Exhibit 14

Part II:
Shaping the Future of Turnaround

In the second part of this report, we assess the strategies needed to direct the trajectory of school turnaround toward success. Part II covers three major topics:

- Lessons learned from existing efforts at schools and systems,

- Issues to be addressed for turnaround to succeed at scale, and

- Activities that could increase the likelihood of success

Lessons Learned from Early Efforts

Although most school turnaround efforts are at an early stage, FSG spoke with pioneering practitioners — at the school and system levels — to identify conditions that drive success and common lessons learned for effective turnarounds. There have been pockets of demonstrated success in turning around individual schools, with signs of promise that districts and states are making significant changes in their processes, structures, and strategies that will support the work of turning around large numbers of schools. While not a comprehensive list of *all* lessons learned from early efforts, the insights we present are those that resonated most strongly with stakeholders across the sector.

SCHOOL-LEVEL LESSONS LEARNED

Practitioners that have taken on schools in need of turnaround, even the school operators that have previously been successful at managing schools with high-need populations of students, consistently say that they were unprepared for the severity of the student need and the school issues that had to be addressed.

As a result, they have had to make fundamental changes in their approaches to building school culture, training and supporting staff, and driving improved student performance. What follows is an overview of some of the lessons that school operators, districts, states, and their partners have learned for successful turnaround at the school level. (For a summary, see Exhibit 15.)

Exhibit 15: School-Level Lessons Learned

Planning

- Identify school leadership early so as to build in planning time to engage the community, establish the vision, and create a new school culture.

- Prepare to meet student needs that are severe and pervasive — hire specialized staff, recruit and train teachers with specific capabilities, and engage with effective external providers, as appropriate.

Human Capital

- Provide strong classroom and teamwork skills and additional support to teachers.

- Empower principals and leadership teams with key autonomies over staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

- Ensure principals and school leadership teams have the will, skill, and authority to drive change in demanding environments.

Maintaining Support and Building Sustainability

- Signal change early and build momentum by delivering and communicating "quick wins."

- Build capacity for long-term sustainable results.

Planning

Build in planning time to engage the community, establish the vision, and create a new school culture.

- Most interviewees, including turnaround principals and those working in districts and state central offices, agreed that a full "planning year" in advance of a school's reopening yields the greatest likelihood of success, particularly when changing a large percentage of staff, as in the turnaround and restart models. NLNS recommends that turnaround leaders be hired and placed "as early as possible, preferably at least several months prior to the end of the school year preceding their formal adoption of the principalship."[47] Kenyatta Stansberry-Butler, principal of Harper High School in Chicago, points out that the amount of planning time required may vary "depending on how the turnaround looks. If the principal is not being replaced, six months ahead works. But when the entire staff is changing, including the principal, and you're working in a high school situation, you may need a full year." In the near term, the timeline for the distribution of SIG funds may make it difficult or impossible to build in this planning time.

- Successful turnaround principals use this planning time to build community support, hire staff, create a vision for change, and align the staff and leadership team behind that vision, according to the providers and principals we interviewed. Interviewees also pointed out that transforming a school's culture requires the development of a coherent and inspirational vision for success and strong alignment between all adults in the building to consistently execute, day in and day out, on the concrete actions needed to instill a new culture. Frequently cited actions include modeling behavior, setting high expectations, and enforcing discipline codes effectively and positively. "Our biggest success has been based on our ability to change the culture from day one," says Marco Petruzzi, CEO at Green Dot Public Schools. "Removing an incredibly toxic culture, and creating a culture of respect, has to do with professional development for the adults in the building and consistent discipline."

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47 New Leaders for New Schools, "Principal Effectiveness."

- While turnaround schools may appear demographically similar to other schools, years of chronic failure result in a higher level of student need. Operators that have taken on turnarounds expressed surprise about the extent of special-education needs, the level of violence, the depth of academic remediation required (particularly at high schools), and the prevalence of mental-health issues, even in comparison with other "high-need" schools they operated. Despite the fact that Mastery's turnaround schools had a similar socioeconomic profile as its nonturnaround schools, the organization had to significantly revamp its program, staff composition, and staff training to deliver meaningful results, according to CEO Scott Gordon.

- School operators note the importance of providing additional wraparound services and resources, including guidance counselors, extensive case management, mental-health services, social and emotional programming, deeper special-education services, academic remediation, and in some cases, increased security. For example, Greicius at Turnaround points to its four-pronged model for addressing social, emotional, and academic needs:[48]

  ○ Partnering with principals who agree to hire a social worker and allocate funds to support their work,

  ○ Developing systems around a student-intervention team to identify and deal with the most disruptive students, an instructional support team to look at teachers' knowledge and classroom skills, and a core team to examine organizational thinking and identify problems that may be driven by the school's procedures,

  ○ Providing access to resources, including extensive case management and partnering with universities to bring in social-work interns and develop a "small mental health clinic," and

  ○ Facilitating knowledge and skill building, with intensive training in child development for teachers, social workers, support staff, and school leaders.

Human Capital

Provide strong classroom and teamwork skills and additional support to teachers and leaders.

- Interviewees agreed that the quality of the adults in the building, particularly teachers and the principal, is one of the most significant drivers of success in a turnaround situation.

- Teachers in turnaround schools must be able to meet students' acute behavioral and academic needs through effective classroom discipline and consistent classroom management, and through remediation approaches targeted at students who are often significantly below grade level.

- Teachers play an active role in creating a new school culture in concert with the principal. Turnaround teachers often work longer hours, take on additional responsibilities as part of leadership teams, and work in teams to case manage the highest-need students. School leaders must create and sustain professional learning communities for teachers that allow for mutually supportive, cross-content area dialogue.

  For example, teachers should be provided with support to ensure classroom consistency in discipline and lessons and to draw connections in skills across content areas. Particularly in the turnaround and transformation models, professional development for teachers must be aimed at breaking established routines and norms, changing entrenched expectations, providing new instructional approaches, and creating and enforcing a school culture of high expectations for all students.

- Interviewees also pointed to the importance for teachers to have more time with students through in-school extended-learning-time programs, as well as after-school and summer programs.[49]

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[48] FSG interviews.

[49] Interview with Jeff Riley, the academic superintendent for middle and K-8 schools in Boston.

- According to recent studies by William Ouchi, the performance of schools improves measurably when principals are given autonomy over their schools. Ouchi studied 442 schools in eight urban districts, finding a direct correlation between "how much control a principal has over his or her budget and how much that school's student performance rises." According to Ouchi, "School organization reform alone produces a more potent improvement in student performance than any other single factor."[50]

- In line with the study from William Ouchi cited above, Superintendent Pastorek says: "We believe that the fundamental underpinning [of turnaround] is to give the principal responsibility." In addition to control over the site-based budget, critical autonomies pointed out by turnaround operators and principals also include flexibility over:

  - *Staffing*, including the ability to hire and fire staff, evaluate and observe teachers, and select leadership team members,

  - *Program*, including curriculum and instruction as well as school support services used, to meet academic, social, and emotional needs,

  - *Schedule*, including how time is used throughout the day, as well as the ability to increase learning and planning time by expanding the school day or year, and

  - *Data*, including the ability to collect, analyze, and act on real-time student-performance data.

Ensure that leaders have the will, skill, and authority to drive change.

- Many of the characteristics and behaviors necessary in turnaround schools are not very different from those of any good leader. For example, interviewees mentioned the importance of stakeholder management and relationship building, communication, and instructional leadership. "Whatever intervention they pick, they work it," says Ann Duffy, policy director of the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, about successful turnaround leaders. "They are relentless, and they don't let success deviate them from their path. They just layer on the next thing."

