



Part I: Cover Page – Organization Information

Organization Information	
Organization Name:	University Preparatory Schools <input type="checkbox"/> New or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation Submission
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Organization Category (select all that apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charter Network, Charter Management Organization or Charter School <input type="checkbox"/> Turnaround Leader Development Provider <input type="checkbox"/> Management Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement Specialist	
Preferred Geographical Region(s) in Colorado to Work In (select all that apply)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Denver <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Front Range (Colorado Springs, Ft. Collins) <input type="checkbox"/> Rural / Mountain / Western Slope	

Indicate the school district(s) or BOCES your organization is willing and able to engage with:

District name

Academy 20 School District	Weld County Re-1 School District
Adams 12 Five Star Schools School District	Weld County School District Re-3j School District
Adams County 14 School District	Weld County School District Re-8 School District
Adams-Arapahoe 28j School District	Westminster 50 School District
Boulder Valley Re 2 School District	Widefield 3 School District
Cherry Creek 5 School District	
Cheyenne Mountain 12 School District	
Colorado Springs 11 School District	
Denver County 1 School District	
Douglas County Re 1 School District	
Englewood 1 School District	
Hanover 28 School District	
Harrison 2 School District	
Jefferson County R-1 School District	
Littleton 6 School District	
Manitou Springs 14 School District	
Mapleton Public Schools, Adams 1 County School District 1	
Poudre R-1 School District	
Pueblo City 60 School District	
Pueblo County 70 School District	
School District 27j School District	
St. Vrain Valley Re 1j School District	

II. Narrative Responses

- a. Provide an update on your organization's work and progress since the original RFI submission in 2018.

Since submitting our original RFI in February 2018 University Prep has continued to focus our work on our existing two campuses in Denver, CO. While we remain completely open to engaging in turnaround and restart efforts within many school districts across our state, we have thus far found it to be difficult to access opportunities. As per our original RFI, our greatest interest and commitment lies in directly restarting schools that demonstrate chronic struggles and performance gaps serving the most marginalized populations. We are committed to doing that work with families and alongside of communities. We recognize how challenging turnaround work can be, and we remain enthusiastic for the immense potential that lies within it.

At our existing two campuses we would like to highlight several data points that illustrate progress since our original submission.

Enrollment

At our University Prep – Steele St. campus enrollment has grown from 226 in the first year of the turnaround (2015-16) to 325 (2019-20). This 44% increase over four years is incredibly exciting as it is occurring during a time where there is rapid decline in student enrollment at the elementary level both in our community (Near Northeast Denver) and the city as a whole.

Academic Performance:

2017-18 School Year

- Student Demographics:
 - Arapahoe St. – 81% FRL, 7% SPED, 14% ELL, 94% Students of Color
 - Steele St. – 89% FRL, 12% SPED, 71% ELL, 98% Students of Color
- 5th Grade Highlight:
 - The state average proficiency (meets/exceeds expectations) in 5th grade for the 2017-18 school year for FRL students in ELA was **30%** and in math it was **19%**. University Prep scholars, represented by incredibly high FRL rates, continue to demonstrate that demography is not destiny, dramatically outperforming the average performance for the FRL subgroup.
 - ELA – Proficiency (*% Meets/Exceeds*)
 - Arapahoe St. - **65.5%**
 - Steele St. - **42.9%**
 - Math – Proficiency (*% Meets/Exceeds*)
 - Arapahoe St. - **58.2%**
 - Steele St. - **57.1%**
 - Growth Highlight:
 - Median growth percentiles for 4th and 5th graders continue to demonstrate that children at University Prep are growing at a faster rate than their peer group across the state.

- Arapahoe St. – ELA MGP - **62**, Math MGP – **62**
- Steele St. – ELA MGP - **61**, Math MGP - **62**

2018-19 School year

- Student Demographics
 - Arapahoe St. – 86% FRL, 9% SPED, 11% ELL, 94% Students of Color
 - Steele St. – 91% FRL, 13% SPED, 55% ELL, 96% Students of Color
- ELA proficiency across U Prep’s two campuses for 4th and 5th grade averaged **45%**, more than 20% above the average in our local community. Both grade levels also performed above the Denver Public Schools average for ELA proficiency.
- Our 4th and 5th graders at Arapahoe St. and Steele St. continue to learn at a more rapid rate than their peers in ELA, achieving growth results that place them in the **90th** and **84th** percentile respectively against more than 100 schools serving elementary aged students.
 - Arapahoe St. MGP – **65**
 - Steele St. MGP - **62**

Parent Satisfaction

Parent responses to the DPS satisfaction survey continue to demonstrate that families have a deep pride and love in the University Prep schools they are a part of.

- 2017-18 sample data (*%’s represent families who agree or strongly agree*):

Question/Statement	Arapahoe St.	Steele St.
I would recommend this school to others.	92%	91%
How satisfied are you with parent-teacher conferences that provide information that is clear, usable, and linked to my child's learning.	97%	99%
How satisfied are you with your child’s school’s ability to provide academic support needed to meet your child’s needs.	94%	96%
The school creates a school environment that helps children learn.	96%	97%
My child’s school is a safe place to learn.	94%	99%
The teachers care about his/her success.	98%	98%
My child’s school motivates my child to work hard.	95%	95%
My child’s school prepares him/her for the next academic year.	95%	96%
My child’s school prepares him/her for college and career.	96%	92%

- 2018-19 sample data (*%s represent families who agree or strongly agree*):

Question/Statement	Arapahoe St.	Steele St.
How satisfied are you with parent-teacher conferences that provide information that is clear, usable, and linked to my child's learning.	99%	93%
How well does your child's school make parents feel welcome.	91%	90%
How satisfied are you with your child's school's ability to provide academic support needed to meet your child's needs.	91%	92%
My child's school is a safe place to learn.	90%	91%
The teachers care about his/her success.	89%	93%
My child's school prepares him/her for the next academic year.	87%	91%

- b. Describe any new work you have done or are doing in Colorado schools and districts since the original RFI submission in 2018.

