

Colorado Department of Education School Redesign RFI:  
Management Partners and Non-Profit Networks

**Organization name: Empower Schools**

<b>Summary</b>
<p>Empower Schools is a non-profit organization that supports districts in creating systems that empower school leaders to make key decisions around the use of people, time, and money. The organization states: “We believe schools and communities thrive when educators are empowered and held accountable for making the key decisions at the school level that are best for students.” The organization believes in creating conditions at the district level to increase school-level autonomy and innovation, while maintaining district and community voice and ownership. Empower has a strong track record of supporting districts in engaging with multiple, high-quality partners to fulfill the unique needs of schools.</p> <p>Empower supports districts in creating Empowerment Zones for specific subsets of schools, but also supports district-wide improvement efforts and coordination.</p>

Question	Completed Sufficiently? (Yes, No, Partially)	Notes
How will you differentiate your services to meet the unique needs of schools and districts in Colorado, especially those with historically underserved students?	Yes	Empower Schools has experience working with districts with persistently low-performing schools and high proportions of underserved students. They have a track record of success with Empowerment Zones in Massachusetts and recently partnered with Denver Public Schools on an Empowerment Zone initiative.
When considering partnering with a school or district that you have not partnered with before, what would be the key aspects or conditions of an agreement you would need to have in place with the district (or authorizer) in order to	Yes	The response explains that zone schools should have a common thread such as geographic proximity, feeder pattern, or common instructional practice.

make your school successful?		One way the response could be strengthened is to describe how the organization would work with smaller districts to secure autonomy when a zone structure is less appropriate (e.g. the district has fewer than eight schools).
Describe your experience working with other third party providers to support coherent school and district improvement.	Yes	The response clearly articulates the criteria for and experience with working with other third party providers. Empower has a background in supporting districts in selecting high-quality partners to fulfill capacity gaps and meet the unique needs of schools.
<b>Evidence of Track Record of Improved Student and School Outcomes:</b> Please illustrate your organization’s track record in dramatically improving schools or districts and radically increasing outcomes for targeted groups of students. Include a description of the criteria and the data that you use to determine the impact of your work. Please highlight the context and location of where this work has occurred. Formal research studies are preferred, if available.	Yes	Strong, compelling evidence of success in Lawrence, Salem, and Springfield in Massachusetts.  Emerging evidence from Denver Public Schools’ Luminary Learning Network.

<b>References</b>	
Are there three references listed?	Yes
Comments about references	The provided references are appropriate and include past and current clients. CDE strongly encourages interested schools and districts to reach out to the references on their own.