- Interviewees also highlightened that effective turnaround leaders must be ruthlessly consistent; willing to make difficult decisions around personnel and resource allocation; and able to maintain urgency, resolve crises, and hire and manage a new staff. Public Impact for the Chicago Public Education Fund defines four key competency clusters that turnaround school leaders must exhibit to be successful, which include: driving for results, influencing for results, problem solving, and showing the confidence to lead.[51]

- Successful turnaround leaders are not "lone rangers" — they develop and rely on leadership teams, distribute responsibility among staff, and partner with the district and the community. "The most important thing for a school to have is adults on the same page," says Josh Edelman of the District of Columbia Public Schools. "The turnaround principal, regardless of the model, has to see the importance of developing adult capacity. There are necessary competencies of developing relationships, using data, coaching people, and knowing how to hire the right people."

- The set of skills necessary for turnaround leaders may be even more pronounced at the high school level, according to Kathleen Smith of the Virginia Department of Education: "We've had one high school in turnaround that made it out last year, and it was hugely due to the culture in the building. In a high school setting, you need a larger critical mass of teachers who can move the initiative forward. You need the right leader to pull the faculty together. Fundamentally, it's school leadership that will make the difference at the high school level — someone who can lead people who are stuck in what they do to some place far more challenging."

Maintaining Support and Building Sustainability

Signal change early and build momentum by delivering and communicating "quick wins."

- The 2008 practice guide on turning around chronically low-performing schools from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Science (IES) highlights the need to "provide visible improvements early in the turnaround process" to "rally staff around the effort and overcome resistance and inertia."[52] Quick wins in nonacademic areas signal to students and the community that a dramatic change is under way. In the words of a successful turnaround principal, "It shows that things are different here."

[50] Ouchi, William, The Secret of TSL, *The Revolutionary Discovery That Raises School Performance* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009).

[51] Public Impact for the Chicago Public Education Fund, "Leaders for School Turnaround: Competencies for Success," June 2008.

[52] Herman, Rebecca, Priscilla Dawson, Thomas Dee, Jay Greene, Rebecca Maynard, Sam Redding, and Marlene Darwin, "Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools: A Practice Guide," National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2008.

- Replacing a school's leader and some staff, as in the turnaround and restart models, is a powerful way to signal a dramatic shift in culture to stakeholders inside and outside of a school, and the moves can serve as a catalyst for other changes in the school.

- Quick wins might include improving the physical condition of the building, reducing disruptive student behavior, establishing a new disciplinary plan, improving student and faculty attendance, or establishing common team processes or planning time among teachers. These wins often come before improvements in student achievement, and they can serve as leading indicators of success.

- Quick wins are also important in order to build community support for turnaround efforts. Successful turnaround principals and operators highlight nonacademic measures of school culture, such as rising student attendance, falling numbers of suspensions or expulsions, and upward movement on student and parent perception surveys as leading indicators that the turnaround is gaining commitment and support from parents and the broader community.

Build capacity for long-term sustainable results.

- Proponents of turnaround at the district and state levels also encourage school leaders to systematize and build upon the culture, assessments, instructional approaches, and programs that allow schools to dramatically improve student performance. These efforts ensure that schools continue to improve and do not lapse back into failure. The IES practice guide backs this up, arguing that a "short-term focus on quick wins can establish a climate for long-term change," but cautions that short-term gains must also be maintained, or else turnarounds risk becoming "yet another example of the transience of school reform and fodder for those who resist change."

- School leaders can build on short-term momentum and urgency around a school turnaround effort by simultaneously establishing effective processes and systems for the long term. For example, a school leader might establish regular teacher meetings to allow for continued collaboration; build out parent and community groups to sustain ongoing support; strengthen relationships with the district and state to more effectively access services;

train staff in better use of data to drive improved instruction; and for independent school operators, develop a strong board to guide the school's work.

SYSTEM-LEVEL LESSONS LEARNED

Successful school-level turnaround efforts must be sustained and supported with corresponding changes at the system level. "Turnaround efforts won't succeed if they are only school focused and are notcomplemented by systems change," says Bob Hughes, president of New Visions. "No bad school is an island; it exists in a system."

A school's ability to sustain a turnaround effort, executing upon some of the lessons learned and the promising practices mentioned earlier, depends on processes, supports, and structures to enable sets of schools to turn around successfully. Interviews with districts, states, and school operators highlighted the following lessons learned (as summarized in Exhibit 16).

Exhibit 16: System-Level Lessons Learned

Planning

- Articulate a powerful vision for turnaround and make tough decisions.

- View turnaround as a portfolio of approaches, with closure as a viable option.

Creating Conditions and Building System Capacity

- Create the necessary school-based conditions for success, partnering with labor unions as relevant.

- Develop turnaround-specific capabilities and capacity.

- Build accountability and data systems to track progress and inform decisions.

- Build systems and structures that allow for sharing lessons across schools.

Planning

Articulate a powerful vision for turnaround and make tough decisions.

- Promising systemic approaches to turnaround are rooted in a commitment to a powerful vision of student and school success. Without such a vision, district and state leaders believe that reform efforts will be fragmented and will not engender the political will to make needed, but difficult changes. Kathy Augustine, deputy superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools, describes an example: "When [Superintendent] Hall came in 1999, she set a tone early on that she was a superintendent focusing on teaching and learning, and that is our core business. She put it right out there and tied it to the targets, making the accountability piece really clear."

- Further, stakeholders pointed out the necessity of making politically difficult decisions, such as closing failing schools, replacing principals, or negotiating with teachers' unions for needed autonomies. "A critical challenge is the political courage on the local level to really do something different in these schools," says Ann Whalen at the U.S. Department of Education. "The tendency is to do triage instead of whole-school and system change." A district or state willing to make and stand behind politically difficult decisions allows school leaders and operators on the ground to promote bold changes.

- When making difficult decisions, it is helpful to have support from businesses, philanthropy, government officials, parents, and community-based organizations. Without communitywide support, school leaders and operators cautioned that even promising reform efforts can be put at risk. For example, the IES practice guide points to a large urban high school that had recently begun the turnaround process, but after "a year in which initial progress had been made, the district decided to close the school."[53] By embarking on a public campaign and generating broad support, the principal was able to "buy more time" and persuaded the district to keep the school open — ultimately leading to gains in student achievement.

View turnaround as a portfolio of approaches, with closure as a viable option.

- For many states and districts, the enormity and urgency of the challenge necessitates a willingness to consider all four turnaround models. "We need to be ruthless in our effort to save kids, and look at every option available to us," says Paul Pastorek, state superintendent of Louisiana. In the short term, however, districts and state interviewees choose turnaround models based on resource constraints, such as the availability of human capital and operators. Yet forward-thinking districts and states are also planning to track performance and build capacity to use models in the long term based on the needs of schools and the efficacy of the models.

- Districts and states should view school closure as a viable option at the system level, particularly when districts invest in creating new, high-performing schools. In large urban districts with issues of underutilization, closing schools and reassigning students can effectively allow districts to reallocate per-pupil dollars, offering the opportunity to "right size" the system.

  Recent research from Chicago's Consortium of School Research, which studied 18 Chicago public elementary schools closed between 2001 and 2006 due to chronically poor academic performance or enrollment significantly below capacity, found that the "success of a school-closing policy hinges on the quality of the receiving schools that accept the displaced students."[54] Students who were re-enrolled in the strongest "receiving schools" (with test scores in the top quartile of all system schools) experienced significant gains in math and reading achievement. However, displaced students who were re-enrolled in the weakest receiving schools (with test scores in the bottom quartile of all system schools) experienced an achievement loss of more than a month in reading and half a month in math, one year after school closings.

  Where high-performing options do not exist, states and districts can play a role in creating new high-quality options for students, including charter schools. Furthermore, school closures can be highly political and controversial, inciting anger and disappointment at the community level. State education departments can support districts through strategies that engage communities, provide "political cover," and deliver timely and accessible data about the chronic underperformance of schools.

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[53] Ibid.

