SCHOOL TURNAROUND GROUP

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Metrics for School Turnaround:

A comprehensive set of metrics to measure school turnaround efforts

September 2010

This report represents an extension of Mass Insight's research on school turnaround. Turnaround is a relatively new field. In order to collect data that validates its efficacy, codifies promising practices for reform, and increases the imperative for turnaround, stakeholders must commit to establishing ongoing evaluation systems and processes. This report is a supplement to the main report: *Evaluating School Turnaround.*

Mass Insight continues to lead research and development efforts in the turnaround sector. Our work is defined by two convictions: 1) school reform at scale depends on the practical integration of research, policy, and practice; and 2) only dramatic and comprehensive changes will produce significant achievement gains in high-poverty schools. In line with these beliefs, we focus our work on a number of core activities, including the development of cutting edge, research-based toolkits, communication of both our principles and strategies to key stakeholders, and support for states and districts in designing and implementing dramatic reform strategies.

The culmination of our research is the launch of the Partnership Zone Initiative, a national effort to implement proof points of our Partnership Zone framework in six states over the next several years. This work is funded by an initial grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with a partial match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
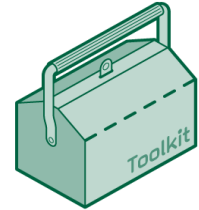
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This publication is part of a larger STG toolkit on evaluation

Visit www.massinsight.org/stg to access a broader set of tools pertaining to evaluation. This toolkit will be updated on an ongoing basis.

1. Evaluation primer	**About this guide:** Provides an overview of evaluation theory and provides a framework for evaluating school turnaround; those new to evaluation should review this piece prior to the other documents.
2. Evaluating school turnaround *(PRIMARY DOCUMENT)*	**About this publication:** Provides an introduction to evaluation in the context of school turnaround; describes the evaluation process and identifies leading and lagging indicators of school turnaround.
3. Turnaround data from the field	**About this tool:** Compiles data from successful turnaround schools across the country; suggests what is achievable in years 1, 2, etc. under a turnaround model and can inform benchmarks in other states, districts, and schools.
4. Metrics for evaluation	**About this list:** Provides a comprehensive list of metrics that can be used to evaluate turnaround. The metrics are grouped into six major categories: demographic data, school environment data, student achievement data, perception data, instructional data, facilities/resources data.
5. Protocol for data use	**About this guide:** Provides teachers, administrators, Lead Partners, and LEA/SEA staff with a process to collaboratively use and analyze data, thereby using the evaluation process for decision-making and to set strategic goals. Not yet released.

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A variety of metrics should be tracked as part of a robust evaluation system

A comprehensive data tracking system should include leading and lagging indicators in the following 6 categories:

1   **Demographic data.** Describing the population of students served.

2   **School environment data.** Reflecting the school climate and culture.

3   **Student achievement data.** Measuring students' academic achievement.

4   **Perception data.** Representing student, staff, and community opinions about the school.

5   **Instructional data.** Describing the teaching staff and instruction.

6   **Facilities and resources data.** Capturing school resources and operations.

- The following slides list potential variables in each category; not all variables should be tracked.

- **Schools/Lead Partners, districts, and states must be thoughtful in selecting the variables that are most relevant to assessing and driving impact in their own systems**; these parties must balance the burden of tracking and understanding many variables with the desire to obtain a comprehensive picture of the situation.

Note: These categories do not encompass metrics related to implementation evaluation.

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Metrics to track as part of a robust evaluation system (page 1 of 3)

1 — Demographic data

- Enrollment by grade
- Race/Ethnicity breakdown
- Gender breakdown
- % English language learners (ELL)
- % special education
- % gifted and talented
- % economically disadvantaged (i.e., qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch)
- Title I status (NCLB)
- % potential first-generation college students

Description: Demographic data are descriptive and capture the composition of the student population. These data should be collected and tracked regularly and throughout the turnaround process.

2 — School environment data

- Average daily attendance rate
- Truancy rate
- Drop-out/retention rate
- # of suspensions
- Student stability (% moving in and out of school during the year)
- Site visit or quality review scores

Description: Improvements to the school environment provide a good indication of long-term success and therefore they are leading measures of turnaround. During years 1 and 2 of turnaround, educators should focus on school climate and stability.

