

Position: Director

Location: Dallas/Fort-Worth, Texas (Preferred)

Position Summary

Reporting to one of Empower's Partners, you will be responsible for leading a set of complex projects to benefit students across the country, especially in Texas and potentially in other states such as Colorado and/or Louisiana. You will lead project teams and work closely with state and district leaders to empower public schools, driving the creation, execution, and implementation of strategic partnerships.

This position is based in Dallas/Fort-Worth, TX and applicants must be willing to travel up to 30% of the time (post-pandemic) to support our on-the-ground work in districts across the region. While we prefer to base the position in the DFW-region, we are open to considering candidates based in Austin or another major Texas city.

Who We Are

Empower Schools works with local communities across the country to help design, launch, and support empowered district school partnerships and autonomous zones within districts. We believe that schools and communities thrive when educators are empowered and held accountable for making key decisions that are best for students.

Our approach centers around the following focus areas:

- *Establishing Partnerships:* We execute foundational and operational necessities for the launch of new networks—from complex, multi-stream project management to crafting governance agreements/contracts, to navigating state and local policy pathways.
- *Supporting Leaders:* We bring deep expertise and strong support skills to help school, system, and community leaders design and launch networks of empowered district schools. We help build capacity in network and district leaders to implement and sustain the work.
- *Convening Practitioners:* We host convenings and organize learning cohorts for school, network and district leaders pursuing empowered school strategies.
- *Spreading the Word:* We identify and narrate bright spot successes and best practices in empowered public school models and innovative, sustaining governance structures.

Empower's work is informed by our experience as the design and launch partner of several public school improvement and innovation efforts across the country including, most recently, Colorado and Texas where we have built on the ground teams to drive state-specific work. To date, we have supported the design and launch of fourteen empowering partnerships across five states, serving more than 28,000 students attending 60 schools.

Our core work is most often focused on partnering with districts and developing context-specific partnerships between district schools and nonprofit education organizations. We are supported by an ecosystem of partners and stakeholders in each community, often organized at a state-level in partnership with state agencies. Developing both site and state-specific strategies and relationships is key to our work. Visit us at www.empowerschools.org to learn more.

Who You Are

You are committed to centering racial and socioeconomic equity in your work. You understand the impact of systemic and implicit racism and challenge yourself and others to support transformational outcomes for students across race and class.

Big ideas and even bigger challenges excite you. You are committed to using your leadership skills and creative thinking to develop local solutions to address systemic challenges and create better educational opportunities for students and families.

You thrive in a rapidly-evolving entrepreneurial environment, get excited about building new and impactful work, and recognize that resourcefulness and effective communication skills are key to your success in this environment.

You have experience working in K-12 public education and have applied your project management and coalition-building skills in various ways in the field.

You are able to quickly and effectively build strong relationships and influence others with your ideas. You are a fast learner and are excited by developing creative solutions with multiple stakeholders to ensure the education system is serving all students well.

You are able to take ideas and solutions from brainstorm to successful completion, while engaging and incorporating the perspectives of others along the way. Your strong project management skills allow you to develop processes and systems to manage complex projects involving multiple stakeholders and tight deadlines to high standards.

You make time to reflect on your work in order to continually improve your effectiveness, you know how to self-advocate in order to get the support that you need, and you can keep it all in perspective with a sense of humor.

In short, you are a strong generalist with a broad skill-set who is interested in leading critical state-, district-, and school-level work in partnership with a dynamic team.

What You'll Do

- Cultivate new partnerships and scope high-impact projects
 - Build meaningful relationships with state education agency staff, district leaders, school leaders, and education champions to expand Empower's impact to new regions
 - Collaborate with potential partners and other key stakeholders to align on Empower's role and craft specific project plans
- Lead project teams that drive student outcomes and systems change
 - Lead Empower staff and consultants over multi-month or even multi-year engagements to set and execute district strategic plans (including through the Texas Education Agency's System of Great Schools) and/or design context-appropriate partnerships in collaboration with community partners
 - Navigate complex political and organizational dynamics to align diverse stakeholders and build buy-in for the partnership vision
- Serve as a go-to expert to support partnership implementation at every stage
 - Develop deep trusting relationships with school and system leaders and serve as a thought partner as their needs evolve and their partnerships mature
 - Support districts, Zones, and autonomous school networks with strategic planning, change management, organizational design, communications, and nonprofit leadership
- Position Empower Schools to effectively engage in the state and local education ecosystem
 - Build and deepen Empower's relationships with aligned education organizations and coalitions across target geographies
 - Cultivate allies and champions for Empower's theory of change and the work of our district and Zone partners
 - Engage with existing and potential new philanthropic partners to secure financial support for Empower and the partners we support
 - Contribute to the development and execution of organizational communications, including events and messaging
- Build the capacity and impact of the Empower Schools team
 - Contribute to Empower's long-term strategy
 - Coach and develop junior staff members to increase their skills and impact
 - Build positive team culture
 - Support recruitment and onboarding of new staff
 - Live out our values, especially our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Qualifications

- Strong alignment with the mission of Empower Schools, including demonstrated interest in educational equity and systems-level change

- At least 5 years of relevant work experience, especially in project and team management roles
 - Education sector experience required
 - Consulting and/or strategic planning work preferred
 - Strong relationships and experience in the Texas K12 education space preferred
- Exceptional strategic thinking and problem-solving skills
- Strong, demonstrated commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity & inclusion
- Track record of successfully manage complex initiatives involving multiple stakeholders
- Dynamic and effective prioritization skills, enabling strong, ontime completion of multiple projects with shifting timelines
- Demonstrated ability to build successful relationships with teammates, partners, external organizations, and education leaders
- Ability to navigate an often partisan and politically challenging environment and work collaboratively with stakeholders holding differing viewpoints to align interests and build consensus
- Experience building partnerships and expanding organizational impact to new types of support and/or geographies
- An entrepreneurial mindset and ability to thrive in a fast-paced, rapidly changing environment
- Strong track record of managing and developing direct reports
- Excellent written and oral communications skills, including the ability to translate ideas into clear, compelling messaging and documents (e.g., in PowerPoint and Word formats)

Compensation

The salary for Directors starts at \$110,000 per year. Empower Schools offers a comprehensive benefits package, including health and dental insurance, retirement benefits, life and disability insurance, and flexible spending accounts.

Application

Interested and qualified applicants should send a cover letter and resume to careers@empowerschools.org. Please note "Director - Texas" in the subject line of your email and please save your attachments using the following convention: LastName_FirstName_CoverLetter and LastName_FirstName_Resume.

We support equal opportunity and value building the diversity of our team as we grow. We seek individuals of all races, ethnicities, abilities, and creeds to support our organization's work and encourage individuals from historically under-represented backgrounds to apply.