SCHOOL
TURNAROUND GROUP

MASS INSIGHT EDUCATION

THE LEAD PARTNER PLAYBOOK

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Acknowledgments

Publications at Mass Insight Education's School Turnaround Group

Mass Insight Education's 2007 report, *The Turnaround Challenge*, which was supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, made a significant contribution to the national debate on high-poverty schools. That report helped to shape the current emphasis on transformational change through significant investments of human capital and organizational capacity in persistently low-achieving schools. The School Turnaround Group (STG) at Mass Insight continues to lead the field by developing a set of integrated tools to help states, districts, and partner organizations "operationalize" *The Turnaround Challenge* and create proof-points for the "Partnership Zone" framework.

The STG collects and analyzes data from emerging practices across the country. We develop tools to help states and districts build systems, structures, and policies that will lead to dramatic improvement in their lowest-performing schools. Our research is based on an understanding of how policy drives practice and how practice is strengthened by building capacity and knowledge within local and state systems. Our free publications are available on our website: www.massinsight.org/stg/research.

In addition to our collection of public tools and reports, we provide exclusive, customized reports to states that participate in our State Development Network (SDN). The SDN is a multistate network of state education agency leaders who are committed to turning around low-performing schools by increasing state-level capacity and transforming the policy framework. Please contact us at turnaround@massinsight.org if your state is interested in joining this network.

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Executive Summary

> HELP WANTED: Innovative, strategic-thinking entrepreneurs to turn around groups of low-performing schools. Competitive benefits, including working in newly formed operating units with charter-like autonomy, access to district's back-office resources and buildings, $3.5 billion federal money, and opportunity to transform schools for hundreds of thousands of urban children. Bonus for success: nearly infinite career opportunities in education leadership.

This could be the hardest-to-fill but most important job opening school districts and states have. How do you/they take advantage of this unique opportunity — unprecedented policy flexibility and billions of new federal funds — to transform the neediest schools? And how do you/they do this work not just one school at a time, but at scale?

Our answer, based on our pioneering 2007 research, *The Turnaround Challenge*, and subsequent intensive work on the ground is to focus on the "3C's": flexible operating conditions, expanded capacity, and clusters of schools to ramp up improvements more quickly.

The organizational and operational linchpin of this intervention is what we call a Lead Partner (LP), a nonprofit or decentralized unit of the district, reporting directly to the superintendent, that brings a new kind of expertise needed to turn around chronically failing schools. Lead Partners are defined by four responsibilities:

- **Accountability.** They sign three-to-five-year performance contracts that hold them accountable for rapid gains in student achievement across several schools.

- **Authority.** They control schools' staffing, time, budgets, and programs.

- **Comprehensive services.** They manage and coordinate all district departments or outside organizations that have been brought in to help the schools improve. No more forcing overwhelmed principals to deal with multiple, overlapping "improvement" programs.

- **Embedded in schools.** Their staff work on site in schools to support principals. No more part-time consulting from afar and less bureaucratic interference from the central office.

Because they have the flexibility of charter schools plus access to a district's resources, Lead Partners benefit from the best of both worlds — and are uniquely positioned to help schools make rapid academic gains. For districts, they offer a "third way" between the two polar approaches: total school autonomy on the one hand and standardized command-and-control on the other.

Successful turnaround organizations such as the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) and Friendship Public Charter Schools show what's possible. For example, the proportion of students meeting or exceeding the Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) standards at 10 turnaround elementary schools increased by up to 34 percentage points under AUSL and Friendship has consistently raised graduation rates and proficiency levels at its partnership schools. However, the reality is that organizations like these are not likely to expand beyond their regions.

This means states and districts must invent their own solutions, their own versions of AUSL and Friendship. This Lead Partner Playbook offers a detailed how-to for doing so.

