can and must be closed. The mission of Achievement First is “to deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all

of America’s children, [who]...regardless of race or economic status, can succeed if they have access to a great education.” As the network continues to add to its current 22 schools in New York City, New Haven, Bridgeport, and Hartford, CT, AF further enacts its theory of change: that “by creating the equivalent of an urban public school ‘district,’ Achievement First can serve as proof that closing the achievement gap is possible at district scale and inspire broader reform.”¹ To date this means a network of 615 teachers serving over 7000 students, 78 percent of whom are eligible for FRL, mostly in grades K–8 with three high schools, with a total operating budget of \$82 million.

Achievement First’s Distinctive Model

Less than a decade old and operating only charter schools, Achievement First has avoided some of the constraints of traditional school organizations, schedules, and policies. This flexibility allows AF to look holistically at the many inter-connected components of an effective human capital system. AF emphasizes each key lever in the continuous cycle of improving instruction depicted in **Figure 1** below. Although AF places significant resources behind recruiting and hiring teachers for a quickly expanding network,² this case study emphasizes AF’s strategies for effective teacher development and support in the areas of both Organizational and Individual Teacher Growth. (See **Figure 1**—also found in the whitepaper: ERS (2013). *A New Vision for Teacher Professional Growth & Support: Six Steps to A More Powerful School System Strategy.*)



Organizational Improvement refers to the issues schools must address to continuously improve performance school-wide. This category includes four essentials: 1) school designs that organize time, group students and teachers, and distribute teacher talent to maximize student and teacher performance; 2) curriculum materials and supports; 3) assessment and reporting of student progress; and 4) professional growth opportunities. Professional growth aimed at organization improvement helps individuals and teams learn about the curriculum and common team practices, as well as engage in collective learning and planning to improve instruction. It includes professional development aimed at all teachers or subsets of teachers independent of career stage. For instance, we categorize cross-district training in Literacy for all elementary school teachers as Organizational Improvement, since system and school needs drive this initiative (although individual teachers will also benefit).

Clear standards for instruction and performance, including AF's Teaching Excellence Framework for evaluation, Teacher Career Pathway, and real-time student assessment systems are the scaffolding for AF's system of professional management and growth, providing check points against which the network measures, adjusts, and continuously improves. AF investments, whether in coaching, curriculum, student data, evaluation, or additional time for teacher teaming, continually reinforce one another to maximize growth. AF's flexibility over resource use is critical to the network's success, allowing AF to shift people, time, dollars, and technology to the areas that address gaps and strengthen teaching effectiveness.

A Strategic Professional Growth & Support System

The leaders of Achievement First support teacher development and student achievement at a system-wide level, designing a detailed professional growth system and career path that nurtures success at scale, across a growing network of schools. AF's approach mirrors current research on effective Professional Growth & Support systems in several key ways:

- the successful integration of the various Professional Growth & Support functions
- significant teacher time for professional growth
- an evaluation system that emphasizes feedback for individual improvement
- a career path and compensation structure tied to contribution and results³

ERS KEY PRINCIPLE

Integrates human capital, professional growth, and teaching support functions to support the school system's broader improvement strategy and context

As AF has grown, it has avoided the departmental fragmentation typical of large, traditional school systems.⁴ AF has built an infrastructure and devised roles that carefully connect professional growth with curriculum, assessment, evaluation, and other teaching support functions. **Figure 2** (page 6) summarizes the key ingredients of an integrated Professional Growth & Support system on the left. On the right we see how AF encourages coordination across these same areas.

FIGURE 2: AF’S INTEGRATED PROFESSIONAL GROWTH & SUPPORT SYSTEM

| Components of Integrated PGS Systems | Achievement First |
|---|--|
| <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes standards-based, content-specific materials by grade and subject • Informs assessment topics/metrics • Informs evaluation rubric | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guided curriculum in all Common Core subjects and grades • Reflected in aligned interim assessments • Part of weekly teacher observations |
| <p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent, formative, and summative • Accessible to individuals, teams, experts • Covers multiple grades/subjects • Mapped to specific curriculum • Informs adjustments to instruction for re-teaching and acceleration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four interim assessments, one summative per year • Athena system reports by teacher, student, skill, content • All subjects, grades K-12 • Assessments link to content and key skill areas |
| <p>Teacher Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes student outcomes • Includes frequent observations • Allows time for feedback • Maps to specific content and supports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student data included in Teacher Excellence Framework • Weekly informal and three formal per year • Weekly debrief with coach to revise/improve instruction |
| <p>Direct PG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content-focused • Uses regular collaborative planning time • Team-based with expert support • Uses formative assessment data • Links to specific areas of curriculum, support, and tools • Addresses individual career junctures and needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of pedagogy and content knowledge • Weekly grade/department meetings • Data days every six weeks based on interim assessments to refocus instruction on student needs • Better lesson platform for sharing lessons and materials linked to skill and content areas for each grade and subject |

