

**RACE TO THE TOP
SCHOOL TURNAROUND
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

**PROMISING PRACTICES
FOR RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING
IN TURNAROUND SCHOOLS**



SEPTEMBER 13, 2012



AGENDA

2:00 – 2:10 Welcome and Introductions

2:10 – 2:40 Presentation

- Staffing decisions in the turnaround setting
- Staffing options in turnaround schools
- Competencies of turnaround teachers
- Actions for States to consider

2:40 – 2:50 Group Discussion and Q&A

2:50 – 3:00 Next Steps

OVERVIEW

Staffing decisions in the turnaround setting

- Strategies for building a committed staff with implications for States, local educational agencies (LEAs), and schools

Staffing options in turnaround schools

- Recruitment in hard-to-staff schools
- Extending excellent teachers' reach

Turnaround teacher competencies

- Competencies defined
- Competencies in the turnaround setting
- Selection methods

Actions for States to consider

The following slides contain information from public and private organizations that may be useful to the reader. Inclusion of this information does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any products or services offered or views expressed.

STAFFING DECISIONS IN THE TURNAROUND SETTING

Cross-sector research* reveals two primary staffing strategies in successful turnarounds:

Targeted decisions

- Selective dismissals – combined with new hires and reassignments – are more common than wholesale staff replacements
- Dismissals free the organization from employees who cannot support the turnaround
- New hires, in conjunction with some existing staff, enable leaders to build and keep valuable skills and experience

Voluntary and involuntary departures

- Strong vision set by a successful turnaround leader fosters a results-oriented environment that encourages staff who are unwilling or unable to carry out necessary changes to leave voluntarily
- Successful turnaround leaders also gather a variety of information about their staff to make decisions about who should stay and who should go

*Includes a review of the literature – research and expert opinion – about staff dismissals from organizations that have faced imminent failure in sectors within and outside education (for example, non-profit and medical fields, private industry, and State and federal governments).

STAFFING OPTIONS IN TURNAROUND SCHOOLS

Cross-sector experience* offers several promising strategies for recruiting new teachers to hard-to-staff schools:

A portfolio of financial incentives, such as:

- Rewards for performance
- Signing and retention bonuses
- Loan repayment

Substantial premiums

- Larger than we typically see in schools today
- For example: \$8,000-\$25,000 annually

Other personnel strategies

- Using technology to alter the roles or location of teaching staff
- Extending excellent teachers' reach to reduce the number of positions to fill

*Based on experience and available research in education as well as literature about incentives (financial and other) in the non-profit and medical fields, private industry, and State and federal governments. See *Financial Incentives for Hard-to-Staff Positions: Cross-Sector Lessons for Public Education* (on "Additional Resources" slide) for full citations.

STAFFING OPTIONS IN TURNAROUND SCHOOLS

Extending excellent teachers' reach to more students can also help States, LEAs and schools meet recruiting needs.

Extending excellent teachers' reach can:

- Immediately provide more students in the school with access to a proven-effective teacher
- Ease recruiting by decreasing the number of teaching positions that the school must fill

States can put an excellent teacher in charge of more students' learning by:

- Redesigning jobs, roles and schedules
- Using technology to transform teaching in turnaround schools

STAFFING OPTIONS IN TURNAROUND SCHOOLS

What experiences has your State had with incentives and other personnel strategies in turnaround or hard-to-staff schools?

- Using differentiated compensation
- Working with LEAs to change procedural or policy practice
- Examining seniority
- Recruiting talented teachers and principals to interview for positions in turnaround and/or hard-to-staff schools first
- Implementing performance incentives (exceeding \$10,000) to recruit talented candidates for turnaround schools

TURNAROUND TEACHER COMPETENCIES

Qualifications:

- Certification
- Degrees

- Knowledge and skills
- Classroom practices

Competencies:

- Recurring patterns of thought and action
- Example: Achievement Drive

Adapted from "The Iceberg Model" in Spencer & Spencer,
Competence at Work, p. 11.

