Leadership for School Turnarounds

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Leadership for School Turnarounds

National Context

The federal Race to the Top program will provide $3.5 billion in 2009-10 to turnaround failing schools.
Leadership is one essential part of a comprehensive turnaround strategy.
Turnaround Leaders

School Turnaround Leaders: Competencies for Success

Part of the School Turnaround Collection from Public Impact
What Turnaround Leaders Do

- Get early wins, big payoffs
- Act quickly
- Break school norms

www.publicimpact.org
Turnaround Lessons from Manual Arts High School (LAUSD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manual Arts High School (LAUSD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
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<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
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<td>English Learners</td>
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<td>API</td>
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<td>% Proficient ELA</td>
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<td>% Proficient Math</td>
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<td>Graduation rate 5 yrs</td>
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Lesson 1: A role for ALL school leaders

- Superintendent
- District leaders
- School board
- External support providers
- Teacher leaders
- Principal

{ Autonomy
  Patience
  Support
  “All in” }
Lesson 2: Get the right drivers on the bus

- Build a strong pool of leadership candidates
- Powerful message to attract candidates
  - Local autonomy/lack of bureaucratic interference
  - Critical mass of teachers who will embrace change
  - External support
  - Control over staff
- Select carefully ("Behavior Event Interviews" – from Public Impact selection toolkit)
Lesson 3: Recognize strengths

- Acknowledge what’s working
- Leverage the school’s assets
Lesson 4: Accountability (that works)

Counter example: 5,000 schools nationwide in Program Improvement (NCLB)
Accountability (that works)

Traditional Accountability
People below accountable to people above

Problem 1: The people below do not get what they need to succeed from the people above.

Problem 2: The people below resent people above which means they do even less than they can with the support they do have.
Reciprocal Accountability
All parties accountable to clearly defined expectations
School Turnaround Leaders

Lesson 5: Evaluation (that works)

- Clear expectations for all stakeholders
- All stakeholders evaluated (360 degree review)
- Teacher evaluations:
  - Formative and summative
  - Credible, well-prepared, well-supported evaluators
  - Focus on student work and feedback, curriculum, assessment, instruction
  - Differentiated support (PD, peer-assistance, coaching)
School Turnaround Leaders

What difference is it making?

• Suspension rates cut in half
• 98% participation rate on CST
• Matriculation rates boosted
• Dramatically improved climate
• Greater personalization (adults and students)
• Quality assessments of student learning now being done, common course outlines tied to standards
• API up 32 points
Leading Schools to a Tipping Point

“We are all, at heart, gradualists, our expectations set by the steady passage of time. The world of the Tipping Point is a place where the unexpected becomes expected, where radical change is more than possibility. It is—contrary to all our expectations—a certainty.” The Tipping Point