

## MEETING THE TURNAROUND CHALLENGE



# Who's Developing Capacity?

## Profiles of organizations creating new capacity for turnaround

*Strategies, Resources & Tools to transform a framework into practice*  
**July 2009**

Turning around schools and districts requires **high capacity** policymakers and practitioners. Current staff and board members often need **additional professional development**, and some school systems need an **influx of new talent** to work in their schools and district offices. A variety of organizations focus their work exclusively on building the talent pool of people who work in chronically low-performing schools.

This document will help answer the following questions:

- Which organizations are working to build capacity for turnaround?\*
- How are organizations building school and district leadership capacity?
- What has been the impact of these programs?

\* The organizations profiled are a sample of the capacity building field. Other organizations, not profiled, may support this work as well.

The *Meeting the Turnaround Challenge* series of documents includes:

- Executive Summary
- *Partnership Zones*: Using school turnaround as the entry point for real reform – and reinventing the district model in the process
- *A New Partnership Paradigm*: Developing strong partnerships to tackle turnaround – and increase capacity in public education
- *At the Ground Level*: School Transformation in Action
- Compilation of dozens of other tools, templates and resources to help implement a turnaround strategy

The reports and related Research & Development were generously funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Copyright © 2009 by the Mass Insight Education and Research Institute. Permission granted to the original recipient to copy this document, or sections of this document, without alteration or removal of this copyright notice, solely for non-commercial use with acknowledgement to the copyright holder.

# Building Excellent Schools

Website: <http://www.buildingexcellentschools.org/>

**Headquarters:** Boston, MA

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Boston, New York City, New Orleans, Washington, D.C.

**Impact:**

BES has worked with 90% of Massachusetts charter schools

BES fellows have founded 34 charter schools nationwide

**Program:**

Building Excellent Schools (BES) seeks to build and support high quality charter schools. Through a one year training program, BES fellows develop charter school management skills and complete a residency in a high-performing charter school.

BES also supports alumni with charter school application creation and matching Teach for America alumni with leadership positions in BES fellow-founded schools.

During the one year fellowship program, participants are paid a competitive salary as they undergo intensive training that includes visiting high-performing charter schools across the country, charter school proposal development, and a residency.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Education Pioneers

Website: <http://www.educationpioneers.org/>

**Headquarters:** Oakland, CA

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** California's Bay Area, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Metro-Washington D.C., New York City

**Impact:**

Provides ongoing support for fellows in over 100 school districts and education organizations

Alumni network currently includes 400 individuals

Two out of three Education Pioneers alumni continue on in the education field

Program continues to expand in key districts

**Program:**

Education Pioneers is building a network of high quality education staff to transform urban education in districts, state education agencies, and educational organizations. Top graduate students are recruited for this program, and participate in a summer internship program with a partner organization or district.

The multi-disciplinary cohorts of fellows learn how to use their particular skill sets to benefit an urban education organization. Along with a full-time ten week internship, fellows participate in professional development training and networking events.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Education Resource Strategies

Website: <http://www.educationresourcestrategies.org/>

**Headquarters:** Watertown, MA

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Albuquerque, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, New York City, Providence, Rochester, St. Paul, Washington, D.C., amongst others

**Impact:**

ERS has worked, or is currently working with, eleven districts

**Program:**

Education Resource Strategies (ERS) is an organization that works with leaders of urban school districts to analyze how district and school-level resources are allocated. ERS staff and district leaders then determine ways in which resources could be used more effectively and efficiently to support strategies that improve instruction and performance.

ERS's approach uses action research to support district leaders, while working alongside them to apply diagnostic analyses and tailor strategies to improve their district.

While ERS is not directly building the capacity for turnaround (by creating new leaders/experts), the indirect work with current school and district staff is an extremely valuable addition to the turnaround field by enhancing the capacity of those already in the sector.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# The Broad Foundation

Website: <http://www.broadfoundation.org>

**Headquarters:** Los Angeles

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Long Beach CA, Los Angeles, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Orleans, Los Angeles, New York City, Oakland, Pittsburgh, Prince George's County MD, Washington, D.C., amongst others

**Impact:**

Graduates of the various Broad programs assume roles in school district administrative offices and have demonstrated significant growth in raising student achievement in both math and language arts, as well as improving district operations.

**Program:**

The Broad Foundation trains urban education leaders to improve student achievement and district operations. In the past decade the Broad Foundation has allocated nearly \$400 million to enhance student growth, teacher efficacy, and school leadership.

The Broad Residency places high-capacity project managers in urban districts to bring additional resources, best practices, and reforms to districts. The two-year leadership program focuses on professional development, networking, and systemic district reform.