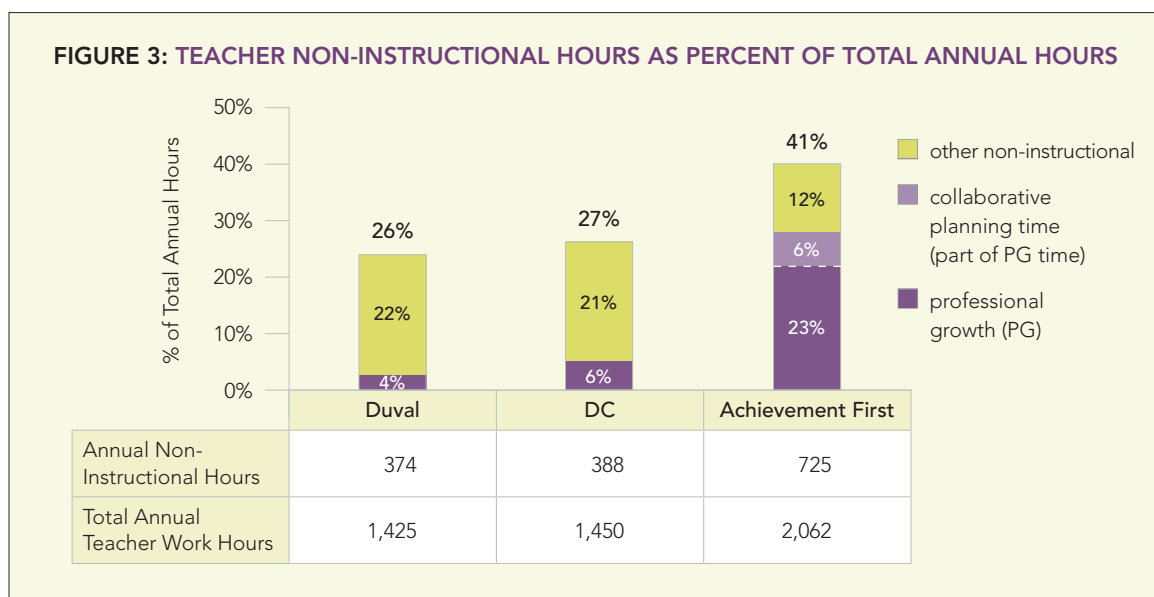
Looking at the above figure, AF’s revised scope and sequence covers all subjects and grades and is linked to corresponding interim assessments. Athena, the online assessment system, makes regular assessment data easily available by classroom and content area to inform individual coaching, weekly collaborative planning, periodic “data days,” and other professional growth activities. Ongoing assessment data are also a key part of the newly piloted evaluation system that helps direct teacher career paths and define individual growth areas. Coaches perform weekly informal observations and provide feedback to direct improvement along specific content areas. In addition, the online platform, Better Lesson, allows teachers and coaches to share lessons and materials to further individual and collective practice.

Achievement First’s annual calendar reveals a system that carefully orchestrates Professional Growth & Support functions, using available information, tools, and technology. (See AF’s Calendar in **Appendix A**, page 13). From August to June, AF synchronizes annual, interim, weekly, and daily activities related to curriculum, assessment, evaluation, and professional growth that inform and build upon one another. For instance, Athena supplies formative assessment data (orange boxes 1A–5A), measures student progress against AF’s scope and sequence (red bar), and informs the agenda for Data Days (green boxes) in which teams of teachers meet with school-based Academic Deans and grade and department heads to develop interventions, adjust instruction, and address performance gaps. Athena assessment data also feeds into AF Platinum, the network’s talent management system, available to coaches for one-on-one meetings with individual teachers. This technology further integrates AF’s Professional Growth & Support system.

ERS KEY PRINCIPLE

Organizes sufficient teacher time to meet both individual growth and organization needs

As AF’s annual calendar indicates, the network organizes significant time for improvement, both at the individual level and school and system level. Exempt from certain state and local policies that limit daily and yearly hours for students and teachers, AF’s school year is over 40 percent longer than six comparison urban school districts.⁵ AF is able to provide 35 percent, or 725 hours, to time outside of the classroom (compared to DC’s 398 contractually designated hours in 2011–2012.) Not only does AF set aside significantly more non-instructional time than most school systems, but it also makes sure that the time is used for teacher growth and development. While school systems typically spend most non-instructional time on unspecified teacher planning and release, as indicated in **Figure 3**, AF devotes nearly three-quarters of non-instructional hours to professional growth and collaborative planning.