The Playbook includes advice, plus detailed templates and guidance on issues such as budgeting, staffing, auditing the central office and schools, clarifying responsibilities, and evaluating performance. These are the nuts and bolts that bridge the gap between theory and reality. The Playbook is organized around four key phases of work:

TABLE 1. FOUR PHASES OF BUILDING A LEAD PARTNER

Phase	Overview	Timeline, Costs, and Staffing
Phase 1. Lead Partner development and site selection	Develop the organizational competencies necessary, including building a staff, organizational structure, and turnaround model; in the case of an independent LP that operates outside the district's central office unit, win a contract to manage a site; identify and secure a school or cluster of schools for the LP to manage; and ensure the appropriate conditions and capacity for success.	▪ 3–12 months. ▪ About $200,000 for core staff, minimal operations. ▪ At least one leader, preferably supported by two or three members of the core team.
Phase 2. Year 0: Pre-implementation planning	Prepare the organization, the community, and the school(s) to open under the management of the LP; develop a school improvement plan; continue to secure appropriate conditions and build capacity for success.	▪ 9–12 months. ▪ About $700,000 to $900,000. ▪ Core team in "home office" of five or more, plus at least one school staff (principal), remainder of school staff by summer.
Phase 3. Years 1–2: Turnaround implementation begins	Operate the school(s) and manage its development through the turnaround process; implement dramatic school turnaround strategies.	▪ 2 years. ▪ About $750,000 to $1 million a year. ▪ "Home office" staffing stays the same. School staffing varies, but we recommend 2 assistant principals and three embedded coaches, or equivalent support.
Phase 4. Years 3–5: Sustainability and growth	Operate the school(s) and assess the sustainability of changes implemented; scale back central management and transfer more autonomies to the school-based team; create a framework for student achievement that achieves parity with high-performing schools; if applicable, examine strategy and capacity for scaling.	▪ 3 years. ▪ Staffing and funding depend on growth strategy.

I. THE LEAD PARTNER PLAYBOOK AND THE FRAMEWORK

Introduction to the Playbook

The LP model as originally outlined in *The Turnaround Challenge* is still in its developmental stages. While only several organizations across the country can serve as exemplars of this approach, both established early leaders and current start-ups have lessons to contribute to a greater understanding of LP development. By analyzing and synthesizing the experience of LPs in a variety of settings, *The Lead Partner Playbook* identifies several common stages in their development process. Though some specifics may vary from organization to organization, this guide documents the general process required to build an effective LP and outlines the subsequent process for school-level turnaround.

As the LP is a fairly new entity, only a handful of examples are available to offer guidance and promising practices. This guide represents a compilation and synthesis of data from the STG's work in the field, as well as an analysis of organizations that are, or are becoming, LPs. While each organization may not fulfill all of the specifications of an LP at present, all are similar enough to the model to merit examination, and their collective experience offers important lessons for other organizations that plan to undertake this role.

The following organizations were interviewed and researched in the development of this tool:

- Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL
- Big Picture Learning (BPL)
- Diplomas Now
- Explore Schools
- Friendship Public Charter Schools
- Green Dot Public Schools
- Institute for Student Achievement

- LA's Promise (formerly MLA Partner Schools)
- LEAD Public Schools
- Mastery Charter Schools
- Renaissance School Services
- Renew Schools
- Scholar Academies
- Unlocking Potential

The following districts were researched in the development of this tool:

- Charlotte-Mecklenberg Schools
- Chicago Public Schools (CPS)

- Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)
- New York City Schools

The Lead Partner framework

Lead Partner (LP) is an embedded independent organization (usually nonprofit) or an internal unit within a central office on a performance contract with the district or state to turn around a cluster of low-performing public schools.

LPs are defined by four responsibilities:

1. Accountability for student achievement: LPs must sign a three- to five-year performance contract with the district or state to improve student achievement at a cluster of schools.

2. Authority over key elements of the school: LPs must assume authority for decision-making on school staffing, as well as time, money, and program; in particular, the LP must hire a new principal or approve the current one and support the principal in hiring and replacing teachers.

3. Comprehensive services: LPs must provide core academic and student support services directly or by aligning the services of other program and support partners on subcontract to build internal capacity within the school(s) and, by extension, the district.

4. Embedded presence at the school: LPs must be fully engaged in the operations of the school (i.e., present in the school five days a week) during the turnaround process, after which the school should be in a position to take on greater autonomy and the LP can scale back some of its day-to-day involvement.

Benefits of Lead Partners

The LP is a relatively new model, but one that has already demonstrated success by making dramatic gains in student achievement in schools across the country with a built-in mechanism for scaling. The LP offers the best of both worlds: the flexible operating conditions of charter schools combined with the built-in infrastructure, supports, and scalability of school clusters.

The LP model improves on traditional school reform models for a number of key reasons:

> **"If we are really in the business of changing education in the long run, [then] we need to work with the district. Many children don't have another option."**
> *Kari Thierer, National Director of Network Support at Big Picture Learning*

- **Capacity**. The LP frees up the principal's time and allows him/her to focus on instruction and school culture while the LP manages organizational and operational issues.

