



**Summary of Resources for the
Four Intervention Models
For Persistently Underperforming Schools
Applying for the School Improvement Grant
March 7, 2010**

Overview of All Models

Center on Innovation and Improvement. “Handbook on Effective Implementation of School Improvement Grants,” 2009. Eds. Perlman, Redding (210 pages)

<http://www.centerii.org/handbook>

This document is a collaborative effort of the following agencies: Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center, Center on Innovation & Improvement, Center on Instruction, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, and the National High School Center. The work was coordinated and edited by the Center on Innovation and Improvement, a national content center that supports regional centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families, with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. This document identifies how to implement the four intervention models of mandated in the School Improvement Grant application. It is divided into seven chapters which are directly linked to the components of the four intervention models. It includes: (1) organizational structures,(2) leadership and decision-making, (3) human capital, (4) curriculum and instruction, (5) scheduling and learning time, (6) student supports, and (7) indicators. Each of the above chapters lists four to 12 topics from two to three specifically linked to intervention models which can be downloaded separately.

Center on Innovation and Improvement: “NCLB’s Ultimate Restructuring Alternatives: Do they Improve the Quality of Education?” April 2009. (26 pages)

<http://epicpolicy.org/files/Mathis-SANCTIONS.pdf>

This article is a meta-analysis of the research into four of the five restructuring models under NCLB: (1) state takeover, (2) hire a school management company, (3) reopen the school as a charter, and (4) reconstitute the school by eliminating some or all of the staff, teachers, and administrators. The article states that there is little or no evidence to suggest that any of these options delivers the promised improvements in academic achievement. It also makes five policy recommendations. One suggests that states refrain from relying on the restructuring sanctions listed above to effect school improvement and instead to focus on strategies that have empirically demonstrated to yield significant school improvement. These include early education, longer school years and days, small school communities, intense personal intervention, strong counseling, and social support systems.

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement: “School Restructuring: What Works When?: A Guide for Education Leaders,” 2009. (141 pages)

http://www.centerforsri.org/files/School_Restructuring_Guide.pdf

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement was formerly a research lab funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Its website is maintained through the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Texas. This document describes steps to be taken when implementing one of the following restructuring models: (1) reopening as a charter school, (2) turnaround with new leaders and staff, and (3) contracting with a private educational management organization. It outlines four steps:

1. Taking Charge of Change – Big Change
2. Choosing the Right Changes
3. Implementing the Plan
4. Evaluating, Improving and Acting on Results

Center on Education Policy: “Managing More Than a Thousand Remodeling Projects: School Restructuring in California,” 2008. (23 pages)

<http://www.cep-dc.org/document/docWindow.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=232&documentFormatId=3879>

The Center on Education Policy is a Washington-based think tank that studies the implementation and impact of NCLB. This study looks at schools implementing restructuring per NCLB mandate in California and found that none of the required models: (1) contracting with an outside agency, (2) reopening as a charter school, (3) replacing all or most of school staff, (4) state takeover, or (5) other major restructuring were more effective in raising student achievement. The most commonly adopted choice was “other.”

Turnaround Model

Institute on Education Science. “Practice Guide: Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools,” May 2008. (43 pages)

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf

This document is produced by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) which publishes research in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). WWC is a federal website which reviews research on focused educational topics. IES makes five recommendations for turning around chronically low performing schools, all of which were published prior to the current focus on the four intervention models. The recommendations include: (1) signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership, (2) maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction, (3) make visible improvement early in the school turnaround process, and (4) build a committed staff. The level of evidence given to these recommendations was rated “low” meaning they are based on expert opinion derived from strong findings or theories in related areas and or expert opinion buttressed by evidence that comes from well controlled studies. Evidence rated “high” and “moderate” consist of more directly controlled studies.

Mass Insight: “The Turnaround Challenge Executive Summary,” 2007. (8 pages)
<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non-profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards-based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. This document, funded by the Gates Foundation, describes the necessity for creating a Zone for Effective Turnaround, and addressing the 3 C’s of turnaround: (1) changing conditions, (2) building capacity, and (3) clustering for support. These components are included in turnaround efforts in Chicago, Miami-Dade, Cleveland, and Denver.

Center on Innovation and Improvement: “School Turnarounds: Actions and Results,” 2008. (28 pages)
<http://www.centerii.org/survey/>

The Center on Innovation and Improvement is a collaboration between the Academic Development Institute in Lincoln, Illinois, Temple University Institute for Schools and Society, and Little Planet Learning in Tennessee. It helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. This document provides descriptive, real world vignettes that illustrate for practitioners the actions that successful school leaders have taken to turn around low-performing schools. It begins by identifying and explaining 14 leader actions associated with a successful turn around. Vignettes drawn from case studies are then provided to illustrate each leader action.