Additional detail on AF's specific uses of non-instructional time (see **Appendix B**, page 14) shows a focus on both organizational improvement and individual growth. While organizational improvement occurs through network trainings and team-based data days, Friday PD, and principal-directed time in August, individual growth primarily occurs in one-on-one meetings with coaches during the evaluation debrief and release time.

ERS KEY PRINCIPLE

Links results of performance evaluations to opportunities for growth that are ongoing and occur at key career junctures

AF's evaluation system, summarized by the Teaching Excellence Framework in **Appendix C**, page 14, uses a combination of surveys, student assessment data, formal and informal observations, and coach feedback to continually inform teacher growth at all career stages. (The observations are guided by AF's Essentials of Effective Teaching summarized in **Appendix D**, page 15.) Although school systems often invest in induction when a teacher is new to the system or remediation when a teacher is struggling, few provide this type of targeted support as a teacher moves from novice to proficiency and mastery.

In the case of AF, the accessibility of evaluation information by coaching staff is critical to continuous teacher growth. Some school system policies deliberately separate evaluation from coaching, especially when there are employment decisions at stake. However, AF's coaching structure and AF Platinum, the talent management system, allows coaches full access to evaluation data. This, combined with low teacher-to-coach ratios, allows for many opportunities for teacher learning at AF. Principals coach and evaluate two-to-four teachers (in addition to about six deans and coordinators), while academic deans are responsible for coaching and evaluating between eight and 12 teachers. These spans of review are significantly lower than the ratios we see in other urban school systems, where coaches typically work with at least 20 and often 30–40 teachers.⁶

At AF there is also time in the weekly schedule for classroom walk-throughs and frequent constructive feedback. In addition to informal observations, the coach (along with the principal, area superintendent, or network staff member) performs two formal observations per year. AF teachers spend an average of 45 hours per year in debrief time post observations (versus less than five hours in DC, for example). This means an investment of \$750 per teacher per year for debriefing. The feedback time is essential to ensuring that evaluation yields changes and improvements in practice. The debrief should identify the big actions required to take teaching to the next level in terms of practice and student outcomes.⁷ AF has made a deliberate and sustained investment in the evaluation process, viewing it as the centerpiece of a human capital management system that develops and keeps strong practitioners in the classroom.

Armed with clear measures for teaching effectiveness, evaluators and coaches can identify teacher strengths and priorities for improvement. This, combined with value-added student assessment data, parent, student, and peer surveys, and the principal's assessment to ensure consistency, creates the rich data necessary to target support for teachers at key career junctures. This approach differentiates teachers' individual growth needs better than the system-wide trainings and self-directed coursework that traditional schools systems often provide as continuing education for teachers.

ERS KEY PRINCIPLE

Supports growth throughout a teacher's career by restructuring compensation and career path