[54] De La Torre, Marisa, and Julia Gwynne. "When Schools Close: Effects on Displaced Students in Chicago Public Schools," Consortium on Chicago School Research, October 2009.

- Viewing the system as a portfolio of schools enables decision making about the effective allocation and deployment of resources. In Montgomery County, Maryland, Superintendent Jerry Weast recognized that a "majority of low-income and minority students had been clustered in about half the district's schools, which significantly underperformed the other half." By shifting resources from low-need to high-need schools, Weast and his team enabled those schools to increase time on task, hire better-trained teachers, offer early-childhood education, and reduce class size.[55]

Creating Conditions and Building System Capacity

Create the necessary school conditions for success, partnering with labor unions as relevant.

- In line with the school-level lessons learned, school leaders must have site-based autonomy over staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

- Mass Insight Education's report "The Turnaround Challenge" underscores the key levers for autonomy.[56] The six states partnering with Mass Insight Education in its Partnership Zone Initiative — Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, and New York — are required to provide lead partners with the authority to select principals in their schools, the power to supervise every program or provider that brings in support services, accountability for student outcomes in their cluster of schools, and a staff member on-site at each of the schools.

- But greater autonomy requires people in place who can use that autonomy successfully. That said, districts and state interviewees believed a major challenge for turnaround is attracting, developing, and retaining the necessary talent. Central to effective human capital strategies is the ability to directly put in place policies or partner with labor unions and negotiate agreements that affect staff hiring and turnover, performance pay, teacher evaluation, distribution of teachers, work rules, and charter policies.

- State education departments can promote conversations between districts and unions, as in Massachusetts, where the state education department has taken on an active role in convening unions and districts and facilitating the negotiation process. In Rhode Island, the state education department has taken a different approach, working with the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers to develop a joint-venture model for site-based management, where labor gets a "seat at the table" in return for giving up the existing contract and negotiating a school-specific contract.

  The Rhode Island education department, too, has exercised significant authority under state law over such labor issues as seniority and assignment. "When we've reached what feels like an impasse with improvement and we think human capital is the issue, we haven't hesitated to order districts to make that change," says David Abbott, deputy commissioner at the Rhode Island Department of Education.

- Other districts have proactively negotiated with local labor, as in New Haven, Connecticut, where teachers ratified a new contract aimed at the district's lowest-performing schools, as described above.

- In many cases, however, changes to state laws and regulations have been needed to allow districts and unions to draft new policies around labor. For example, Superintendent Pastorek says Hurricane Katrina allowed for a new model and approach to labor issues in New Orleans with the creation of the Recovery School District.

Develop turnaround-specific capabilities and capacity.

- A number of states and districts have begun to dedicate resources and create specific units to oversee turnaround work. This practice was raised as a key success factor by states, districts, and turnaround operators and providers alike. Interviewees also cited the importance of states and districts taking advantage of current funding around school turnaround to put long-term systems and capabilities in place that sustain their initial turnaround efforts.

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[55] Childress, Stacey, "Moving Beyond the Conventional Wisdom of Whole-District Reform," *EdWeek*, September 14, 2009.

[56] Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, "The Turnaround Challenge," 2007.

- Interviewees also wanted to see states and districts develop robust human capital pipelines to support turnaround efforts. In particular, they wanted to see aligned programs that are specifically designed to recruit, train, certify, and support teachers and principals for turnaround schools. This is particularly relevant for building system capacity to employ the turnaround model or in rural schools that may have difficulty attracting turnaround-ready educators. States and districts themselves expressed the need to build their own human capital capacity — bringing in new staff with relevant turnaround expertise and enhancing the turnaround knowledge of their current staff.

- In order to effectively support school leaders and operators, stakeholders believed central offices need to increase the operational supports they provide to turnaround schools. Chris Coxon, chief program officer of initiatives at the Texas High School Project, says that "a critical factor for turnaround situations is the ability of districts and states to 'clear the deck' for school leaders." Anything that takes principals away from their focus of teaching, learning, and community engagement — meetings at the state level, dealing with facilities issues like a broken window, problems with food services — should be handled speedily by district or state central-office staff. For example, work is under way in Washington, D.C., to build the district's capacity to take on noninstructional issues quickly and efficiently, while in Virginia, the state turnaround office responds to all principal outreach within 24 hours.

- Given the increasing number of new organizations entering the school turnaround field, principals and school operators we interviewed frequently expressed their desire for districts and states to vet the quality of turnaround providers.

- Districts or school operators should commit to strategically reallocate resources and empower school leaders. In New York City, for example, when resource-mapping exercises revealed that only half of the budget was being spent in the schools, a decision was made to decentralize funding and devolve as much decision making as possible to schools. "Aligning resources to key infrastructure and decision points along the way is necessary," says Sajan George, managing director at Alvarez and Marsal. "Rather than overlaying a new turnaround initiative on top of what exists, you need to fundamentally change how you do business as a district."

Build accountability and data systems to track progress and inform decisions.

- Interviewees believed that districts, states, and school operators should invest in data systems that provide longitudinal as well as formative real-time data linking student performance with targeted turnaround interventions. According to the Data Quality Campaign, 44 states now collect data that can identify the schools producing the strongest academic growth for students, up from 21 states in 2005.[57] For example, Chicago has made a major investment in an online school- and student-level data system that allows for more frequent assessments and rapid turnaround of results to inform decision making. "You need to have systems built to be able to know what's happening, or else how can you effect change?" asks Alan Anderson, acting deputy CEO for human capital at Chicago Public Schools.

- Data systems should also be used to track school performance across the district, assessing where progress is being made in turnaround schools, guiding earlier intervention in other schools so that they do not need turnaround, and ensuring that interventions in turnaround schools are not having adverse impacts on other district schools. Providing central-office staff with real-time, formative data on school and teacher performance allows for greater accountability, as well as enables more effective decision making around issues like resource allocation and human capital management.

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[57] Data Quality Campaign Web site.

- Interviewees stressed that accountability systems need to be structured between states and districts, between districts and school operators, between districts/school operators and schools, and between all of the above and local communities. The systems should ensure that clear performance and reporting goals are set and communicated so that accurate and timely progress and outcome data can be shared, learned from, and acted upon. Within good systems, accountability enables autonomy, and relationships are based on mutual goals and support instead of on compliance and consequences.

Build systems and structures that allow for sharing lessons across schools.

- According to Mass Insight Education, a benefit of its cluster-based approach is to facilitate knowledge and resource sharing. The development of clusters, organized around identified needs (such as school type, student characteristics, feeder patterns, or regions), also has the potential to provide specialized supports, deliver common services, develop stronger purchasing power among schools, and create opportunities for shared learning and support across schools.

  Clustered networks have been introduced in a number of urban school districts, including Miami-Dade's Improvement Zone and Chicago's Renaissance 2010 schools. Clusters are also being formed at the state level, where Mass Insight Education's Partnership Zone Initiative is working with six partner states to ensure they receive advice and support from national education organizations in human capital, policy, and nonacademic supports.

- Cohort-based knowledge sharing can also happen through district or state efforts to create communities of practice or working groups of principals.[58]

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[58] Maxwell, Leslie A., "Six States Sign on to School Turnaround Project," *EdWeek*, February 2, 2010.

Key Gaps

Given the early stages of turnaround work, it is not surprising that our research and interviews unearthed significant gaps that must be filled to ensure that school turnarounds can succeed at scale (see Exhibit 17).

Exhibit 17: Key Gaps

Capacity: There are not enough proven turnaround experts or organizations, and existing organizations are still building capacity and infrastructure. Additionally, there is little capacity to assess the quality of the large number of new entrants to the school turnaround field.

Funding: There may be a lack of ongoing operational funding to sustain efforts. Additionally, the requirements for the distribution of federal funds are putting pressure on states and school districts to act without adequate planning time.

Public and Political Will: Key actors find it challenging to make the difficult decisions required for dramatic school turnaround.