The Broad Superintendent's Academy is housed within The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems and acts as an executive training program for current superintendents.

The Broad Prize is awarded annually to a large urban school district demonstrating significant improvement in student learning.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# The Mind Trust

Website: <http://www.themindtrust.org/>

**Headquarters Location:** Indianapolis  
**Districts & States of Interest:** Indianapolis and national

## Impact:

The first Fellow was selected in May 2008  
The second cohort included 3 new Fellows and was announced in December 2008  
The third cohort will sponsor 3 Fellows and will be selected in November 2009

## Program:

The Mind Trust's mission is based on the belief that if strong educational ventures are concentrated within one location, student performance will increase, and will then force change across the educational system. The organization initially supported a variety of educational programs within Indianapolis, but recently expanded to also incubate new organizations and support educational entrepreneurs.

The Education Entrepreneur Fellowship provides a select group education leaders with a salary, benefits, training, a travel budget and additional support from a mentor/champion to launch transformational initiatives. Fellows launch their programs both in Indianapolis and in a location of his/her choosing. This concentrates new efforts in Indianapolis, while also ensuring that the ventures are scalable in other locations.

The Mind Trust has also launched a Venture Fund which helps bring national education pioneers to Indianapolis. To date, the organization has helped recruit and sponsor programs such as College Summit, Diploma Plus, The New Teacher Project, and Teach for America.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# New Leaders for New Schools

Website: <http://www.newschools.org/>

**Headquarters Location:** New York City

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Baltimore, California's Bay Area, Charlotte NC, Chicago, Memphis TN, Milwaukee WI, New Orleans, New York City, Prince George's County MD, Washington, D.C.

**Impact:**

In 2001, the first cohort included 13 school leaders

In 2006, the number of alumni was 427

NLNS' goal is to train 700 new leaders by 2009

**Program:**

New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) seeks to improve educational achievement of urban students by attracting, supporting, and retaining high-quality school leaders. All school leaders in this program have prior teaching experience – about half come from districts in which NLNS partners, and half are from elsewhere – including leaders with backgrounds in schools, universities, companies, non-profit organizations, and foundations.

Each school leader attends a 5-week intensive summer training session and then completes a one-year residency working with an experienced mentor principal. Ongoing support is provided upon completion of the residency. Schools run by NLNS leaders have shown impressive academic gains.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# NewSchools Venture Fund

Website: <http://www.newschools.org/>

**Headquarters:** San Francisco and Boston

**District/Sites of Interest:** 3rd fund focuses on: Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York City, Oakland CA, Washington D.C.

**Impact:**

1st fund: 9 non-profit and for-profit ventures

2nd fund: 12 Charter Management Organizations (CMOs)

3rd fund: primary focus on above districts

**Program:**

NewSchools Venture Fund (NSVF) is a national organization dedicated to improving achievement of all students, but particularly those underserved in urban areas, through their support and creation of educational entrepreneurs. NSVF raises capital to find and invest in promising educational entrepreneurs, helps bring new organizations to scale, and connects leaders with public school systems.

The current fund is being used to invest in the following areas: development of charter management organizations, alignment of school support organizations that provide additional infrastructure to schools, creation of systems and tools to enhance accountability and performance, and the support of ventures that seek to provide high-quality teachers, administrators, and entrepreneurial management to public school systems.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.



# The New Teacher Project

Website: <http://www.tntp.org>

**Headquarters Location:** New York City  
**Districts/Sites of Interest:** 70 programs or initiatives in 28 states

**Impact:**  
TNTP has trained or hired 33,000 teachers, benefiting 4.8 million students nationwide

**Program:**  
The New Teacher Project (TNTP) provides school districts and states with a range of services to help maximize the potential to provide students in high-needs schools with high-quality teachers.

TNTP differs from many traditional consulting groups by the highly collaborative nature of their approach, working alongside staff in district offices.

The organization helps districts create programs to attract high-quality teachers to hard-to-staff schools, identify barriers in the district's hiring practices that make it difficult to staff these schools, and works on new ways to better prepare, develop, and certify teachers for public schools.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Reform Governance in Action for Urban School Boards

Website: <http://www.crss.org/rga-for-urban-school-boards.html>

**Headquarters:** Los Angeles and Houston

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Antioch CA, Elizabeth NJ, Houston, Philadelphia, Memphis, Texas, amongst others

**Impact:**

Almost 100 superintendents and school boards have been trained by Reform Governance in Action

**Program:**

The Broad-funded program is designed to develop the skills of elected school board members and superintendents. Its three programs offer different levels of support based on board members' level of experience.

