



Turnaround Leadership

Overview

The goal of this professional development is to assist district and school leadership teams in developing capacity to quickly and dramatically improve student achievement in persistently low-achieving schools. Leadership teams can use knowledge and skills gained during the training to guide their planning and execution of school turnaround strategies. The module includes specific recommendations and cites anecdotal evidence drawn from schools that recently engaged in the school turnaround process and experienced increases in student achievement.



The activities and content in *Turnaround Leadership: Saying No To the Status Quo* prepare participants to:

- ◆ Improve their capacity to understand and create systems and supports for rapid, sustainable school turnaround;
- ◆ Increase functional knowledge of the essential components in fostering a turnaround school community; and
- ◆ Consider and create next steps regarding the change process for their school.

School Turnaround vs. School Improvement

Both school improvement and school turnaround aim to improve student outcomes by changing how schools and classrooms operate. School turnarounds involve quick, dramatic improvement within three years, while school improvement is often marked by steady, incremental improvements over a longer time period. School turnaround literature builds on effective school improvement practices, but focuses on how to speed up and increase the impact of these practices.

Turnaround Leadership: Saying No to the Status Quo

The training is designed to be implemented in 1½-2 days. Participants should include school and district leaders, building leadership teams, teachers, and supplemental service providers. This module identifies practices that can quickly improve the performances of chronically low-performing schools—a process commonly referred to as creating “turnaround schools.”

To plan for and move into turnaround position, school and district leaders must implement research-based processes shown to assist schools in ramping up their systems and improving student outcomes. This module focuses on five of these processes:

- ◆ **Signaling the need to change**, which includes re-visioning leadership, understanding organizational change, and beginning to choose and plan big implementations.
- ◆ **Revising instructional practice** and drilling down to deeply understand and be able to apply best practices, including aligning vertically and horizontally curriculum and instructional practices.
- ◆ **Identifying “quick wins”** that will rally staff and boost morale—which in turn will continue the cycle of positive change!
- ◆ **Building a committed staff** by working with the do-ers and encouraging all staff to get on the same page.
- ◆ **Developing organizational flexibility** and the necessary structural supports for turnaround schools within the system.

Instead of helping some kids beat the odds...why don't we just change the odds?

*Geoffrey Canada,
Founder, Harlem Children's
Zone, 2004*