Conditions: Policies and conditions in districts and states are frequently at odds with what is necessary for success in turnaround.

Research and Knowledge Sharing: There is not enough research or evidence to identify, share, and scale effective turnaround interventions.

High Schools and Rural Schools: While improving the performance of any school is difficult, it is particularly challenging to implement and succeed in school turnaround at high schools and at schools in rural areas.

GAPS IN CAPACITY

There are not enough high-quality experts or organizations engaging in school turnaround work to reach the necessary scale. Existing organizations are still building their own capacity and expertise, and district and state offices lack the people, tools, and infrastructure to assess providers and support turnaround work. The gaps in capacity break down into four categories:

- **Human Capital Capacity.** Education leaders point to human capital at the school and system levels as a significant concern. At the school level, there is an insufficient supply of high-quality teachers and leaders who are prepared to take on the uniquely challenging environments of turnaround situations. This problem is particularly acute given that several of the turnaround models require new leaders and teachers. Many of the organizations who recruit, train, and support new principals and teachers are not focused on school turnaround or are still building their own capacity to identify and prepare turnaround-ready educators. Although institutes of higher education have the potential to provide greater scale in preparing enough teachers and leaders to go into targeted schools, significant concerns exist about whether their current programs can prepare turnaround leaders and

teachers. School operators, districts, states, and other turnaround providers are also struggling with finding and training the right people to lead and staff their own turnaround initiatives and offices.

- **District and State Capacity.** Many states and districts still have no specific department or staff focused on school turnarounds. Additionally, they lack turnaround-specific funding streams; structures like data and accountability systems or rubrics to vet partners; knowledge of best practices; and capabilities like engaging unions, partnering with business and philanthropy, or analyzing real-time data. Finally, states and districts have often fallen into relationships based on compliance, and they now need to build their capacity to work more effectively as turnaround collaborators. "We at the state departments of education need to build our capacity," says John King at the New York State Department of Education. "Federal policy is now asking states to go from a compliance focus to a support focus, which is a big transformation in and of itself."

- **Operator Capacity.** Few turnaround-focused operators exist to serve the market, and most of those that do are still too early in their work to have proven results. "I'm not sure we have the experienced, proven vendors that could do this job in a sufficiently critical mass to cover the whole United States with lead partners," says Smith at the Virginia Department of Education. The U.S. Department of Education has urged CMOs to take on turnarounds, but for the most part, charter management organizations and charter operators have not taken up the challenge en masse. This may be due to the fact that many charter organizations are still struggling to reach scale and quality within their existing models or that their models differ in important ways from those needed to succeed in turnarounds.

  Provider Capacity. As with operators, there are not enough proven turnaround-focused providers to serve the number of schools and districts in need of turnaround. It may also be a challenge to convince high-quality human capital and other service providers to enter this space, because the work is difficult and because turnaround schools represent only a small sliver of the market that these organizations can attempt to serve. "The turnaround market may not be big enough right now to be worth spending time on it," says Larry Berger of Wireless Generation. "Why wouldn't I rather sell to Buffalo, New York, than to all the turnaround schools? They can guarantee demand in a way that the turnaround space can't." This challenge is particularly acute in rural areas, where providers or operators are unlikely to be motivated by the possibility of reaching scale. However, in some areas, the lure of federal funding is leading to a large number of new entrants into the school turnaround space. In the long term, this will be good for the field's capacity; but, in the short term, many of these organizations have little direct turnaround experience and need to build their own expertise and capacity.

GAPS IN FUNDING

State and district leaders expressed concerns that RTTT and other federal funding is short term and will not be available to sustain the work unless turnaround is more formally built into the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. On the positive side, there is the potential for additional funding in the near future. In January 2010, President Obama requested an additional $1.35 billion from Congress to serve as a Round III of Race to the Top, with pools of money potentially to be made available to districts as well as states. The proposal for 2011 funding also specifically calls for $900 million in a reauthorized School Turnaround Grants program.

There is also great potential for existing federal revenue streams, such as Title I, Title II, and IDEA, to be used to greater effectiveness in the lowest-performing schools. Beyond the federal level though, states are facing increasingly stretched budgets, and most states have no specific operational funding streams allocated to support school turnaround. While many states, districts, operators, service providers, and researchers are looking to philanthropic sources to fill in gaps, significant concerns remain about the ability to create or access sustainable long-term operational funding.[59]

GAPS IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL WILL

State and district departments of education, as well as school boards, mayors, and other governing bodies, must be willing to make the difficult decisions required for school turnaround, such as closing failing schools and negotiating with teachers' unions to gain more flexibility over teacher contracts. "We need to use every ounce of our energy and every bit of political capital to [make turnaround happen]," says Andres Alonso, CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools. "It's about building the political urgency and the sense that whoever gets in the way is working against kids."[60]

There is also a need for greater community engagement, particularly from parents and community-based organizations, to ensure a continuous demand for and commitment to dramatic school improvement. A few districts and states are beginning to take on some of this community engagement and empowerment work. The Baltimore City Public Schools system has taken an active role in engaging community organizers and assigning them to schools in an effort to partner grassroots organizations with the school system. In San Jose, California, the community launched San Jose 2020, an effort to bring together the county office of education, the city of San Jose, educators, business leaders, and community organizers, with the goal of eliminating the achievement gap in San Jose by the year 2020.

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[59] U.S. Department of Education.
[60] "Driving Dramatic School Improvement" conference.

In order to effectively mobilize communities to demand high-quality education for their children, "We must develop the information to show that there's a crisis," says Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Quality Education. "This information is how we can assist policymakers and school leaders in generating the necessary public and political will to drive change." New York City has introduced an easy-to-understand school-level grading system that gives schools annual ratings of A through F and that is communicated to parents. Gary Huggins of the Aspen Institute's No Child Left Behind Commission echoes the urgent need for community engagement. "NCLB created this data-rich environment but parents don't know the information," says Huggins. "We have to get a lot better about making that have meaning to parents."

GAPS IN CONDITIONS

Policies and conditions in districts and states across the country are frequently described, at best, as unsupportive, and at worst, as roadblocks to turnaround success. The gaps in conditions break down into five categories:

- **Collective-Bargaining Agreements.** Interviewees point to provisions in agreements that may hinder turnaround, including hiring, firing, and tenure rules; working hours; teacher distribution; and restrictions around performance management and teacher observation and evaluation. These provisions and policies limit the ability of school leaders, operators, districts, and states to make decisions in the best interests of children.

- **Data and Accountability Systems.** Districts and states lack effective, timely data systems to link student performance over time with specific turnaround interventions.

- **Operating Flexibility for Management Organizations.** State and district policies, regulations, and laws frequently do not support the level of autonomy that schools and operators need over key dimensions necessary for change — staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

- **Limitations on Charter Involvement.** Many states still have charter caps, limiting their ability to employ the restart model. Funding levels and facilities restrictions can also deter charter operators from being willing to take over schools in the restart model.

- **Governance and Leadership.** In order for turnaround efforts to be sustained, superintendents and school boards must align their efforts and be willing to take on dramatic change. "When the superintendent and board can build an effective partnership, the likelihood of changes being sustained increases," says Joe Villani, deputy executive director of the National School Board Association. However, the average superintendent stays on the job for less than 3.5 years, and the vagaries of election cycles can undermine school board members' commitment.[61] The challenge, then, is how to sustain turnaround efforts over a longer time frame. In some cities, mayoral control has paved the way for turnaround efforts, laying the groundwork for bold interventions around teacher evaluations and dismissals, charter schools, and contracting with external providers.

GAPS IN RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

There is not yet enough evidence to identify the most effective interventions for turnaround. Unfortunately, state policies or a lack of student- and teacher-linked data systems often obstruct the ability to track the effectiveness of various interventions at the student level. Given that many states and districts are employing multiple models for turnaround, it will be important to develop a clear research agenda that will allow the field to determine whether or not certain models outperform others in particular contexts.