The Institute serves as an induction to urban school board membership.

The Alumni Institute provides a higher level of training through the use of case studies.

Reform Governance in Action, offered in partnership with the Center for Reform of School Systems, trains urban teams of school boards and superintendents to develop policies and structures that will improve operations, management oversight and student learning.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Teach for America

Website: [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)

**Headquarters:** New York City

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** Over 1,000 schools in 34 regions, including: Atlanta, Charlotte NC, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville FL, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami-Dade, Mississippi, New Mexico, New Orleans, New York City, South Carolina, St. Louis, Washington D.C, amongst others

**Impact:**

6,200 corps members teaching in over 1,000 schools in 29 regions  
Since TFA's inception, 20,000 corps members have taught approximately 3 million students  
66% of TFA alumni remain in the education field after their two years of service are complete

**Program:**

Teach for America trains and places high-quality recent college graduates in chronically underperforming schools (both rural and urban). TFA provides training and on-going professional development to prepare teachers for the school year. A rigorous five-week summer institute prepares new corps members for day-to-day teaching (curricular planning, lesson plan creation, operations) and the potential high-stress environment of most of the schools. TFA members receive a full salary, paid by the local school district, and serve at least two years.

Applications to become Corps members have drastically increased and the program will place 4,100 new teachers in schools for the 2009-10 school year (bringing the total TFA corps to 7,300). The organization received over 35,000 applications for the approximate 4,000 openings and is able to launch a handful of new sites in September 2009.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Teachers Network Leadership Institute

Website: <http://www.teachersnetwork.org>

**Headquarters:** New York City

**Districts/Sites of Interest:** California (multiple sites), Chicago, Delaware, Miami, Milwaukee, Virginia (multiple sites), and Wyoming

**Impact:**

TNLI has served over 1.5 million teachers, impacting nearly 40 million students nationwide  
The level of policy involvement and impact varies by region

**Program:**

TNLI is a non-profit organization that seeks to improve student achievement in public schools by bringing teachers into the policy discussions that impact them. TNLI believes that professional development and action-research are key levers to improving student outcomes and provides training and resources on policy, advocacy, research to teachers.

TNLI focuses on bringing motivated teachers together to better understand the policy process and its connection to implementation in the field. Teachers are provided a nominal stipend to support their participation. The specific focus of the program varies by state/region.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# Urban Education Institute

Website: <http://uei.uchicago.edu/>

**Headquarters:** Chicago  
**District/Sites of Interest:** Chicago (and national)

**Impact:**

UEI partners with Chicago Public Schools to provide additional resources to struggling schools. UEI recruits and trains teachers, administrators, researchers and policymakers to work with low-performing Chicago schools.

**Program:**

The Urban Education Institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago prepares teachers, school leaders, researchers, and policymakers to transform urban education and expand educational opportunities for disadvantaged students.

UEI's EdD program in Urban Education Leadership features a small cohort of students, support throughout a year-long internship, two-years of leadership support post-graduation, support during the principal job search process, and a program based on a blend of research, theory, and hands-on practices.

UEI manages four University charter schools in Chicago, and incubates and supports additional Chicago Public Schools.

The Urban Teacher Education Program prepares and supports teachers for placement in urban schools in Chicago and across the country. Also affiliated with UEI, the Consortium on Chicago School Research informs public policy and practice with its work on school improvement efforts.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.

# UVA - Partners for Leaders in Education

Website: <http://www.darden.virginia.edu/html/area.aspx?styleid=3&area=ple>

**Headquarters:** Charlottesville, Virginia

**Districts & States of Interest:** Broward Co. FL, Chicago, North Dakota, Philadelphia, Louisiana, Richmond VA, Washington D.C., Wilmington DE, amongst others

**Impact:**

Alumni from the School Turnaround Specialist Program have demonstrated success in raising student achievement in their districts. Approximately 57% of schools from the first three cohorts met AYP targets or reduced student failure rates in math and reading by at least 5%.

**Program:**

PLE strives to develop effective school leaders by drawing upon practices typically used in business. This program is a partnership between the UVA's Darden School of Business and the Curry School of Education.

PLE offers two programs: the Executive Leadership Program for Educators which is designed for administrators at the district or state level, and the School Turnaround Specialist Program, which trains principals and district leadership teams.

Both programs share the same core elements regarding effective practices, essential knowledge and skills, and systems and processes. Many states and districts developing their own leadership training programs are modeling those efforts on the UVA program.

\* See our case study on McDaniel Elementary School to learn more about how UVA's work is implemented in the field.

\* Information subject to change as organizations adjust strategies and expand efforts.