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement: “Successful School Turnaround: Seven Steps for District Leaders,” September 15, 2009. (8 pages)
<http://www.centerforcsri.org/files/CenterIssueBriefSept09.pdf>

The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement is a former research lab funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Its website is maintained through the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Texas. This article was published after the Obama administration identified its “turnaround” initiative in the fall of ’09. The authors identify the following seven steps for district leaders: (1) commit to success, (2) choose turnarounds for the right schools, (3) develop a pipeline of turnaround leaders, (4) give leaders the big yes, (5) hold leaders accountable for results, (6) prioritize teacher hiring in turnaround schools, and (7) proactively engage the community.

Restart Model

Mass Insight: “Mastery Charter School Organization,” May 2009. (28 pages)
<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non-profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards-based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. This publication documents the transition of Picket Middle School a mostly African American, 91 percent Socio Economically Disadvantaged underperforming school toward a 7-12 high school in Philadelphia. The transition is based on premises of the

“Turnaround Challenge” (2007) from Mass Insight. The article is divided into three parts: introduction, strategic and operating context, and turnaround implementation. Fourteen subtopics, including a list of documents used in planning and implementation of this turnaround are also included.

Mass Insight: “Small Schools and Turnaround,” July 2009. (6 pages)

<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non-profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. This article outlines the advantages of creating smaller schools out of larger comprehensive high schools, many of which are converted into schools with a theme or focus. Most of these efforts also included Educational Management Organizations and charter schools. Districts in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles are identified.

School Closure

Center on Innovation and Improvement: “Tough Decisions: Closing Persistently Low-Performing Schools.” (29 pages)

http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Tough_Decisions.pdf

The Center on Innovation and Improvement is a collaboration between the Academic Development Institute in Lincoln, Illinois, Temple University Institute for Schools and Society, and Little Planet Learning in Tennessee. It helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity information and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. This paper describes why and how four urban districts – Denver, Chicago, Harford, and Pittsburgh public school systems closed schools for low performance. It focuses on closing school buildings and dispersing students to other schools. It includes information on why districts choose this option, criteria for closing, announcing the decision, implementing a transition plan, working with the public and board and providing support to families.

Consortium on Chicago School Research: “When Schools Close: Effects on Displaced Students in Chicago Public Schools,” October, 2009. (40 pages)

<http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/CCSRSchoolClosings-Final.pdf>

The Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) was created in 1990 after the passage of the Chicago School Reform Act that decentralized governance of the city's public schools. Researchers at the University of Chicago joined with researchers from the school district and other organizations to form CCSR with the imperative to study this landmark restructuring and its long-term effects. This document chapters include: (1) school closing policy in Chicago), (2) where displaced students go? (3) a look at the receiving schools, (4) what are the effects on displaced students? and (4) summary information.

Transformation Model

a. Internal Lead Partners:

Mass Insight: “Creating Internal Lead Partner for Turnaround,” December 2009. (38 pages)

<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non-profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards-based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. An external lead partner in a district is a non-profit or public agency or units of central offices on contract with the central office or state to manage small clusters of three to five schools that are called Partnership Zones. These zones are supported by state policy and the state turn around office. They have flexibility and autonomy to make decisions about people, time, money, and school programs. The zones remain within the district and have access to district central office services. Internal lead partners are divisions of the district central office that must fulfill the same responsibilities as external lead partners. The article identifies four examples of internal lead partners in Cleveland TurnAround Schools, Miami-Dade School Improvement Zone, Louisiana Recovery School District, and Chicago Public Schools.

Mass Insight: “The Essential Conditions: Recommended Operational & Instructional Criteria for Partnership Zones,” 2009. (1 page)

<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards-based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. This page identifies recommended operational and instructional criteria for partnership zones that include people, money, time, and program.

b. Teacher Incentives:

Mass Insight: “Teacher Pay for Performance in School Turnaround,” July 2009. (8 pages)

<http://www.massinsight.org/turnaround/reports.aspx> (Free registration required.)

Mass Insight is a non-profit organization based in Boston, MA created in 1997 to promote standards-based reform in Massachusetts and to provide research and strategic consulting services nationally. This short article reviews the need to compensate teachers who serve in turnaround schools. Four types of pay are discussed: (1) hard to staff schools/skill shortage, (2) performance, (3) retention, and (4) advanced role. The article identifies differentiated pay plans in Miami-Dade and Denver.

Center on Innovation and Improvement: “Performance Based Dismissals: Cross Sector Lessons for School Turnarounds,” 2009. (34 pages)

http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Performance-Based_Dismissals.pdf

The Center on Innovation and Improvement is a collaboration between the Academic Development Institute in Lincoln, Illinois, Temple University Institute for Schools and Society,

and Little Planet Learning in Tennessee. It helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity information and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. This article examines the research on performance-based dismissals outside of education – where the experience base is much richer – to inform strategies for turnaround leaders in public education. It also examines the ways in which state and district policies enable – or more often impede – targeted staff replacement and provide policy recommendations for local and state education leaders.