

TURNAROUND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Turnaround Leadership Development is based on the core School Turnaround belief which is that there is no change in the world that has ever been driven by a program or an idea or a mandate. All great changes in the world have been driven by individuals.

Leadership Training

School Turnaround has a track record of identifying good candidates for turnaround leadership and growing them into that role. These leaders are both formal and informal; school-based and district office-based. This might include school grade levels, curriculum area, or official roles. Prior to initial training, we conduct a 360 review of each participant. The intent is to gather information that will be useful to the participant when he or she attends the initial training and is asked to compare his or her own reflection with that of the feedback from others.

At a seminar (which can be organized to fit in-service days or weekends), leaders look at their own leadership using instruments we provide. Each principal is typically accompanied by one other critical person. Each leader leaves with a personal Turnaround Development Results Focus. The Results Focus replaces a standard job description with personal responsibility for hitting targets.

Developing Turnaround Leadership

During implementation, a Turnaround Specialist makes regular site visits to work with leaders individually, observe them in action, and provide feedback. Turnaround Specialists also interact with each leader weekly to discuss problems and challenges and specific performance relative to the targets set and to all aspects of the Turnaround Development Results Focus.

In particular, School Turnaround works with school and district leaders to clear the perceived barriers that they see preventing them from getting into classrooms to support teacher behavior change. This is particularly effective for new building leaders and assistant principals and department chairs. Each month there is a new module for learning that focuses on a particular area of turnaround leadership. Leaders also receive monthly newsletters, access to web-based resources and invitations to participate in Turnaround web conferences.

Assessing the Results Focus

At the conclusion of the implementation period, the cohort of leaders reconvenes and looks at their final 360s, the feedback from the Turnaround Specialist, and their own final self-evaluations. In facilitated groups they look at how well they achieved the targets in the Result Focuses as well as the quantifiable impact on student achievement. Leaders also use this opportunity to reflect on how the tools they have used might be expanded to broader issues of academic achievement. At this second one-day workshop, and in follow-up individual consultations, each leader looks at this mini-turnaround experience and his or her own desire and ability to lead a more comprehensive turnaround.