

Colorado Department of Education School Redesign RFI:
Charter Management Organizations, Networks and Schools

Organization name: University Prep

Summary
<p>University Preparatory Schools (“U Prep”) currently consists of two campuses: Arapahoe Street and Steele Street. Arapahoe Street, the flagship campus, opened its doors to kindergarten and first grade students in fall 2011. Steele Street opened in August 2016 as a full K-5 turnaround. U Prep currently operates in Denver serving “high poverty, high needs students”. U Prep has a track record of success at both campuses citing impressive data around family experience, teacher retention, language development and core academic outcomes. U Prep’s application indicates they are “open to working with any front range districts with similar demographics” as their existing schools. The application provides clear information regarding their educational model, strategies for community engagement and processes for opening up new schools and partnering productively with school districts.</p>

Application Question	Completed Sufficiently? (Yes, No, Partially)	Notes
Describe your organization’s mission and educational model. Describe how your model meets the needs of historically underserved students (students living in poverty, English language learners, and racial/ethnic minority students).	Yes	U Prep clearly describes their mission and educational model. U Prep was founded in 2010 with the mission of “building a foundation of skills, knowledge and character, University Prep educates every scholar for a four year college degree and a life of opportunity.” U Prep focuses on a “high poverty, high needs population.” U Prep outlines key program components, major instructional methods, assessment strategies and core ELA and math practices.
What do you anticipate would be the greatest challenges making your educational approach successful at a turnaround	Yes	U Prep notes its prior experience with turnaround taking over Pioneer Charter School

<p>school or as a new school in a new community, and how would you go about working to address those challenges?</p>		<p>and it becoming its second campus at Steele Street. Based on this experience, U Prep anticipates challenges around “family and community engagement, understanding the academic needs of scholars and running a successful incubation/ prep year.” U Prep explains how they were able to overcome these challenges at the Steele Street Campus.</p>
<p>When considering operating a school in a district that you have not operated in 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 make your school successful?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>U Prep has only operated in Denver Public Schools. U Prep is open to engaging in conversations with other districts but would need “autonomies necessary to run our existing program.” In addition, U Prep would like access to get to know the families in the community that the school serves.</p>
<p>Please describe your action plan for engaging with local communities. How might the charter network, management organization or school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage with parents, community members, school and district staff and leaders, and local school board members to design a school that meets the community’s needs and has community support? ● Address the varied funding models found in different districts? ● Address the unique authorizing requirements and policies of different districts? ● What do you perceive would be the likely differences in districts other than the ones you currently work with? ● How would you approach facility acquisition in other districts? 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>U Prep details a strong action plan for engaging with local communities citing efforts they have used in the past. Currently, U Prep employs two full time Community Engagement staff members “to manage outreach for current and future campuses.” U Prep describes how they will approach community engagement for any future campuses.</p> <p>U Prep outlines potential areas where they could be financially creative with their model as well as the potential for additional outside sources to provide financial assistance.</p> <p>All of the sub-questions are addressed concisely and thoroughly in the application.</p>

<p>Evidence of Track Record of Improved Student and School Outcomes: 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.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The application highlights the strong academic growth and overall performance seen at U Prep including data around ELA, math, teacher retention rates, English language development and parent satisfaction rates.</p>
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<p>References</p>	
<p>Are there three references listed?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Comments about references</p>	<p>The provided references are appropriate and include current partnerships. CDE will be contacting references and notes from those calls may be requested by districts. However, CDE strongly encourages interested schools and districts to reach out to the references on their own.</p>