- **Expertise**. The LP brings expertise in key areas that are often missing from school staff, including operations, human resources (HR), district relationship, fundraising, and data analysis.

- **Pathways**. The LP structure creates a new alternative career pathway that helps attract and retain high-quality principals and leaders who may not want to work in the central office and would prefer to run clusters on the ground.

- **Coordination**. Turnaround schools are inundated with programs/plans/coaches from the state and district; the LP provides a single point of contact, alignment, and management of these relationships.

- **Scalability**. The LP can coordinate and create an operational network and learning community across multiple schools.

- **Accountability**. The LP holds a performance contract with the district, creating a higher standard of accountability for student achievement.

- **Autonomy**. The LP operates independently from the district, unlike principals, and therefore can be more efficient and more innovative, creating a more flexible support system that is more responsive to the needs at the school level.

- **Depth**. Unlike light-touch partners or traditional school improvement units within a district, the LP is embedded in the school and community, which leads to a more thorough understanding of particular strengths and challenges and a more significant impact in

the classroom.

That is not to say there are no existing school leaders or leadership teams that provide this kind of support for their schools. The very best principals can fulfill many of the functions described above. However, scaling success requires an organizational strategy that develops a system built to scale success; this is what the LP model offers.

Sources of Lead Partners

The LP represents a new role that organizations are only beginning to fill. Strong LPs exist, including the AUSL and Friendship Public Charter Schools. However, despite those examples, the existing marketplace is highly regionalized, with few best-in-class operators looking to extend into new geographies. Our work in the field has demonstrated the extent to which the supply side of the LP marketplace needs its own cultivation efforts.

The time is ripe for new organizations to enter the field. Potential sources of new LPs include charter/school management organizations, supporting partners (e.g., human capital, data, and curriculum), local funders, districts, unions, and universities. Most existing organizations will need to build or acquire new capacity to take on the complexities of the LP role. *The Lead Partner Playbook* aims to help potential or newly-minted LPs map out and implement a clear strategy for turnaround.

A district or state looking to secure an independent LP organization will want to recruit an existing LP through a competitive process or identify an organization that has some of the competencies of an LP and is willing to develop the additional capabilities required. Alternatively, a district can create a new organizational unit, either inside the district or as an independent 501(c)3.

How districts proceed will depend on the local availability of potential LPs, the political environment, willingness to engage with existing organizations, and the capacity at the state education agency (SEA) or local education agency (LEA). *The Lead Partner Playbook* is most applicable when creating a strong development plan to build the capacity of either an internal or existing entity to fulfill all the critical functions of an LP. Throughout the Playbook, the term "organization" refers to whatever individual or group is developing the LP — it need not refer to a formal, legal entity.

A new LP can come from a variety of sources, such as charter or school management organizations, supporting partners, nonprofit partnerships, local funders, districts, unions, or universities. A brief overview of each type of entity and its potential transformation into an LP can be found in Table 2 on the next page.

TABLE 2. POTENTIAL LEAD PARTNERS

Potential Source	Required Modifications	Opportunities and/or Gains
Charter/school management organizations	Adapt their model to work within a district architecture and to address turnaround issues.	Access to facilities and other infrastructure, and the ability to work in states without charter availability.
Supporting partners (e.g., human capital, data, curriculum)	Ramp up their models to work more intensively in schools, address a broader range of capacities, and adapt to turnarounds.	Ability to implement their core approaches with greater fidelity and depth within schools, longer term and larger contracts in schools with more likelihood of impact.
Nonprofit partnerships	Create a central team that will be responsible for creating the overall strategy, coordinating the activities of each respective organization, and building expertise in comprehensive school turnarounds.	Ability to weave multiple expertise into a holistic turnaround strategy and implement core approaches with greater fidelity and depth within schools through a longer term, embedded role with more likelihood of impact.
Local funders (e.g., local education funds)	Move into the operating role by adjusting current structure or spinning off a new organization that is focused on turnaround.	Ability to leverage their expertise, resources, and local relationships to transform schools.
Districts	Create a new, autonomous unit and bring in people with expertise in school turnarounds.	Capacity to accelerate the pace of school turnarounds and build support from within the system for reform.
Unions	Develop a school model relevant to turnaround and increase operating responsibility.	Opportunity to help shape the turnaround movement in a way that is beneficial to its members.
Universities	Adjust their programs to incorporate turnaround and become more practice-based.	Platform to demonstrate leadership and share expertise in addressing this critical education issue.