"I am worried that we are not going to learn as much as we could about what works in schools," says Bryan Hassel of Public Impact. "Under NCLB, there was no information gathered on what was tried and what worked or didn't work. As we continue with this work, gathering key data would be really useful."

Interviewees also voiced the need for further research into the relative effectiveness of turnaround approaches for particular student subgroups. "We need to learn more about the extra focus needed for high-need populations in these turnaround situations — English Language Learners students, disabled students, homeless or underhoused students, and so on," says John King of the New York Department of Education. "What are the best practices regarding each of these student subpopulations?"

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61 Council of the Great City Schools, "Urban Indicator: Urban School Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure, and Salary Sixth Survey and Report," Winter 2008/2009, http://www.cgcs.org/research/research_pub.aspx.

At the school level, examples exist of schools that have been successfully turned around, but stakeholders across the field point to a greater need for proof points and evidence to show how to implement at scale what has worked in the past. As one interviewee noted, "No model yet exists that is both scalable and replicable." At the system level, too, there is a need to examine and document systems that have been successfully turned around, and to pinpoint factors that contributed to turnaround success.

In addition, few mechanisms exist for knowledge sharing in the field to identify the most effective practices and tools and bring them to scale. "Who is going to track who does what with the school improvement dollars?" asks Laura Weeldreyer, deputy superintendent of Baltimore City Public

Schools. "Was one of the models more successful than the others? What processes did districts use to choose interventions, and did schools have a say? There are no processes in place to learn what others are doing."

Fortunately, the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences announced in fall 2009 a commitment to evaluate what states are doing with their stimulus education dollars, whether common strategies have emerged, and whether the efforts funded improved schooling. "I certainly don't want to be here in three years and have somebody say, 'What did we get for that $10 billion?'" says John Easton, director of IES. "We've got to be learning from this."

Exhibit 18 identifies the three most commonly cited questions for a "learning agenda" of the turnaround field.

Exhibit 18: A Learning Agenda for the Turnaround Field

- What does progress and success look like in turning around an individual school and a system of schools?

- Which models of school turnaround are most effective and efficient given the particular circumstances, student demographics, geographies, and levels of the school and the district? Why are they effective?

- Which changes at the local, state, and national levels support success in turning around significant numbers of schools? How do entities at these different levels work together to create systems, build capacity, and ensure sustainability?

GAPS IN HIGH SCHOOL SETTINGS

As we identified gaps, interviewees consistently cited high schools and rural schools as the two settings where the gaps identified above were most severe and particularly difficult to address. Because of that, we have included Exhibits 19 and 20, which speak to high school and rural school turnarounds, respectively.

Exhibit 19: A Spotlight on High School Turnarounds

While interviewees acknowledge the difficulty in turning around any school, high schools were singled out as being particularly challenging. Academic remediation is more difficult, because students have accumulated knowledge and skills gaps over many years and have only a few remaining years to address them. The high school curriculum and schedule are also more complex. Changing school culture is more difficult, because the students in the building are nearly adults themselves and may resist the changes.

High schools also tend to have larger numbers of students and lack the resources to intervene proactively with students on an individual level. In addition to these challenges, which are relevant to all of the turnaround models, fewer high school operators exist to support the restart model, and closure is more difficult because there are typically few if any additional high-quality high schools in close proximity.

Recognizing the special needs of high schools, a few states, districts, and operators are trying to develop solutions. One approach is to dramatically redesign high schools — beginning with breaking them up. For example, New York City has replaced 20 underperforming public high schools with 200 small schools of choice that offer a more personalized learning environment, rigorous academic standards, student-centered pedagogy, support to meet instructional and developmental goals, and a focus on connections to college. A recent MDRC evaluation has shown that these schools are achieving higher graduation rates than comparison schools (a difference of 10 percentage points) and have closed one-third of the gap in the graduation rate between white students and students of color.

Green Dot has taken a similar approach at the school level, taking over Locke High School in Los Angeles and reopening it as eight (and now nine) small college-prep academies. A year after the takeover, Green Dot has seen modest improvements in test scores, but dramatic indicators of a change in culture, including a more than 58 percent improvement in retention, almost 38 percent more students taking tests, and a 25 percent increase in the graduation rate.

Another approach is to build specialized capability in the district to support high school turnaround. "As a district, we're going to focus on high school turnaround, since there are many more external turnaround operators out there that can work on elementary and middle schools," says Don Fraynd of the Chicago Public Schools Office of School Turnaround. Chicago Public Schools has had success in its turnaround of Harper High School by putting in place a capable team of turnaround leaders; allocating sufficient time for planning; and ensuring access to the right resources for hiring, professional development, curriculum development, community engagement, and school operations.

The field has an urgent need for a greater focus on turnaround solutions at the high school level. Almost 2,000 of the nation's high schools have been described as "dropout factories," because they graduate fewer than 50 percent of their students. A welcome sign is that many states, districts, and operators are embarking on new approaches to turn around these schools.

Exhibit 20: A Spotlight on Rural Turnarounds

Rural areas face unique challenges in executing turnaround strategies. Given their widely dispersed geographies, it can be difficult to attract new principals and teachers, school operators, or other turnaround partners. This makes it hard to employ the turnaround or restart models.

Additionally, in rural districts, "Closure is not an option, because there is not an alternative for the students," says Amanda Burnette, director of turnaround schools at the South Carolina Department of Education. "For many of our rural districts, we also can't even consider the turnaround option, because we don't have the teachers to fill vacancies." Furthermore, for small rural districts, building capacity to support turnaround can be cost-prohibitive, given the small number of schools.

To address these challenges, some rural areas or smaller states see the need to aggregate or "pool" demand to create incentives for providers. Some states have determined that turnarounds will only succeed in rural areas if the state itself implements and supports them directly. For example, the South Carolina Department of Education has assumed responsibility for turning around certain rural schools. "Many, many small districts, both rural and exurban, are not going to be able to make the kind of investment in technology and accountability that's needed," says Sajan George of Alvarez and Marsal. "The state needs to develop an assessment and accountability system that smaller districts can draw on."

The U.S. Department of Education, in its late-2009 release of final SIG regulations, acknowledged the concerns of rural superintendents, but also stressed the newly available resources: "We understand that some rural areas may face unique challenges in turning around low-achieving schools, but note that the significant amount of funding available to implement the four models will help to overcome the many resource limitations that previously have hindered successful rural-school reform in many areas." Despite these resources, interviewees consistently expressed concern for how turnaround would be implemented in rural areas.

Critical Actions

Multiple actors across the education sector must commit to a concerted, collaborative effort for turnarounds to succeed at scale. They must work together to scale nascent efforts, build capacity, and address gaps. Based on more than 150 individual actions collected at the "Action Planning" session at the "Driving Dramatic School Improvement" conference, as well as on FSG's interviews and research, we have identified the highest-priority steps that need to be taken collectively and by each type of actor. A table aligning these actions by actor with a summary of the gaps is included in an appendix. Turnaround actors collectively must develop common metrics for success, understand and learn from what is and is not working, build capacity and expertise, create conditions for success, and maintain urgency around turnaround efforts to sustain political will. Exhibit 21 summarizes specific actions that need to be taken collectively to address the gaps and is followed by recommendations for individual organizations.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Education Department already plays a key policy-setting and funding role, but can also support research, rigorous evaluation, and knowledge sharing to benefit the turnaround field. Specific actions include:

- Ensure adequate funding for states and districts to build the infrastructure that sustains turnaround work once federal funds have been expended.

- Ensure that the timeline for distribution of federal funds allows for states, districts, and schools to have adequate planning time to develop and employ successful turnaround interventions.