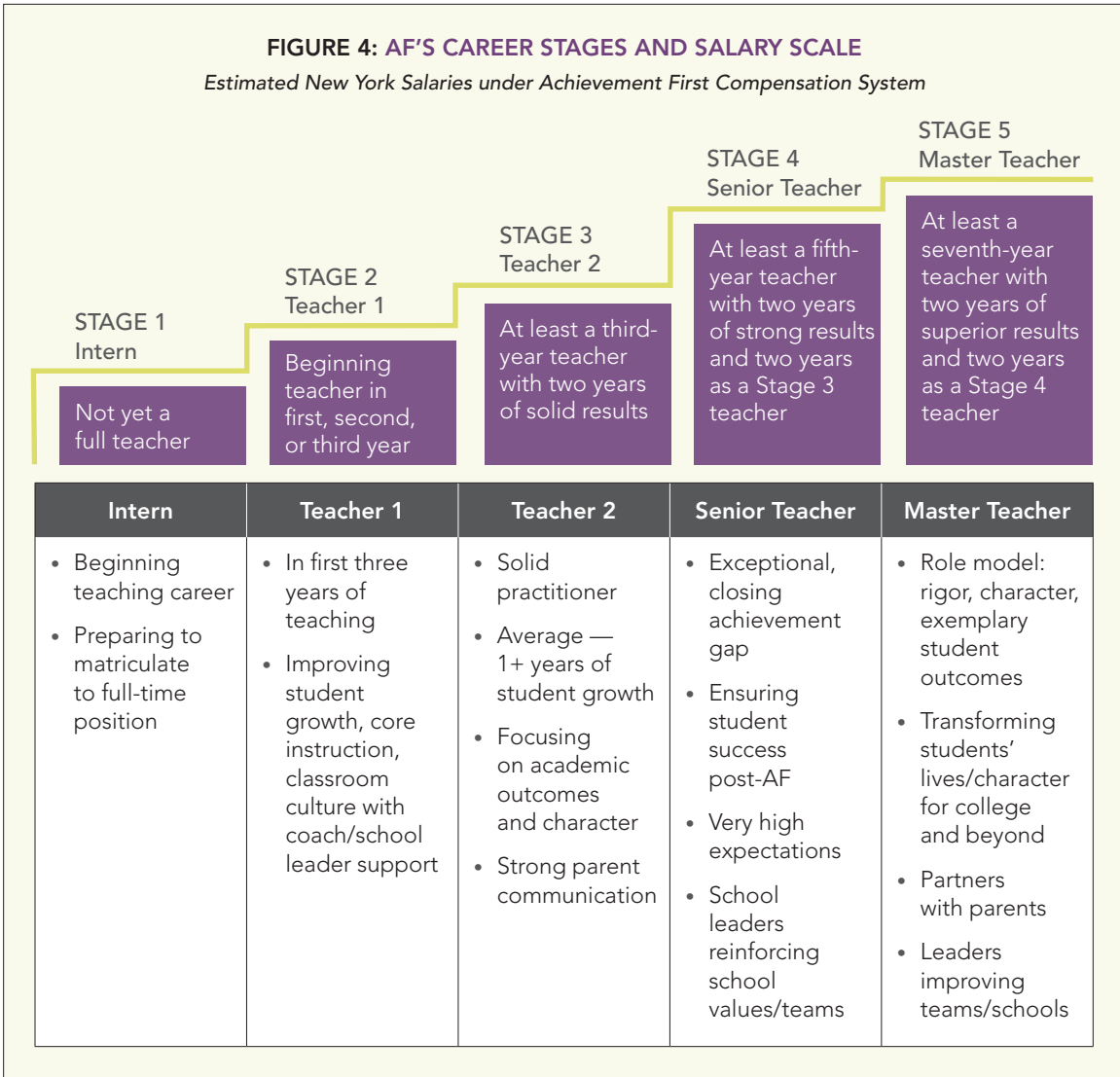
AF's evaluation system provides important information to the network's Teacher Career Pathway (TCP) and compensations system (see Figure 4 on the next page), both of which encourage continuous growth throughout a teacher's career. In its second year of implementation, AF's career path differs from the standard steps and lanes structures still in place in most school systems, which treat all teachers equally, rewarding years on the job and additional course credits regardless of teacher performance or contribution to student learning.⁸ In contrast, AF's TCP outlines clear skills that teachers must master to progress to the next step and salary range.

The stages are as follows:

- *Stage 1:* Intern is just beginning the teaching career.
- *Stage 2:* Teachers are generally within the first three years of teaching.
- *Stage 3:* Teachers, whose students consistently show an average of more than one year of growth, have over three years of teaching.
- *Senior or Distinguished Teachers:* Leaders in their school community and capable of closing the achievement gaps of their students within three years.
- *Master Teachers:* With exemplary student outcomes, put their students on a track to success in college and beyond.

An incoming teacher with a master's degree at or beyond the third year of teaching typically begins at Stage 3. After entry, however, observed contribution and performance, instead of course credits, determine his or her career trajectory, with a minimum of two years per stage. The bulk of AF teachers fall within Stage 2 and 3. The first cohort of teachers are eligible to reach Stage 4 during the 2012–2013 academic year and Stage 5 in 2013–2014. In this quickly growing network, which opens new schools each year, the level of new teacher recruits is high, currently amounting to about one third of the total teaching staff. The Teacher Career Pathway helps AF determine these teacher skills and needs, balance expertise across schools and teams, and place them on a trajectory of growth and success.

Appendix E, page 16, shows a Sample Stage Calculator, which combines weighted scores from observations, student value-added data, and other components of the Teaching Excellence Framework to determine an overall teacher rating. High enough total scores for two consecutive years advance teachers to the next stage and salary level. In addition to increases in salary, rewards for teachers higher on the Career Pathway include opportunities to collaborate with other expert teachers and network staff and to self-direct their own professional development budget. The Teacher Career Pathway provides clear milestones and incentives to help teachers set goals, stay on track, and maximize their individual growth.