TURNAROUND TEACHER COMPETENCIES

What is a competency?

- A pattern of thinking, feeling, acting or speaking that causes a person to be successful in a job or role
- For example: persistence, interpersonal understanding

What are they good for?

- Competencies may be developed, but are most powerful when they are used to select people who are already a good fit for the job
- Alongside other assessments, can help identify teachers who have shown the right combination of competencies in other roles, but have not yet participated in a school turnaround
- Can also help teachers understand and address their strengths and weaknesses

TURNAROUND TEACHER COMPETENCIES

Driving for
Results

Influencing
for Results

Problem
Solving

Personal
Effectiveness

DRIVING FOR RESULTS

Achievement

- Set challenging goals and reach high standards of performance, despite obstacles

Initiative and Persistence

- Do more than expected to accomplish challenging tasks

Monitoring and Directiveness

- Set clear expectations and hold others accountable for performance

Planning Ahead

- Plan to derive future benefits or avoid potential problems

INFLUENCING FOR RESULTS

Impact and Influence

- Influence the perceptions, thinking and actions of others

Interpersonal Understanding

- Understand and interpret others' concerns, motives, feelings and behaviors

Teamwork

- Work with others to achieve shared goals

PROBLEM SOLVING

Analytical Thinking

- Break things down in a logical way and recognize causes and effects

Conceptual Thinking

- See patterns and links among seemingly unrelated things

PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Belief in Learning Potential

- Believe that all students, regardless of circumstances, can learn at high levels

Self-Control

- Keep one's emotions in check, especially when challenged or provoked

Self-Confidence

- Believe in one's ability to accomplish difficult tasks

Flexibility

- Change tactics and adapt one's approach to the requirements of a situation

TURNAROUND TEACHER COMPETENCIES: SELECTION

Behavioral Event Interviews (BEIs)

Research-based method for assessing underlying competencies

Process

- Requires candidate to describe past events in rich detail
- Scores responses that relate to each of the turnaround competencies
- Can be used in combination with other screening methods (Examples: observations and writing samples)

Sample Question

- “Think about a time when you felt very successful or proud of something you accomplished at work, and tell me the story.”

ACTIONS FOR STATES TO CONSIDER

A framework for action to support successful recruitment and staffing in turnaround schools:

Incentives

- Direct resources to LEAs that use competency-based strategies
- Embed strong teacher hiring and retention practices into State-level principal evaluation systems/standards
- Include teacher effectiveness indicators in school, LEA and State reporting

Capacity

- Use turnaround competency model and selection tools to identify a statewide turnaround “corps” (Example: Tennessee)
- Train principals in effective teacher hiring (Example: Model Staffing Initiative)

Opportunity

- Remove policy barriers to targeted dismissals and strategies that extend the reach of schools’ best teachers (salary schedules, placement policies, class size)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- *Extending the Reach of Excellent Teachers* (2012) <http://www.opportunityculture.org>
- *Financial Incentives for Hard-to-Staff Positions: Cross-Sector Lessons for Public Education* (2008) http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2008/11/pdf/hard_to_staff.pdf
- *Performance-Based Dismissals: Cross-Sector Lessons for School Turnarounds* (2009) http://www.centerii.org/survey/downloads/Performance-Based_Dismissals.pdf
- *School Turnaround Teachers: Competencies for Success* (2008) http://publicimpact.com/images/stories/publicimpact/documents/Turnaround_Teacher_Competencies.pdf
- *School Turnaround Teachers: Selection Toolkit* (2008) http://publicimpact.com/images/stories/publicimpact/documents/Turnaround_Teacher_Selection_Toolkit.pdf
- *Using Competency-Based Evaluation to Drive Teacher Excellence: Lessons from Singapore* (2010) http://opportunityculture.org/images/stories/singapore_lessons_2010.pdf

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