- Build early learnings from turnaround efforts into ESEA reauthorization and future funding, potentially to include:

  o Community buy-in, coinvestment, and parental engagement,

  o Turnaround grants made directly to districts,

  o Consideration of and provisions to accommodate the challenges of rural states,

  o Additional competitive grant processes, and

  o Rewards and incentives for schools, districts, and states that succeed in turnaround.

Exhibit 21: Collective Actions to Fill Gaps

Gaps	Collective Actions
Capacity	▪ Promote the entry of new quality providers and scale proven operators. ▪ Create training and recruitment approaches to attract and develop turnaround talent. ▪ Create and staff distinct turnaround offices or divisions.
Funding	▪ As possible, repurpose current ongoing funding sources to address turnaround needs. ▪ Ensure that specific turnaround funding streams are included in ESEA reauthorization. ▪ Promote the use of one-time funding to build long-term capacity and infrastructure.
Public and Political Will	▪ Build awareness of the need for change among students, parents, educators, policy makers, and communities. ▪ Engage and mobilize stakeholders, and build public demand to advocate for needed changes. ▪ Establish laws and policies that support those making difficult decisions.
Conditions	▪ Change the culture of engagement between schools, districts, and states from compliance to cooperation. ▪ Establish laws and policies that ensure needed school and district autonomies and capacity. ▪ Develop and implement shared accountability systems at the system and school levels.
Research and Knowledge Sharing	▪ Ensure funding and attention are directed to rigorously studying and comparing the efficacy of turnaround interventions. ▪ Document and share turnaround successes and challenges to improve implementation. ▪ Create opportunities and infrastructure to collect, organize, and share research and best practices.

- Develop clear standards for student achievement and turnaround success at the school and system levels.

- Implement a national evaluation, knowledge-building, and dissemination initiative that tracks and reports on the turnaround efforts of states and districts.

- Support and sustain the development and implementation of robust state longitudinal data systems.

- Serve as a voice for urgency around turnaround efforts, supporting states' ability to make difficult decisions.

STATES AND STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

States can focus on developing scalable solutions to human capital and operator capacity issues, creating conditions for success through policy change, assessing the quality of turnaround providers and operators, and investing in the IT and accountability infrastructure that supports turnaround success. Specific actions include:

- Collaborate with districts to identify where capacity should be built to effectively execute on turnaround strategies, and designate a specific office and staff to lead turnaround efforts.

- Use a range of strategies to develop, attract, and retain principal and teacher talent at the lowest-performing schools, including:

  o Providing professional-development opportunities,

  o Instituting financial incentives or pay for performance,

  o Ensuring equitable teacher distribution,

  o Strengthening university and alternate-certification paths,

  o Generating and supporting dialogue with labor and helping bring districts and labor "to the table" for negotiations, and

  o Providing political cover for districts, where necessary.

- Create policies that provide districts, turnaround operators, and turnaround school staff with the autonomy over staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data that they need to succeed.

- Develop processes for vetting external turnaround providers.

- Support the sharing of best practices within and among districts and schools through clusters, turnaround zones, or other structures.

- Make investments in technology (performance management and accountability systems), allowing assessment data to be available and accessible to districts, schools, and local communities.

- Provide opportunities for rural districts to partner with one another to reach greater scale, or work directly to implement turnaround strategies in rural areas.

DISTRICTS

Districts can create strong talent pipelines, build their accountability and school support capacity, and ensure the availability of critical, high-quality partners, particularly to fill human capital needs and operate schools. Specific actions include:

- Hold leaders of schools and school operators accountable for turnaround success, while providing them with the autonomy they need to succeed.

- Ensure a pipeline of highly effective teachers and principals who can succeed in turnaround schools, and then provide them with the professional development to enable their success.

- Provide or identify high-quality partners to offer efficient and aligned noninstructional supports to allow turnaround leaders and school operators to focus on culture change, instruction, and community support building.

- Use turnaround as an opportunity to partner with unions, as relevant, to create the needed conditions for turnaround success, such as autonomy over staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

- Engage communities, particularly parents and community-based organizations, to generate demand for change among stakeholders.

- Collaborate with the state to identify where capacity should be built to effectively execute on turnaround strategies, and designate a specific office and staff to lead turnaround efforts.

- Support the sharing of best practices among schools through clusters, turnaround zones, or other structures.

UNIONS

Unions can consider turnaround schools as a "laboratory" in which they are more willing to experiment with new types of contracts, new ways of collaboratively partnering with districts, new work rules, and new teacher-evaluation and pay-for-performance approaches. Specific actions include:

- Engage proactively with states and districts to develop, attract, and retain principal and teacher talent to the lowest-performing schools, and create conditions supporting their success, including:

  o Creating flexibilities within current contracts around instructional time and other work rules, and

  o Developing new and more flexible contracts specifically focused on turnaround schools, with provisions for such elements as data-driven evaluation, hiring and tenure policies, and performance pay.

- Serve as an advocate for turnaround teachers to ensure they receive adequate pay, support, and professional development, given the demanding environments in which they are working.

SCHOOL OPERATORS

School operators can scale existing successful models, identify and train turnaround professionals, and build organizational capacity to run turnaround schools. Specific actions include:

- Consider entering the turnaround space and customizing school models — particularly in areas such as human capital development, curriculum and instruction, parent outreach, and community engagement — to succeed in turnaround situations.

- Negotiate the autonomy and authority needed to succeed, including autonomies over staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.

- Develop human capital pipelines and on-the-ground professional development opportunities for turnaround teachers and leaders.

- Develop consistent and rigorous approaches to align all school personnel behind a powerful vision for success and to create positive cultures of high expectations for students.

- Partner with existing organizations and entities, such as turnaround supporting partners, institutes of higher education, districts, and states.

- Share successes and challenges of turnaround efforts to increase the field's knowledge base.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

School-support partners of all types can build turnaround-specific capacity, services, and expertise. In particular, the most pressing need is for action from human capital providers to develop turnaround-specific training, recruitment, and support approaches for teachers and school leaders that can drive success in turnaround situations, as well as to partner with districts on creating robust human capital management systems. Specific actions include:

- Develop turnaround-specific training modules to prepare teachers and leaders for turnaround schools.

- Identify characteristics of teachers and leaders who are effective in turnaround situations, and then adjust recruiting approaches to find and enroll those individuals.

- Study and evaluate the successes and challenges of strategies to prepare turnaround teachers and leaders, based on school and student outcomes.

- Work with states, districts, and operators to build aligned, cohesive human capital systems and pipelines.

- Use evidence-based outcomes (school- and student-level results) to support districts and states in the creation of conditions that most enable turnaround principals and teachers to succeed.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Community-based organizations can mobilize community support for difficult decisions and partner with turnaround schools to help with academic remediation during out-of-school time. Specific actions include:

- Mobilize community support for turnarounds, working with parents, local businesses, local leaders, and other community organizations to:

    o Demand an excellent public education for all children, including advocating for schools to be shut down and teachers and leaders to be replaced when needed.

    o Engage and mobilize stakeholders across the community as advocates for education.

    o Hold district, state, and labor leadership accountable for a high-quality public education.

- Provide productive out-of-school-time academic and personal support programs to help students engage in school and catch up academically.

RESEARCH AND FIELD-BUILDING ORGANIZATIONS

Research and field-building organizations help move the field forward, studying and evaluating existing efforts, identifying tools and effective practices, filling knowledge gaps, and disseminating findings so that the turnaround field can learn and grow. Specific actions include:

- Analyze themes from successful and unsuccessful Round I and II Race to the Top applications.

- Document school- and system-level turnaround successes and failures, and analyze best practices of turnaround efforts within and across districts and states.

- Help devise rigorous evaluation approaches to ensure that the field learns from and spreads what works, and that resources are not invested in interventions that don't work.

- Pool resources and develop channels to share information, tools, and best practices broadly and effectively.