Further analysis regarding the specific strengths and weaknesses of these potential players in the competencies and experiences required for turnaround can be found in Appendix A.

Different paths of Lead Partners

- AUSL started as a nonprofit specializing in school management and teacher preparation through its teacher residency program and began a relationship with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to turn around low-performing schools in 2005.

- Chicago Public Schools established the Office of School Improvement to oversee the implementation of whole school reform initiatives (Turnaround, Transformation, and Restart) in the district.

- Friendship Public Charter Schools grew out of a 100-year-old social services organization, the Friendship House, and currently manages multiple charter schools and turnaround schools in Baltimore and the District of Columbia.

- LA's Promise was created through the merger between the Center of Innovative Education and Mentor LA, and entered the turnaround space in 2007 as a partner in the Los Angeles Unified School District's iDesign portfolio.

- LEAD Public Schools launched a charter school in 2007 and was selected to launch a turnaround in 2011 through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

- Mastery Charter Schools had its beginnings as a charter school operator, and was approached by the Philadelphia school district to manage three turnaround schools.

- Renaissance School Services was founded in 2006 as a school operations and school turnaround management organization and has managed turnaround schools in Connecticut, Delaware, and Massachusetts as charters and as district contract schools.

- Unlocking Potential secured its turnaround school site through a state charter application process and via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Boston Public Schools.

Harvard School of Excellence, Chicago

AUSL takes on many of the LP responsibilities in its work. It is an organization that has partnered with a district and secured the authority to make decisions and is accountable for specific performance benchmarks, both of which are defined by a contract with Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

AUSL began turning around low-performing CPS schools after their highly-trained teachers became frustrated working within the traditional school structures. By linking the AUSL teacher residency program with the operation of schools, AUSL was able to simultaneously train new teachers, while also creating a talent pipeline to aid the structural transformation of chronically low-performing schools.

Highlights from the AUSL Harvard Turnaround

"HOMEGROWN" TALENT PIPELINE

Before taking on the responsibility for school management, AUSL was a pioneer in developing an apprentice-style urban teacher residency program. AUSL took full advantage of this teacher development resource in staffing its turnaround schools. In that way, AUSL effectively controlled the most important levers, going all the way back to the training of its own teacher workforce, and created a vertically integrated structure for turnaround.

### MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE PARTNER/DISTRICT RELATIONSHIPS

AUSL and CPS established a strong partnership with clearly defined roles, authorities, and accountabilities across its cluster of turnaround schools, including the Harvard School of Excellence. The schools benefit from very close, deeply embedded management and oversight from AUSL, training and other services that are provided across the network of schools, and from back-office and logistical services from CPS. In addition, the turnaround efforts are monitored by a district office that was created especially to run this portfolio of reform partnerships.

CENTRALIZED, THEN DISTRIBUTED RELATIONSHIP

AUSL created a very deliberate phasing process to ensure that it builds organizational capacity within the school, rather than a dependent relationship with no end in sight. There is a long preparation process that insists on recruiting the principal in the winter, if not the fall, of the year prior to reopening. The first year calls for deep involvement by AUSL coaches at the school all year long. But those supports are gradually turned over to lead ("anchor") teachers at the school beginning in year two, and, by year three, the school is assumed to be able to maintain high-performance levels without very significant support from headquarters.

