



Position: Director

Location: Indiana (Flexible)

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Preferred application deadline: June 3, 2021

Position Summary

Reporting to one of Empower's Partners, you will be responsible for leading project teams, working closely with state and district leaders to drive sustainable innovation within districts, and support the design, launch, and success of empowered district school systems and Empowerment Zones across Indiana.

Empower has been working in Indiana since 2019. We partnered with the South Bend Community School Corporation and the Indiana State Board of Education to help design and launch the South Bend Empowerment Zone, which is an innovative district partnership charged with transforming five of South Bend Community School Corporation's schools. In the Spring of 2021, Empower was selected by the Indiana Department of Education to help lead a consortium of Local Education Agencies through a strategic planning process to help maximize the impact of federal COVID relief funding. In this role, you will help to build off of our initial work and support districts to strategically invest these funds to reimagine and rebuild an education system that is less-rigid and more collaborative, student-centered, and capable of meeting students' individual needs - now and in the future.

If public health conditions make travel possible then applicants must be willing to travel up to 30% of the time (primarily within Indiana) to support the growth of our partnerships and on-the-ground support in communities across the state. As part of this role, you will receive coaching, mentorship, and guidance from experienced leaders inside and outside of our organization.

Who We Are

Empower Schools works with local communities across the country to help design, launch, and support empowered district school partnerships and Zones. 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 nonprofits. 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.

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 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 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 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 enjoy working individually and as part of a team and are able to quickly and effectively build strong relationships, make connections across distinct projects, and influence others with your ideas.
- 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.



How You'll Help

As a Director, you will manage an array of important initiatives and relationships, playing a key role in enabling schools to make the best decisions for students in communities across Indiana and nationally. Your work will vary based on the needs over time and will include the following:

- **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 COVID Relief Strategic Planning Consortium) 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
- **Relationship and Project Management**
 - Manage a variety of strategic planning and launch projects to advance empowered district schools communities and school systems:
 - Identify and connect with district, higher education, and community partners to understand their vision and identify opportunities to support
 - Develop and manage a plan to successful completion while building buy-in and support from key stakeholders along the way
 - Ensure that the day-to-day work is aligned with the overall goals of the project, and adjust as needed
 - Proactively identify areas of relative weakness or knowledge gaps and update teammates on project progress and relevant overlaps across workstreams
 - Develop proposals and other supporting materials to explain Empower's approach to funders and other stakeholders.
- **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
- **Additional support as needed**
 - Provide leverage and capacity on additional growth projects outside of Indiana as need

Qualifications

- At least 5 years of work experience
 - Educational expertise required
 - Consulting and strategic planning work preferred
 - Strong relationships and experience in the Indiana K12 education space preferred
- Demonstrated interest in and strong alignment with the goals of Empower Schools
- Strong, demonstrated commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity & inclusion
- Track record of successfully managing ambiguous and complex projects and initiatives involving multiple components
- Demonstrated ability to build successful relationships with teammates, partners, external organizations, and education leaders
- Dynamic and effective prioritization skills, enabling strong, ontime completion of multiple projects with shifting timelines
- 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
- Excellent written and oral communications skills, including the ability to translate ideas into clear, compelling documents (e.g., in PowerPoint and Word formats)
- BA/BS or advanced degree preferred

Salary and Benefits

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 apply [here](#). Note: the application deadline for this position is June 3, 2021. We do not guarantee review of applications submitted after this date.

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.