Preparing Principals to Turn Around Low Performing Schools

How do school turnaround and school transformation differ?

What must principals know and do to turn low performing schools into higher performing schools?

What training strategies and processes are necessary to prepare principals for success in turning around low performing schools?
## Turnaround vs Transformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnaround</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
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<td>“Turnaround” is a dramatic and comprehensive intervention in a low-performing school that:</td>
<td>“Transformation” is a long-term process of changing systems and processes in a school that results in all students achieving academic success, with academic success defined as performing at or above grade level standards.</td>
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<td>a) produces significant gains in achievement within two years; and</td>
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<td>b) readies the school for the longer process of transformation into a high-performance organization.”</td>
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<td>Mass Insight Education, 2007</td>
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Which Comes First?

1. Turnaround comes first
   • examining data to find root causes
   • developing a culture of high-expectation
   • providing a standards-based curriculum in literacy and math
   • giving students rigorous assignments
   • using classroom assessment for learning
   • implementing RtI ...

2. Transformation comes second
   • extending rigor to other subject areas
   • creating effective guidance and career counseling programs
   • using community resources to provide real life and career learning opportunities
   • working with the central office to gain greater autonomy and flexibility in curriculum and instruction ...
Laying the Program Foundation

- Theory of action
- Design principles
- Turnaround skill sets
Theory of Action for Leading Turnaround

• Awareness of problems and obstacles to raising student achievement
• Understanding of why problems exist
• Planning to provide focus and direction
• Competence to lead staff in addressing problems and obstacles
• Commitment to leading staff in addressing problems and obstacles
Turnaround Skill Sets

(knowledge, skills, dispositions necessary for leading turnaround)

1. Analyzing the context of low-performing schools
2. Creating a culture of high expectations
3. Providing a rigorous and relevant curriculum
4. Promoting effective teaching and learning (Part A)
5. Building a student-centered, safe and productive school environment
6. Planning and managing the turnaround process at the internship site
7. Implementing organizational change and professional development that improves teaching and learning
8. Promoting effective teaching and learning for all students (Part B – RtI, ESE, ESOL)
9. Leading Initiatives to Improve Students’ Success in Mathematics
10. Sustaining turnaround and moving into transformation
Professional Learning Strategies

• Two-day seminars addressing skill set content (10)
  - Seminar follow-up activities in a low-performing school
• Five online modules with embedded application activities
  - Assessing Academic Rigor in School and Classroom Practices
  - Designing Assessment to Improve Student Learning
  - Building Instructional Leadership Teams
  - Leading Schoolwide Literacy Initiatives
  - Developing Engaging, Academically Rigorous Career Technical Programs
• Nine major field-based assignments requiring application of turnaround leadership skills (see handout)
• Classroom walkthroughs that focus on a variety of content areas and instructional strategies
Design Principles

- Problem-based learning
- Situated learning
- Data-based problem solving
- Team-based assignments and activities
- Coaching and continuous feedback
- Sequenced learning
- Instructors who are role models
A Closer Look at the Practicum

Analyzing the Context of Low-Performing Schools
April 2012

Envisioning a Culture of High Expectations
June 2012

Providing a Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum
July/Aug. 2012

Assessing Rigor in School and Classroom Practices

Assignment 1: Case Study of the Practicum School

Assignment 2: Schoolwide Rigor Assessment

Assignment 3: Course Schedule

Assignment 4: Case Study School Improvement Plan

Promoting Effective Teaching and Learning (Part A)
November 2012

Designing Assessments to Improve Student Learning
Nov. ‘12 – Jan. ‘13

Building a Student-centered Productive School Environment
February 2013

Building Instructional Leadership Teams
Mar. – May 2013

Planning and Managing the Turnaround Process
June 2013
A Closer Look at the Internship

Implementing Organizational Change and Professional Development
Sept. 2013

Promoting Effective Teaching and Learning (Part B)
Dec. 2013

Assignment 5: Developing and Implementing a 90-Day Plan
July 2013

Assignment 6: Lesson Study

Assignment 7: Supporting Student Transitions

Assignment 8: Mid-course Correction to 90-Day Plan

Assignment 9: Portfolio Presentation
June 2014

Internship/Post-Internship Experiences

Leading Initiatives to Improve Students’ Success in Mathematics
Feb. 2014

Maximizing Flexibility and Autonomy in the Charter Setting
Feb. 2014 (Charter Only)

Leading Schoolwide Literacy Initiatives
Jan./Mar. 2014

Developing Engaging, Academically Rigorous Career Technical Programs
April - June 2014

Sustaining Turnaround/Growing the Organization
June 2014
Essential Elements of Turnaround Program Implementation

- Partners believing in turnaround
- Commitment of top-level leaders
- District shepherd
- Participant selection criteria and process
- Cohesive curriculum
Essential Elements of Turnaround Principal Preparation

- Expert support team
- Trainers who model the role
- Performance tracking and reporting process
- Program evaluation plan
- Dedicated resources
## FTLP Logic Model

### Inputs (Resources you invest)

- **Knowledge base on school turnaround**
  - Tenets of UVA School Turnaround Specialist Program
  - Public Impact Competencies
  - SREB knowledge base
- **Race to the Top funding**
  - $5 million over 2 1/2 years
- **Partnerships with 5 Florida school districts, University of North Florida and FDOE**
- **SREB's experience in school improvement and leadership development**

### Throughputs (Processes used to achieve your goal)

- **Design Team planning process**
  - Planning and development of the program
- **Supporting participants**
  - Coaching, Mentoring and Supervising
- **Selecting participants**
- **Placing participants at practicum and internship schools**
- **Communicating and collaborating with districts**
- **Evaluating participants progress and program quality**

### Outputs (Immediate results of throughputs)

- **FTLP curriculum**
  - Seminars, online modules, practicum and internship field experiences, assignments
- **Cohort of 80+ participants across Florida**
- **Program Leadership**
  - Project Co-directors, project manager, lead practice coach
- **Seminar content, assignments, rubrics and timelines**

### Outcomes (What is left behind for the future)

- **80+ "Fully Ready" turnaround leaders**
- **Tested, replicable turnaround leader development model for states, districts and universities**
- **Lessons learned**
- **Increased district capacity to develop turnaround leaders**
- **Cadre of FTLP-experienced mentors and coaches**
- **Implementation Guide**
Phases of Implementation

1. Examine the Fit
2. Develop Partnerships
   - Clarify Roles
   - Assemble a Design Team, Clarify their Work
3. Create a Customized Implementation Design
4. Select and Train Mentors and/or Coaches
5. Select Participants
6. Plan and Deliver Participant Training
7. Implement Assignments through Field Experiences
8. Evaluate Program Processes and Outcomes
9. Integrate the Program into the Organization