PHILANTHROPIC FUNDERS

Foundations can seed innovative models in leadership, teaching, curriculum, support services, community engagement, and other areas vital to turnaround work, as well as invest in partnerships with states and districts in applying these practices at scale. Specific actions include:

- Consider turnaround-specific initiatives, programs, and investments.

- Support the planning and implementation of state and district turnaround strategies directly and with matching funds for certain federal and state investments.

- Help effective turnaround operators scale and start up new turnaround school operators.

- Support research and field-building efforts to drive the effectiveness of the sector as a whole, including funding evaluation and research.

Conclusion

Despite the tremendous level of activity currently happening in the school-turnaround field, the work is still in its early stages. The field is growing quickly, but remains highly fragmented. Interventions are being piloted, but practitioners lack knowledge of what is working and how to scale what works. It has many more questions than it has answers.

We hope that this report increases education reformers' awareness of the issues, prompts members of the field to think about how to most effectively get involved in or execute on turnaround work, and encourages practitioners to work more closely in concert with others in the field. After all, if the field is to systemically improve thousands of the nation's underperforming schools, everyone must work together to identify and spread effective practices, create the policies and conditions for success, build capacity, and ensure the sustainability of the work at scale.

Suggested Resources

For more information about federal guidelines, definitions, and funding for turnaround efforts:

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To read Race to the Top applications that states submitted:

http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase1-applications/index.html.

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For more information about community engagement in turnaround efforts:

- Visit http://transform-myschool.org for examples of materials that three schools used in the process of converting from schools in Y4 program improvement to charter schools that increase student achievement, including parent petitions, a multimedia public-information campaign, timelines, parents' frequently asked questions, and parent fliers.

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Interviewees

Name	Affiliation
Jay Altman	FirstLine Schools
Jacqueline Ancess	National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching, Teachers College
Alan Anderson	Office of Human Capital, Chicago Public Schools
Kathy Augustine	Atlanta Public Schools
Ben Austin	Parent Revolution
Karla Brooks Baehr	Massachusetts Department of Education
Robert Balfanz	Everyone Graduates Center, The Johns Hopkins University
Elisa Beard	Teach for America
Larry Berger	Wireless Generation
Sue Bodilly	RAND
Harold Brown	EdWorks
LeAnn Buntrock	University of Virginia School Turnaround Specialist Program
Amanda Burnette	Turnaround Schools Initiative at South Carolina Department of Education
Andy Calkins	The Stupski Foundation
Matt Candler	Independent Consultant
Karl Cheng	Parthenon Group
Dale Chu	Indiana Department of Education
Justin Cohen	Mass Insight Education
James Connell	First Things First/IRRE
Michael Cordell	Friendship Public Charter Schools
Chris Coxon	Texas High School Project
Jennifer Davis	National Center on Time and Learning
Nina de las Alas	Council of Chief State School Officers
Joan Devlin	American Federation of Teachers
Christine Dominguez	Long Beach Unified School District
Ann Duffy	Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement
Josh Edelman	District of Columbia Public Schools
Kristin Engel Waters	Denver Public Schools
Mary-Beth Fafard	The Education Alliance, Brown University
Don Feinstein	Academy for Urban School Leadership
Ben Fenton	New Leaders for New Schools
Larry Flakne	Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Don Fraynd	Office of School Turnaround, Chicago Public Schools
Sajan George	Alvarez and Marsal
Robert Glascock	Breakthrough Center, Maryland State Department of Education
Scott Gordon	Mastery Charter School
Peter Gorman	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Greg Greicius	Turnaround
Leah Hamilton	Carnegie Corporation of New York
Bryan C. Hassel	Public Impact
Kati Haycock	Education Trust
Frederick M. Hess	American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research
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Kevin Huffman	Teach for America
Gary Huggins	Commission on NCLB, Aspen Institute
Bob Hughes	New Visions for Public Schools
Rene Islas	B&D Consulting
Joanna Jacobson	Strategic Grant Partners
Jack Jennings	Center on Education Policy
Mike Johnston	New Leaders for New Schools
John Jordan	Mississippi Department of Education
John King	New York State Education Department
Barbara Knaggs	Texas Education Agency
Richard Laine	The Wallace Foundation
Lillian Lowery	Delaware Department of Education
Lisa Margosian	KIPP Foundation
Frances McLaughlin	Education Pioneers
Jordan Meranus	New Schools Venture Fund
Darlene Merry	New Leaders for New Schools
Laura Mitchell	Cincinnati Public Schools
Nora Moreno Cargie	The Boeing Company
Paul Pastorek	Louisiana State Department of Education
Marco Petruzzi	Green Dot Public Schools
Courtney Philips	The Broad Foundation
Eileen Reed	Texas Initiatives
Doug Reeves	The Leadership and Learning Center
Paul Reville	Massachusetts Department of Education
Jim Rex	South Carolina Department of Education
Bill Roberti	Alvarez and Marsal
Vincent Schoemehl	St. Louis Public Schools
Caitlin Scott	Center on Education Policy
Kelly Scott	The Aspen Institute
Joe Siedlecki	Michael and Susan Dell Foundation
Andy Smarick	Thomas B. Fordham Institute
Connie Smith	Tennessee Department of Education
Kathleen Smith	Virginia Department of Education
Nelson Smith	National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
Melissa Solomon	Atlanta Education Fund
Kenyatta Stansberry-Butler	Harper High School, Chicago
Tamar Tamler	Resources for Indispensable Schools and Educators (RISE)
Philip Uri Treisman	University of Texas at Austin
Victoria Van Cleef	The New Teacher Project
Carmita Vaughan	America's Promise Alliance
Joseph Villani	National School Boards Association
David Wakelyn	National Governors Association
Laura Weeldreyer	Baltimore City Public Schools
Courtney Welsh	New York City Leadership Academy
Ann Whalen	U.S. Department of Education
Bob Wise	Alliance for Excellent Education
Kevin Wooldridge	Education for Change
Trevor Yates	Cambridge Education

Organizations That Serve the Turnaround Sector

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list

School Operators

- Academy for Urban School Leadership
- Education for Change
- Friendship Public Charter Schools
- Green Dot Public Schools
- Mastery Charter Schools

Supporting Partners

- Comprehensive School Redesign
    - Cambridge Education
    - Edison Learning
    - Institute for Student Achievement
    - Partners in School Innovation
    - Strategic Learning Initiatives

- Human Capital and Professional Development
    - New Leaders for New Schools
    - The New Teacher Project
    - New York City Leadership Academy
    - Teach for America
    - University of Virginia School Turnaround Specialists Program

- District and School Resource Management
    - Alvarez and Marsal
    - Education Resource Strategies

- Integrated Services
    - Turnaround
    - Turnaround for Children

- Parent and Community Organizing and Engagement
    - America's Promise
    - Parent Revolution

Research and Field-Building Organizations

- The Aspen Institute
- The Center on Education Policy
- Mass Insight Education
- NewSchools Venture Fund
- Public Impact

Philanthropic Funders

- The Broad Foundation
- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- The Ford Foundation
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- The Hewlett Foundation
- The Rainwater Charitable Trust
- The Wallace Foundation
- The Walton Family Foundation
- The Wasserman Foundation