FIGURE 1. TURNAROUND ELEMENTARY PERFORMANCE ISAT COMPOSITE: MEETING/EXCEEDING STANDARDS
Comparison: Before AUSL to Present
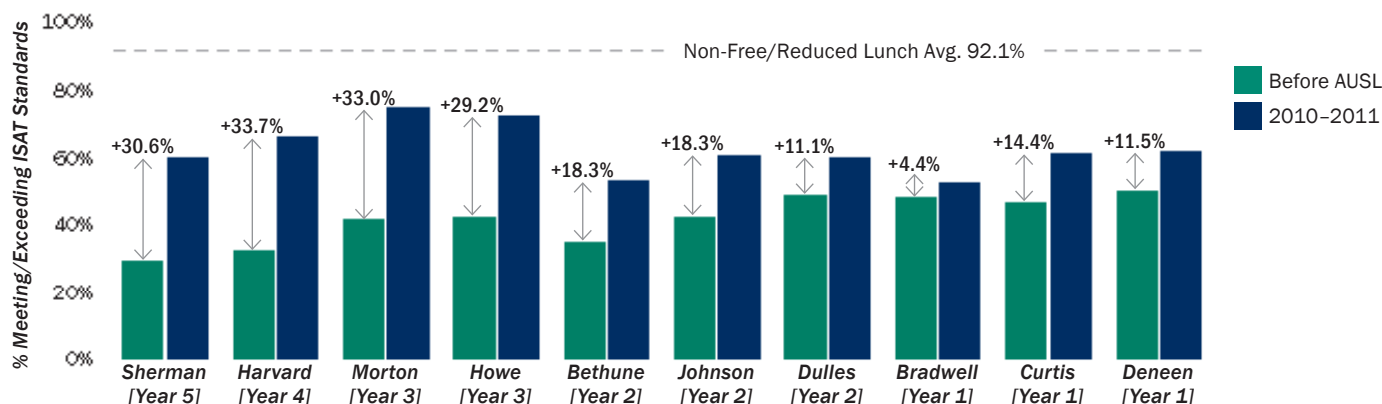
Source: Chicago Public Schools REA
Notes: Data excludes English language learner (ELL) students

II. FOUR PHASES OF LEAD PARTNER DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Phase 1. Lead Partner Development and Site Selection

Phase 1, 3–12 months			
Objectives: Assess the organization's readiness to assume the Lead Partner (LP) role and (if the organization decides to move forward) proceed to design a comprehensive turnaround model, identify a school site(s), and design a management contract with the state or district.	**Staffing:** At the start of this phase, the organization will need to identify at least one person to serve as the lead and to be responsible for moving the vision forward. Once committed to the LP model (after a formal or informal self-diagnostic of organizational readiness), a core team of two to three people is recommended to build out the organization and the turnaround model as well as develop external relationships and contracts.	**Funding:** The required funding for this stage is limited to compensation for the individual or small team of individuals required for the start-up, as well as some operational costs (e.g., legal, office facilities, technology, travel, materials). There will be fundraising throughout the following phases, however, overall planning and effort should begin in Phase 1.	**Time period:** Phase 1 may vary from as little as a few months to a year or longer, depending on the current capacity of the organization, the process of identifying and securing a school site, and the anticipated scale and scope of the LP work.

Secure initial resources

Identify and secure the required resources to complete Phase 1 of the process. This involves identifying an individual or individuals who will serve as the leadership team for early organization-building and securing funds for initial operations. This individual could be the leader of an existing organization, an entrepreneur interested in building a new start-up, or a member of the state or local education agency who is interested in catalyzing this process. Initial operating expenses will be chiefly staff compensation (for one person or a small group) as well as ancillary costs for office space, travel, materials, or legal fees. These start-up funds may be obtained from a variety of sources, including federal, state, or local funds, or private foundation or corporate grants. Refer to Appendix B for examples of expenses that these funds will be needed for.

Assess existing capacity

Assess existing organizational capacity once the leadership team of the potential Lead Partner (LP) is in place. A comprehensive formal process is not necessary, but it would be advisable to take some time to reflect on capacity and needs using the structure below in order to identify gaps and take steps to secure additional capacity where needed.

PERFORM DIAGNOSTIC AUDIT

Assess the organization's current resources and competencies to determine alignment with the LP model (see Appendix C for a sample self-diagnostic tool) and what roles and objectives would need to be created, modified, or abandoned in order to take on a turnaround as an LP. If the LP is a new organization rather than an outgrowth of an existing entity, this process should be approached as an opportunity to identify what resources, competencies, and experiences the founders already possess that transfer to an LP role. Internal LPs may even be able to leverage strong, existing departments in the district so that the LP provides coordination for the school(s) while leaning on existing expertise outside the LP team. Through this diagnostic process, the team also can determine the organization's capacity gaps in the context of an LP role. Articulating this knowledge allows the team to explicitly map the plan for building internal

capacity or identifying external resources to fill the gaps. Some of the capacities that external LPs often choose to partially or completely outsource include recruiting, accounting, and legal expertise. Once this self-study is complete, potential LPs should have a good idea of how well their current organization, resources, and competencies align with what is necessary to engage in all the activities of an LP.