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3 — Student achievement data
(*Note: see slide 8)

- Graduation rate (within 4 years; within 6 years)
- State standardized test scores (ELA; math; other)
- NAEP scores
- NCLB school-level accountability status and Adequate Yearly Progress (# of AYP criteria; # of criteria met)
- Average GPA
- Course passage rate; # of students earning Ds and Fs
- Credit accumulation (# of under-aged, under-credited students)
- Capstone project evaluation
- # enrolled in an AP or IB course
- % receiving a passing AP/IB score
- PSAT, SAT, and ACT participation rate and scores
- College enrollment, retention, and completion data
- % employed/in postsecondary programs after graduation
- % receiving temporary assistance/food stamps after graduation

Description: The ultimate goal of any turnaround effort should be improved student achievement. Though there is a demand for fast and dramatic gains in academic achievement, these metrics take much longer to address and begin to affect improvements; therefore, these are usually lagging indicators.

4 — Perception data

- Student, parent, and teacher perceptions of school safety and culture
- Student, parent, and teacher perceptions of student engagement
- Student, parent, and teacher perceptions of academic expectations
- Student, parent, and teacher perceptions of parent/community engagement
- Community understanding of school turnaround

Description: Perceptions should begin to improve in years 1 and 2, making these metrics good leading indicators. Student, staff, and parent perceptions should continue to improve throughout the turnaround process.

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Metrics to track (page 3 of 3)

5 · Human capital and instructional data

- Student-to-teacher ratio
- Average class size
- Student-to-support staff ratio
- % of educators with a teaching license; 2+ years of teaching experience; a Master's degree or higher
- % of core classes taught by highly-qualified teachers (NCLB definition/measure)
- Average number of staff absences
- Hours of professional development
- Informal and formal teacher evaluations

Description: Improved human capital is a key input for school turnaround; therefore, these metrics may predict the success of the turnaround efforts. However, some of these data represent long-term investments (e.g., teacher quality metrics can also be lagging indicators).

6 · Facilities and resources data

- Safety and cleanliness of school facilities
- Safety and availability of school transportation
- Accuracy of budget projections
- % of budget devoted to classroom purposes
- Ratio of students and staff to computers
- Internet/Network availability
- Average time for the order and delivery of classroom supplies

Description: An increase in resources is a key ingredient for turnaround; therefore, many of these improvements should be immediate and are leading indicators of turnaround. Some measures of efficiency (e.g., accuracy of budget projections) may take longer to appear.

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*A note on reporting data by subgroups

Current NCLB accountability and reporting standards require schools to provide aggregate data and disaggregated data for various subgroups.

- Subgroups include: 1) all students, 2) English proficiency status, 3) students with disabilities, 4) migrant status, 5) economically disadvantaged status, and 6) major racial/ethnic groups.

- If the subgroup has an "N" greater than 40 students, then the school must report data for that group, which will then be evaluated according to AYP.

- Disaggregating and analyzing all data by subgroups is a good practice.

For example:

Student population	% tested			% ELA proficiency		
	School	District	State	School	District	State
All students	93	95	96	45	53	57
African American/Black	90	91	92	42	47	52
Hispanic	88	87	86	38	41	49
Asian/Pacific Island	99	98	99	50	57	61
American Indian/Native American	--	95	96	--	53	60
White	95	96	98	52	60	63
Students with disabilities	89	90	91	39	50	52
Limited English Proficient students	91	89	90	37	48	50
Economically disadvantaged	90	93	93	45	52	54

- Disaggregated data allow school leaders to identify and address trends within the school.

- Disaggregated data can always be aggregated up (to the "all student level"), but aggregated data cannot be disaggregated unless properly coded.

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Get involved

The School Turnaround Group is a division of Mass Insight Education, an independent non-profit that organizes public schools, higher education, business, and state government to significantly improve student achievement, with a focus on closing achievement gaps.

For more information on how your state can employ these promising practices for school turnaround, please contact the School Turnaround Group at:

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*The School Turnaround Groups **offers a broad range of strategic consulting services to state and district clients**. This work includes **building organizational capacity** through the development of state and district turnaround offices, **securing more flexible operating conditions**, including through the development of modified collective bargaining agreements; **attracting and supporting Lead Partners** through the development of Request for Proposal and Memorandum of Understanding tools; and **auditing state and district readiness** to implement dramatic turnaround strategies.*

In each of our engagements, we seek to deeply understand the needs of our client to offer highly customized solutions and to develop lasting relationships to support the difficult work of school turnaround over the necessarily long time frame.

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The presentation and related documents are the result of a research and development process led by Mass Insight with the support of various partners.

It should be used in conjunction with the Main Report, "The Turnaround Challenge: Why America's best opportunity to dramatically improve student achievement lies in our worst performing schools," and a variety of other resources we have developed and distributed.