Detailed Critical Actions Aligned to Turnaround Gaps

Actor	Action	Gaps Addressed				
		Capacity	Funding	Public and Political Will	Conditions	Research and Knowledge Sharing
U.S. Department of Education	**Build early learnings from turnaround efforts into ESEA reauthorization and future funding**, potentially to include: • Community buy-in/coinvestment and parental engagement, • Turnaround grants made directly to districts, • Consideration of and provisions to accommodate the challenge of rural states, and • Additional competitive grant processes.		X	X	X	X
	Implement a **national knowledge-building and dissemination initiative** that tracks and reports on the turnaround efforts of states and districts, particularly the states that are implementing RTTT plans.	X				X
	Develop **clear standards** for student achievement and turnaround success at the school and system levels.				X	X
	Support and sustain the development and implementation of **robust state longitudinal-data systems**.		X		X	
	Serve as a **voice for urgency** around turnaround efforts, **supporting states' ability to make difficult decisions.**			X		
States	Provide **opportunities for rural districts to partner with one another** to reach greater scale.	X	X	X	X	
	Collaborate with districts to identify where capacity should be built to effectively execute on turnaround strategies, and **designate a specific office and staff to lead turnaround efforts.**	X			X	
	Use a range of strategies to **develop, attract, and retain principals and teachers** at the lowest-performing schools, including: • Professional-development opportunities, • Financial incentives and/or pay for performance, • More equitable teacher distribution, • Alternate certification paths, • Policy change, • Partnerships with institutes of higher education, • Generating dialogue with labor, • Bringing districts and labor "to the table" for negotiations, • Providing political cover for districts, where necessary, • Retirement accumulation, and • Differentiated pay systems.	X		X	X	
	Develop **processes for vetting external providers.**	X			X	X
	Support the **sharing of best practices among districts and schools** through clusters, turnaround zones, or other structures.				X	X
	Make **investments in technology** (performance management and accountability systems) and **make statewide assessment data available and accessible** to districts and local communities.			X		X
Districts	**Engage communities** — particularly parents and community-based organizations — to generate demand and political will among stakeholders.			X	X	

Actor	Action	Gaps Addressed				
		Capacity	Funding	Public and Political Will	Conditions	Research and Knowledge Sharing
Districts	**Hold leaders of schools and school operators accountable** for turnaround success, in exchange for **greater autonomy** around staffing, program, budget, schedule, and data.	X			X	
	Collaborate with the state to identify where capacity should be built to effectively execute on turnaround strategies, and designate a **specific office and staff to lead turnaround efforts.**	X			X	
	Provide **aligned noninstructional supports efficiently** to allow turnaround leaders and school operators to focus on instructional and community-building work.				X	
	Support the **sharing of best practices among schools** through clusters, turnaround zones, or other structures.				X	X
Human Capital Providers	**Build skills and capacity** to prepare teachers and leaders for turnaround situations.	X				
	Identify characteristics of quality teachers and leaders who succeed in turnaround situations.	X				X
	Study and evaluate the successes and challenges of strategies for turnaround teacher and leader preparation, based on school and student outcomes.	X				X
	Partner with existing organizations and entities — such as school operators, districts, and states — to build the human capital pipeline.	X				
	Use evidence-based outcomes — school- and student-level results — to encourage the creation of conditions that most enable principals and teachers to succeed.				X	
School Management Organizations, School Operators, and Support Providers	**Share the successes and challenges** of turnaround efforts to increase the field's base of knowledge and to build credibility.	X				X
	Think creatively about solutions for reaching scale, such as partnering with multiple rural school districts within a state.	X			X	
	Partner with existing organizations and entities, such as turnaround supporting partners, institutes of higher education, districts, and states.	X			X	
	Consider **entering the turnaround space.**	X				
	Develop **human capital pipelines** and **on-the-ground professional development opportunities** for teachers and leaders.	X				
Philanthropic Funders	**Provide seed funding** to providers and **help effective operators** reach scale.	X	X			
	Support **research and field-building efforts** to drive the effectiveness of the sector as a whole.		X			X
	Document and disseminate best practices in turnaround philanthropy.		X	X		X

Actor	Action	Gaps Addressed				
		Capacity	Funding	Public and Political Will	Conditions	Research and Knowledge Sharing
Unions	**Engage proactively with states and districts** to develop, attract, and retain principals and teachers at the lowest-performing schools, and create conditions that support their success, including: • Working to identify flexibilities within current contracts, and • Being willing to develop new and more flexible contracts specifically focused on turnaround schools.	X			X	
	Serve as an advocate for turnaround teachers to ensure they receive adequate support and professional development, given the demanding environments in which they work.	X			X	
Parents and Community-Based Organizations	**Demand an excellent public education** for children within local communities.			X		
	Engage and mobilize stakeholders across the community as advocates for education.			X		
	Hold district and state leadership accountable for transparency and high-quality public education.			X	X	
Research Organizations	**Document** school- and system-level turnaround **successes and failures.**			X		X
	Develop channels to **share information and best practices** broadly and effectively.			X		X
	Conduct best-practices analyses of community engagement in turnaround efforts within and across districts and states.			X	X	X
	Analyze themes from successful and unsuccessful Round I and II Race to the Top applications.	X	X	X	X	X
Collective Actions	**Collaborate across stakeholder groups** and encourage coordination and conversation among stakeholders.	X	X	X	X	X
	Generate political will and momentum for school turnaround.			X	X	
	Develop **metrics** for successful turnarounds, allowing states, schools, school operators, and LEAs to know how they will be measured.			X	X	X
	Document and share **best practices and challenges**.	X	X	X	X	X
	Serve as a **voice for urgency** around turnaround efforts.			X		

Authors

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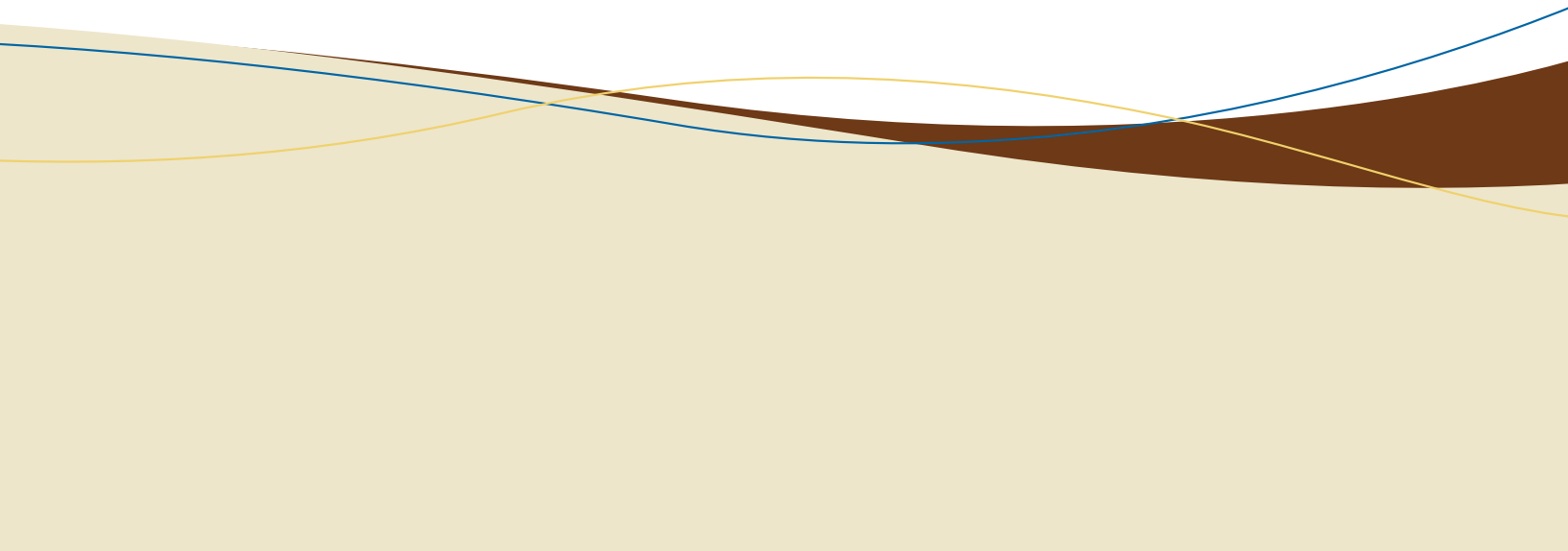
SCHOOL TURNAROUND LANDSCAPE

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