Sources: Curtis, Rachel (March 2011). *Achievement First: Developing a Teacher Performance Management System that Recognizes Excellence*. The Aspen Institute.

The Teacher Career Pathway is geared toward rewarding excellent teachers who remain in the classroom and there are numerous leadership roles that AF teachers can pursue. A Leadership Fellows program trains high-performing teachers to write curriculum or move into other leadership positions such as academic dean, or grade or departmental chairs. Coaches attend four to eight workshops per year aimed at effectively coaching teachers, three days of orientation in summer for first years, and hands-on support from school and network leadership. This gives teacher leaders the training to co-observe and complete the principal/dean survey and the comprehensive lesson observation score. This career path offers financial incentives, responsibility, and other rewards that allow teachers to continue to challenge themselves without fully leaving the classroom.

Results

AF's dedication to excellent instruction has translated into significant jumps in student performance and academic gains at faster rates than local and statewide peers. Since New York increased its proficiency standards in 2010, the proportion of AF students attaining English Language Arts and math proficiency in 2012 rose by 20 and 18 percentage points, respectively. In contrast, statewide proficiency increases were at two and four percentage points, respectively. AF saw similarly strong results in Connecticut with 90 percent of K–2 students scoring proficient in nationally normed reading assessments. At the 10th grade level, 56 percent of AF students achieved at or above goal on CAPT versus 22 percent of their New Haven peers. AF middle school students have demonstrated dramatic growth as well. At Armistad Academy, Elm City College Prep, and AF Bridgeport Academy, the percentage of students at or above goal on Connecticut Mastery Test, averaged across all subjects, doubled from 4th grade in 2008 to 8th grade in 2012. In Bridgeport, the 8th grade cohort gained 51 percentage points from their 4th grade results, compared to statewide growth of only nine percentage points.⁹

Funding

As a growing charter network with significant expansion costs, AF currently receives 39 percent of its funding from private sources, 11 percent from federal sources, and the balance from state and local funding.¹⁰ While AF uses private sources to fund the start-up costs associated with new schools, the network pays the operational costs of established schools with ongoing state, local, and federal funding, saving grants for short-term programs and infrastructure building. Fully built-out K-8 schools operate at the same per pupil costs as their host districts. AF has used one-time foundation money to design and implement performance management platforms, including Athena. TIF grants paid for implementation of the new Teacher Career Pathway. In this way, AF has leveraged short-term dollars and technology for the cost-effective delivery of critical and ongoing information needed to adjust and improve instruction.