Our work has continued forward in a similar fashion to the work we were leading in February of 2018 when we originally submitted our RFI to CDE. We continue to operate two campuses serving nearly 700 children in the Denver metro area. The major difference at this time is the number of children we are serving at our Steele St. campus, which has increased by 43% since our opening in 2016-17.

We remain deeply committed to serving more children beyond our two schools, and specifically in communities where there is a need for a high-quality public-school option or the need to transform an existing school that may be falling short of necessary expectations. Within that context, we are most interested in being a part of the turnaround of schools serving the most marginalized student populations in our state. We have directly reached out to and engaged with several school districts outside of Denver, but have yet to be provided the opportunity to carry forward this core interest.

III. Capacity: Does your organization currently have the capacity to serve additional schools and districts in Colorado? If yes, indicate how many new schools or districts your current capacity would allow for. If no, explain what additional capacity you would need to put in place, and any other constraints such as timelines or minimum participating schools or districts.

University Prep has the capacity and is interested in serving additional schools in Colorado. Ideally, that would include two more schools by the 2023-24 school year. We believe the soonest we could engage in direct school transformation work would be in the fall of 2021 with the 2020-21 school year being used as a planning year (year zero). Specifically, we would need to rebuild our leadership residency staffing and start an over-staffing process of Teachers, Teaching Fellows and Paraprofessionals at our existing schools who would all be ready to go for the new campus (replicating our approach to turnaround work as we went from University Prep – Arapahoe St. to transforming Pioneer Charter School). January of 2020 through July 2020 should provide sufficient time to increase staffing and ensure we have the right folks in place

for an effective turnaround/restart campus. We firmly believe in a year of preparation for the individuals who will be on the ground leading the work and to ensure there is a sufficient window to engage in direct community efforts and genuine relationship building if at all possible.

During this same window, we would be building up our Central Office capacity to ensure effective oversight of three, and then four schools. This includes the onboarding of a Chief Operating Officer who is coming on this winter (2019-20 school year) and other key positions such as a Manager of Enrollment and a Recruitment Associate to further support talent acquisition. Ultimately, the school-based team and the central office team that provides direct supports to our schools need to build capacity and require the right timeline to do so. These efforts would allow us to achieve our goal of supporting a district with school turnaround/restart in fall 2021 and an additional one within two years of that time.

IV. Evidence of Track Record of Improved Student and School Outcomes:

- a. Provide concrete evidence from your three most recent engagements with schools and districts (Colorado schools and districts are preferred, if available). Include a description of the criteria and the data that you use to determine the impact of your work. Highlight the context and location of where this work has occurred.

University Prep has not engaged with other schools and districts in Colorado to restart an existing school or open a new school since doing so in Denver in the 2016-17 school year. Therefore, we do not have concrete evidence of such efforts since our original application in Feb. 2018.

As per our RFI, the first year of expansion efforts requires additional staffing to prepare academic and operational leadership for the launch of the new school. University Prep had begun the “year zero” efforts of hiring a Principal Resident, Academic Dean Resident, and Operations Dean Resident in the 2017-18 school year. The organization successfully hired those positions and prepared those individuals for turnaround/restart work in aspirations of opening a third school; however, we have not yet had the opportunity to open said campus despite conversations and efforts with several school districts in Colorado. Our onboarding of future leadership staff did however demonstrate University Prep’s ability to comply with the goals and timeline as identified in the RFI.

- b. Self-assess the evidence base for the interventions your organization provides using the following Evidence-Based Intervention (EBI) tiers. Which EBI tier best describes your work, and why?

University Preparatory Schools are managed through a Central Office, which acts a 501c3 non-profit entity operating as a Charter Management Organization (CMO). As a CMO, we have not conducted experimental studies involving control groups, correlation studies, double-blind studies, etc. University Prep’s work operates most in alignment with the Tier 4 evidence-based intervention.

The Tier 4 rationale best describes our work as our “theory of action” or core programming is based in peer-reviewed research. Our academic program is built upon curriculum that have been verified by EdReports and other objective curriculum review organizations. All curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Standards and meets grade-level expectations: Foundational Reading Skills (CKLA), Interventions with Foundational Reading Skills (HD Word), English Language Arts (Wit & Wisdom), Mathematics (Eureka Math), and Science (Amplify).

Further, our teaching practices are grounded in research from the most successful classrooms in the country serving similar student populations to University Prep. As a results-oriented organization, we leverage expertise and best practices from partnering organizations such as, The Achievement Network, Student Achievement Partners, and the Relay Graduate School of Education.

Lastly, the ethos of our schools and our beliefs are equally grounded in research, particularly research generated from The New Teacher Project (TNT) and Unbound Ed. Both organizations spend significant time better understanding what values and beliefs educators need to hold on to in order to achieve true excellence for all learners. They simultaneously work to uncover practices that truly result in grade level performance. As an example, in *The Opportunity Myth*, researchers working with TNT unveiled that students are not actually working with grade level materials. “Even though most students are meeting the demands of their assignments, they’re not prepared for college-level work because those assignments don’t often give them the chance to reach for that bar.” Of thousands of pieces of student work that were analyzed, “71% of students succeeded on their assignments, but only 17% of those exact same assignments actually met or were aligned with grade level standards.”¹ We know that placing grade level work in front of children with appropriate scaffolds is a far more effective approach to academic success and as such, we use a combination of research and objective analysis of curriculum from outside agencies to select, train, and implement our academic program.

¹ <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/different-resources-different-results>