

SYSTEMS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS – THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

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Virginia High School and Middle School
Principals

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History and Terminology

- 1966 – Coleman Report (inputs and outputs)
- 1970s – Effective Schools Research (practices vs. inputs) (Beat-the-Odds Schools - 90-90-90)
- 1980s – Nation at Risk, TQM (management practices)
- 1990s – Standards-Based Education (student outcomes)
- 2000s – Models and Structures (organization and governance)
- 2010s – Practice and Performance for Change

Who's Performance? What Data?

- The other side of the equation
 - ▣ What adults do that affects what students learn
 - ▣ What is our measuring stick?
 - ▣ Who does the measuring?
 - ▣ What do we do with the results?
- Culture of Candor
- Practice guided by indicators

The Virginia Story

The ultimate goal in school improvement is for the people attached to the school to drive its continuous improvement for the sake of their own children and students.

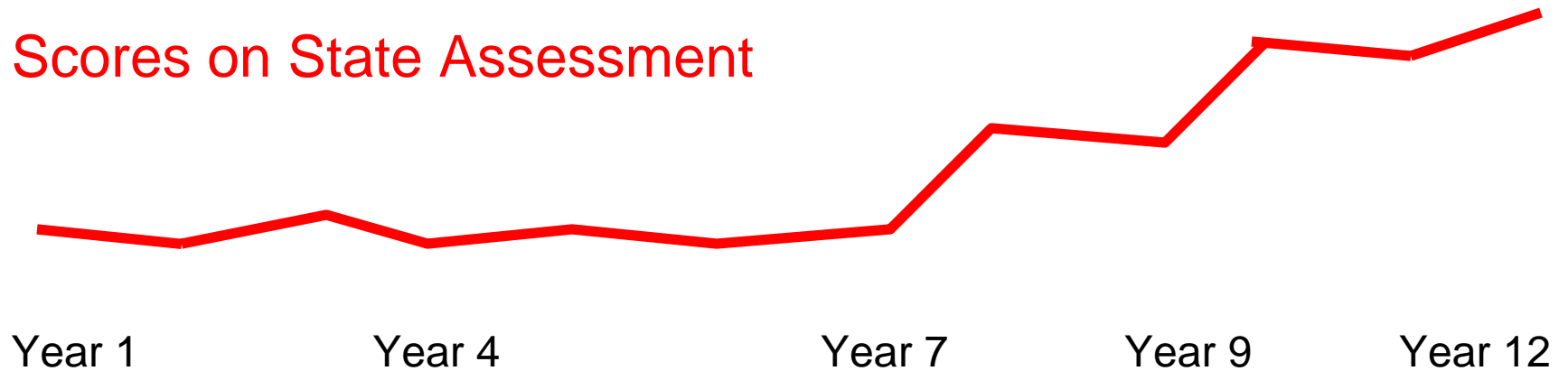
1. State and VASSP support
2. District engagement
3. Learning from other districts and schools
4. Emphasis on instruction
5. Indicators of Effective Practice

What Happened About Year

7?

Millard Fillmore School

Scores on State Assessment



What happened about Year 7?

List 3 **actions** that most contributed to Millard Fillmore's improv

Change of principals **doesn't** count.

Change in Practice & Performance

Leadership and Decision Making

1. Allocation of resources to address learning goals
2. Decision-making structures and processes
3. Information and data systems

Curriculum and Instruction

1. Alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to standards
2. Curriculum - content
3. Formative and periodic assessment of student learning
4. Instructional delivery (teaching and classroom management)
5. Instructional planning by teachers
6. Instructional time and scheduling

Change in Practice & Performance

Human Capital (Personnel)

1. Personnel Policies and Procedures (hiring, placing, evaluating, promoting, retaining, re-assigning, replacing)
2. Professional development processes and procedures
3. Performance Incentives for Personnel

Student Support

1. Programs and services for English Language Learners
2. Extended learning time (supplemental educational services, after-school programs, summer school, for example)
3. Parental involvement, communication, and options
4. Special education programs and procedures
5. Student support services (tutoring, counseling, placement, for example)

Indicators of Successful Practice

- Guideposts for effective school functions
 - Plain language, behavioral indicators
 - Aligned with research base
 - Drivers of planning and improvement
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- Necessary in a Culture of Candor

SCHOOL TURNAROUNDS



Questions

1. Have some low-performing schools turned around?
2. Do we understand why they turned around?
3. Can the turnaround variables be reduced to a set of practical steps?
4. Can we apply this set of practical steps to intentionally turn a school around?
5. Which schools, under what conditions?

Restructuring

- Business Concept – in business turnarounds and bankruptcy
- NCLB Restructuring (change in governance)
 1. State Take-Over
 2. Turnaround – usually change in leadership and other change

Fresh Starts

 3. Reopen as Charter School
 4. Contract to an Education Management Organization (EMO)
 5. Other (96%)

The IES Turnaround Report

- Institute of Education Sciences
- Released in May 2008
- Panel and staff worked for almost a year prior
- Goal: formulate specific and coherent evidence-based recommendations for use by educators aiming to quickly and dramatically improve student achievement in low-performing schools.

IES Definition of Turnaround

- School began as chronically poor performers—with a high proportion of their students failing to meet state standards of proficiency in mathematics or reading over two or more consecutive years.
- School showed substantial gains in student achievement in a short time (no more than three years). Examples:
 - reducing by at least 10 percentage points the proportion of students failing to meet state standards for proficiency in mathematics or reading
 - showing similarly large improvements in other measures of academic performance (such as lowering the dropout rate by 10 percentage points or more), or improving overall performance on standardized mathematics or reading tests by an average of 10 percentage points (or about 0.25 standard deviations).