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

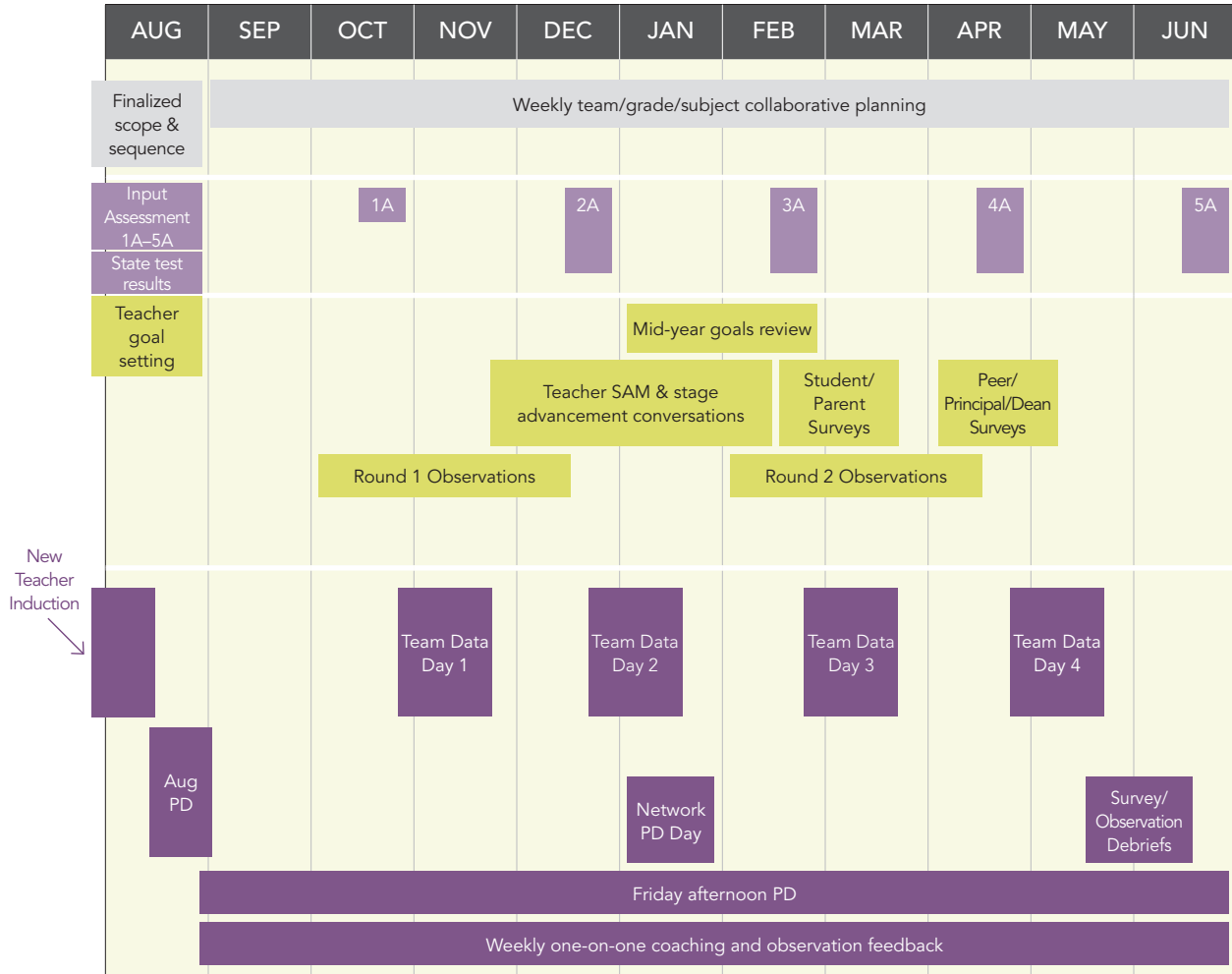
The key to AF's strategy has been to focus on the development and retention of effective classroom teachers—the most important school-based factor for student achievement. Staying true to this vision has enabled the network to continue to grow and excel at its current pace. Leveraging research, AF has built a rigorous performance management system, which uses technology and a strong coaching staff to bring together the results of student assessment and teacher evaluation. These metrics identify gaps and gauge progress against Common Core standards in every grade and subject, inform interventions, and allow the ongoing improvement of everyday content and delivery by individuals and teams of teachers. Accountability is inherent in AF's performance rubrics, career path, and compensation system. AF regularly uses data from these systems to measure progress, provide rewards, identify issues, and outline next steps for teachers, coaches, and others in the chain of command.

This constant self-assessment allows AF to revisit the effectiveness of various programs, eliminate less-effective initiatives, and make resource trade-offs in favor of the most important Professional Growth & Support priorities. As AF and the school systems in which the network operates continue to feel budget pressure, AF's flexible use of resources will be critical to sustaining success. To date, AF has invested in systems and infrastructure, a longer teacher day and year, centrally controlled teacher professional growth, teacher leadership roles, and coaching of individuals and teams. Going forward, AF will need to continually weigh the relative importance and impact of various actions—staff compensation and incentives versus technology or time, network trainings, curriculum, evaluation, or assessment—to find the best ways to cost-effectively improve teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

Sources

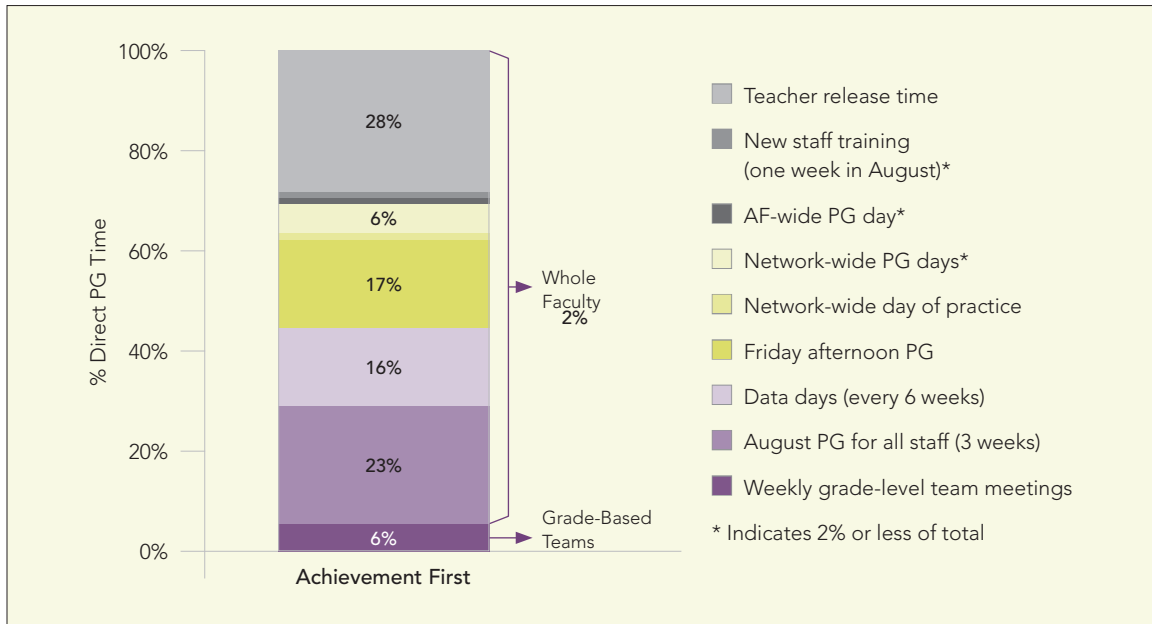
- Achievement First website. www.achievementfirst.org.
- Achievement First (2012–2013). *Teacher Career Pathway School Leader Guidebook*.
- Achievement First. *Growth Opportunities at Achievement First*.
- Curtis, R. (March 2011). *Achievement First: Developing a Teacher Performance Management System that Recognizes Excellence*. The Aspen Institute.
- ERS Interviews (August 2012). *Achievement First Network Leadership*: Paige Maclean, Kurtis Indorf, Sarah Coons, Amber McKay.

APPENDIX A: SCHEDULE OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND TEACHING SUPPORT FUNCTIONS¹¹







Curriculum
 Assessment
 Evaluation
 Professional Development

APPENDIX B: AF'S USE OF TEACHER NON-INSTRUCTIONAL TIME





APPENDIX C: TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

| OUTCOMES | | INPUTS | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Student Achievement</p>  <p>Data on the teacher value-added for student achievement on various tests</p> <p>Principal assessment of data accuracy and consistency with previous results</p> | <p>Student Character Development</p>  <p>Student survey on their experience in the classroom</p> <p>Parent survey of relationships and character development</p> | <p>Quality Instruction</p>  <p>Lesson observations based on the Essentials of Great Instruction</p> <p>Principal assessment of mastery of the Cycle of Effective Instruction</p> | <p>Core Values and Contributions</p>  <p>Peer survey on core values and contributions to the mission</p> <p>Principal assessment of core values and contributions to the mission</p> |

APPENDIX D: AF'S ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

1. *Great AIMS:* Each lesson includes learning objectives that reflect high expectations and drive learning activities
2. *Exit Ticket/Assessment of Student Mastery of the AIMS:* Teacher measures student mastery of the AIMS at the end of class with the goal of 85 percent of students reaching mastery
3. *Most Effective and Efficient Strategies to Teach the AIMS:* Teacher demonstrates content knowledge and uses the most effective and efficient strategy to guide students to mastery; there is a sense of urgency and purpose in the classroom and the pace of instruction is brisk
4. *Modeling/Guided Practice (I/We or We):* Includes mini-lesson, guided practice and checking for understanding
5. *Sustained, Successful, Independent Practice (You):* Students have ample opportunities to practice
6. *Classroom Culture:* Each class demonstrates high expectations and clear routines, joy factor, and the use of positive framing to correct behavior; students are given responsibilities, tools and strategies to fix problems they have created; and the teacher uses key moments in class to reinforce character skills
7. *Student Engagement:* Teacher uses high engagement strategies and insists on 100 percent of students on task
8. *Academic Rigor:* Students do most of the talking and working, teacher employs planned, rigorous questioning and pushes for top-quality oral responses and student work
9. *Cumulative Review:* Students get opportunities to review and practice skills already mastered as part of the lesson and homework routine
10. *Differentiation:* Teacher works to ensure that the needs of every student are met, particularly during independent practice