4 Recommendations from IES Panel

1. Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership.
2. Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction.
3. Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process (quick wins).
4. Build a committed (and competent) staff.

Turnaround: Evidence and Actions

from OII Evidence Review

Cross-Sector Evidence

- Environmental Context
 - Timetable—Planning, Implementing, Sustaining
 - Freedom to Act
 - Support and Aligned Systems
 - Performance Monitoring
 - Community Engagement
- Turnaround Leadership
 - Leader Actions
 - Leader Capabilities

Leader Actions: Initial Analysis and Problem Solving

- Collect & Analyze Data
- Make Action Plan Based on Data

Leader Actions: Driving for Results

- Concentrate on Big, Fast Payoffs in Year One
- Implement Practices Even if Require Deviation
- Require All Staff to Change
- Make Necessary Staff Replacements
- Focus on Successful Tactics; Halt Others
- Do Not Tout Progress as Ultimate Success

Leader Actions: Influencing Inside and Outside

- Communicate a Positive Vision
- Help Staff Personally Feel Problems
- Gain Support of Key Influencers
- Silence Critics with Speedy Success

Leader Actions: Measuring, Reporting (and Improving)

- Measure and Report Progress Frequently
- Require all Decision Makers to Share Data and Problem Solve

- What Data?
- Who Solves Problems?

Turnaround – New Definition

- President Obama – Turnaround 5,000 schools
 - 1,000 a year for 5 years
 - 5% of all schools
- Secretary Duncan – 4 Ways to Turn Schools Around
 1. Kids Stay, Adults Go
 2. Replace staff and leadership and reopen as Charter School or contract to EMO
 3. Keep most staff, dramatically change culture
 4. Close the school—send students to better schools

Secretary Duncan on Principals

“America needs to find 5000 high-energy, hero principals to take over these struggling schools – and they will need a quarter of a million great teachers who are willing to do the toughest work in public education. We will find them in the union ranks and the charter community, the business world and the non-profit sectors. We won't find them overnight. I don't expect a thousand to show up next fall. We can start with one or two hundred in the fall of 2010 and steadily build until we are doing 1000 per year.”

Secretary Duncan on Option

3

Replace some staff and dramatically change culture
Especially for rural schools

What changes?

- Establish a rigorous performance evaluation system along with more support, training and mentoring.
- Change and strengthen the curriculum and instructional program.
- Increase learning time for kids during afternoons, weekends, and in the summer -- and provide more time for teachers to collaborate, plan and strategize.
- Principals and leadership teams must be given more flexibility around budgeting, staffing and calendar.

Option 3, IES, and Virginia

- Initial catalyst to rouse and set in motion ongoing internal processes;
- Keenly attentive to building human relationships, human capital, and team processes within the school;
- Focused on classroom instruction;
- Guided by plain-language indicators of effective practice; and
- As concerned with the data about what the adults in the school are doing to affect student learning as with data about what students are learning.

Foundation of Strong District Support



**(Also Works for Other 95% of
Schools)**

Now, Back to Where We Started

- Culture of Candor – Effective Teams and Collegial Coaching/Learning
- Indicators of Effective Practice
- What the Adults Do That Affects Student Learning

Performance Systems for School Improvement

Sample District Indicators

- The district operates with district-level and school-level improvement teams.
- The district provides incentives for staff who work effectively in hard-to-staff and restructured schools.
- The district regularly reallocates resources to support school, staff, and instructional improvement.
- The district ensures that key pieces of user-friendly data are available in a timely fashion at the district, school, and classroom levels.
- The school reports and documents its progress monthly to the superintendent, and the superintendent reports the school's progress to the school board.
- The district designates a central office contact person for the school, and that person maintains close communication with the school and an interest in its progress.
- District and school decision makers meet at least twice a month to discuss the school's progress.
- The district provides a cohesive district curriculum guide aligned with state standards or otherwise places curricular expectation on the school.

Sample School Indicators

- All teams operate with work plans for the year and specific work products to produce.
- Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.
- Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.
- Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.

Sample Teacher Indicators

- All teachers maintain a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives.
- All teachers differentiate assignments (individualize instruction) in response to individual student performance on pre-tests and other methods of assessment.
- All teachers use modeling, demonstration, and graphics. (Lesson Introduction)
- All teachers review with questioning. (Lesson Summary)
- All teachers interact socially with students (noticing and attending to an ill student, asking about the weekend, inquiring about the family).
- All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.
- All teachers reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them.

Sample PD Indicators

- Professional development for teachers includes observations by peers related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
- Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.
- Professional development of individual teachers includes an emphasis on indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
- Teachers are required to make individual professional development plans based on classroom observations.

The Principal – Sample Indicators

- The principal spends at least 50% of his/her time working directly with teachers to improve instruction, including classroom observations.
- The principal challenges, supports and monitors the correction of unsound teaching practices.
- The principal compiles reports from classroom observations, showing aggregate areas of strength and areas that need improvement without revealing the identity of individual teachers.
- The principal plans opportunities for teachers to share their strengths with other teachers.
- The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.

Performance Systems

- People attached to the school drive its continuous improvement for the sake of their own children and students.
- Real-time coaching and support
- Systematic and continuous assessment and improvement of performance relative to evidence-based indicators of effective practice.
- Principal, Teams, Process, Data from Both Sides of Equation

New Publications from CII

- *The Tough Decision: Closing Persistently Low Performing Schools*
- *Performance-Based Dismissals: Cross-Sector Lessons for Turnaround Schools*
- *Breaking the Habit of Low Performance: Successful School Restructuring Stories*
- *Improving Student Learning: A Synthesis of the Research Across Systems*
- *Case Studies of Rapidly Improving Districts*

Resources

www.centerii.org