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE CAREER STAGE CALCULATOR

| Teaching Excellence Framework | | Date of Data Collection | Possible Points | Network Averages | My Results | Scaled Score ^A | Percent of Evaluation (Weights) ^B | Weighted Scores by Measure ^C | My Weighted Scale Score ^D | Stage 4 Minimums |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Student Achievement  | Your assessment 1: F&P | June 2012 | 0-40 | TBD | Positive Impact 25 points | 250 | 13.0% | 32.5 | 57.0 | Data will be available in late Fall 2012 |
| | Your assessment 2: Terra Nova | May 2012 | 0-40 | TBD | Exemplary Impact 35 points | 350 | 7.0% | 24.5 | | |
| Student Character  | Student Survey | April 2012 | 1-5 | TBD | 4.3 | 344 | 7.5% | 25.8 | 49.2 | Average of student and parent surveys minimum of TBD |
| | Parent Survey | March 2012 | 1-5 | TBD | 3.9 | 312 | 7.5% | 23.4 | | |
| Quality of Instruction  | Observation 1 | October 2011 | 10-100 | TBD | 47 | 188 | 12.5% | 23.5 | 110.0 | Average of all observations minimum of TBD |
| | Observation 2 | January 2012 | 10-100 | TBD | 50 | 200 | 12.5% | 25.0 | | |
| | Observation 3 | April 2012 | 10-100 | TBD | 68 | 272 | 12.5% | 34.0 | | |
| | Comprehensive lesson observation | June 2012 | 10-100 | TBD | 55 | 220 | 12.5% | 27.5 | | |
| Core Values & Contributions to Team  | Peer Survey | May 2012 | 1-5 | TBD | 3.6 | 288 | 7.5% | 21.6 | 42.6 | Average of the peer and principal survey minimum of TBD |
| | Principal/Dean Survey | May 2012 | 1-5 | TBD | 3.5 | 280 | 7.5% | 21.0 | | |
| TOTAL SCORE based on all evaluation components | | | | | | | 100% | | 258.8 out of 400 | Data will be available in late Fall 2012 |

^A My results scaled to 400 (400/max points possible x my results)

^B Identified weights for each component

^C Scaled score x percent of evaluation

^D Sum of weighted scores by component

Endnotes

- 1 Achievement First website. www.achievementfirst.org.
- 2 New Schools Venture Fund (June 2007). Achievement First: The Design and Implementation of a Highly Effective Teacher Recruitment System. San Francisco, CA. http://tntp.org/assets/tools/AF%20NSVF+TeacherRecruitingCaseStudy%20TSLT_0311.pdf
- 3 See the *Eight Principles of a Strategic Professional Growth & Support System* in the Introduction. A review of relevant research can be found in ERS' white paper, *A New Vision for Teacher Professional Growth & Support: Six Steps to a More Powerful School System Strategy*, generously funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- 4 Miles, K. (2002). *Rethinking District Professional Development Spending to Support School Improvement: Lessons from Comparative Spending Analysis*. Watertown, MA: Education Resource Strategies.
- 5 Education Resource Strategies (2011). *The Teaching Job: Restructuring for Effectiveness. Practical Guides for District Transformation*. Watertown, MA. p. 54
- 6 With the exception of Turnaround schools, DC's and Duval County's teacher-to-coach ratios were about 40:1 in the years of ERS' analysis of Professional Growth & Support spending. Both have since been attempting to lower the span of control.
- 7 Curtis, R. (2011).
- 8 Research by Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) and Ehrenberg and Brewer (1994) shows neither experience (after the first three to five years) nor master's degrees (except degrees in math) are correlated with teaching effectiveness.
- 9 Achievement First website: www.achievementfirst.org.
- 10 ERS (2013).
- 11 Curtis, R. (March 2011).

Acknowledgements

We would like to recognize the contributions of ERS team members Barbara Christiansen and Anna Sommers for the work related to these case studies. We are indebted to the leaders of the profiled organizations for sharing significant time and information for our data gathering and verification. These individuals include:

Aspire: *Heather Kirkpatrick, VP of Education*

Teach Plus: *Monique Burns Thompson, President; Celine Coggins, Founder and CEO; Meghan O'Keefe, National Director of T3 Initiative; Nathan Pelsma, Director of Finance and Operations*

Achievement First: *Paige MacLean, Senior Director, Strategic Partnerships; Kurtis Indorf, Senior Director, Program Strategy and Design; Sara Keenan, VP, Leadership Development; Amber McKay, Senior Director, Data Strategy; Sarah Coon, Senior Director, Teacher Career Pathways; and Tracy Epp, Chief Academic Officer*

Agile Mind: *Linda Chaput, Founder and CEO; Massie McAdoo; David Savage, VP and National Director of Professional Services; Gregg McFarland, President of Agile Initiatives; Stephanie Surlis, Senior Program Manager for Strategic Development*

We are grateful to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for providing funding for this project and guidance from Sarah Buhayar and Mike Copland. ERS is solely responsible for any ideas presented in this paper and for any errors.



Education Resource Strategies | 480 Pleasant Street, Suite C-200 | Watertown, MA 02472 | Phone: 617.607.8000

ERS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping urban school systems organize talent, time, and money to create great schools at scale. For more information, see ERStrategies.org