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Topics to consider in a diagnostic audit

1. **Organizational health:** Mission, strategy, organizational structure, systems and infrastructure, culture and change

2. **Resources:** Human capital, financial resources, partners, intangible assets

3. **Competencies:** School design and management, operations, school and district relationships

Refer to Appendix C for more details

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Internal activities

LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR THE LEAD PARTNER

Lay the foundation of action by drafting a comprehensive plan that defines the LP's values and philosophy, outlines a strong turnaround model, and maps out the steps to establish this model in turnaround schools. The plan should include the following major components:

a) Mission and vision: Articulate the LP's mission, goals, principles, and theory of change. If the organization provides other services, then it must also consider how the LP role fits with the other initiatives of the organization to achieve an overall mission.

b) Turnaround model: Create a plan for turnaround. Drawing from the High-performing, High-poverty (HPHP) Readiness Model first presented in *The Turnaround Challenge* (see Figure 1), the plan should specifically state how the LP intends to change conditions, build capacity, and streamline support to create significant improvements in the readiness to learn, readiness to teach, and readiness to act. Readiness to learn and readiness to teach will

happen largely at the school level, with LP support. Readiness to act will be dependent on the LP's ability to secure conditions of autonomy and flexibility in an MOU with the state or district, in the case of an independent LP, or an alternative written agreement and strategic plan, in the case of an internal LP.

c) Services and activities: Building out the turnaround model will naturally lead to determining the supports and services the LP considers vital to provide, directly, through the district, or through subcontracts with supporting partners. The plan should address each individual category of services and indicate whether the LP expects to provide them, contract out to a supporting partner, or use existing district departments. Categories to consider include technology and IT systems, HR and payroll, facilities (provision and maintenance), food services, transportation, special education (SPED), and professional development. Internal LPs should think carefully about their priorities and the district's strengths when determining which services should be centralized and which should be decentralized.

FIGURE 2. HIGH-PERFORMING, HIGH-POVERTY READINESS MODEL
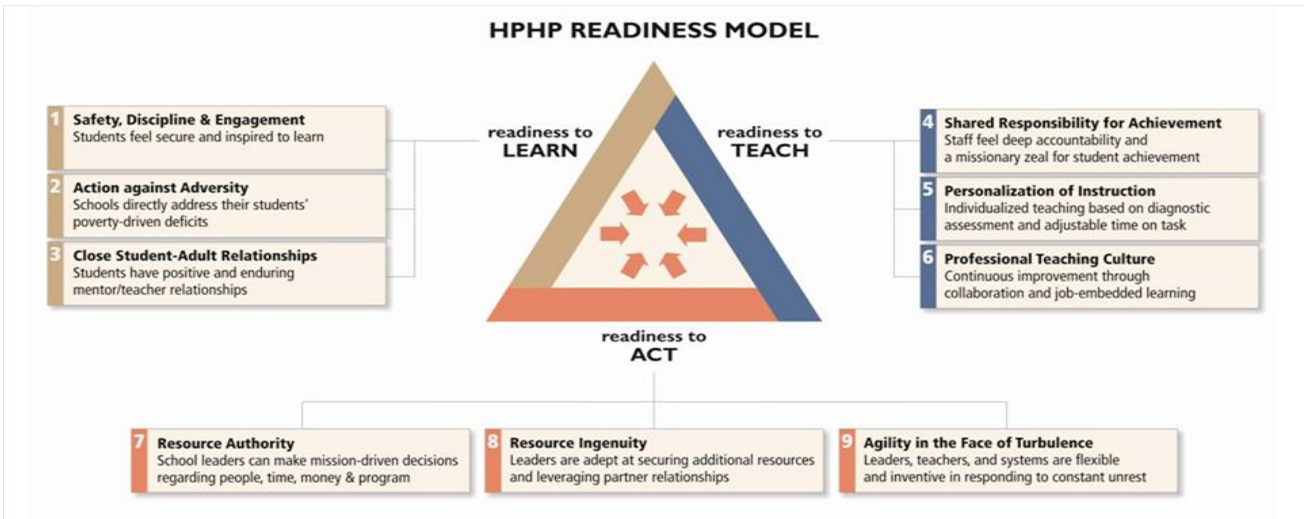
FIGURE 3. EARLY STAFFING MODEL FOR THE LEAD PARTNER
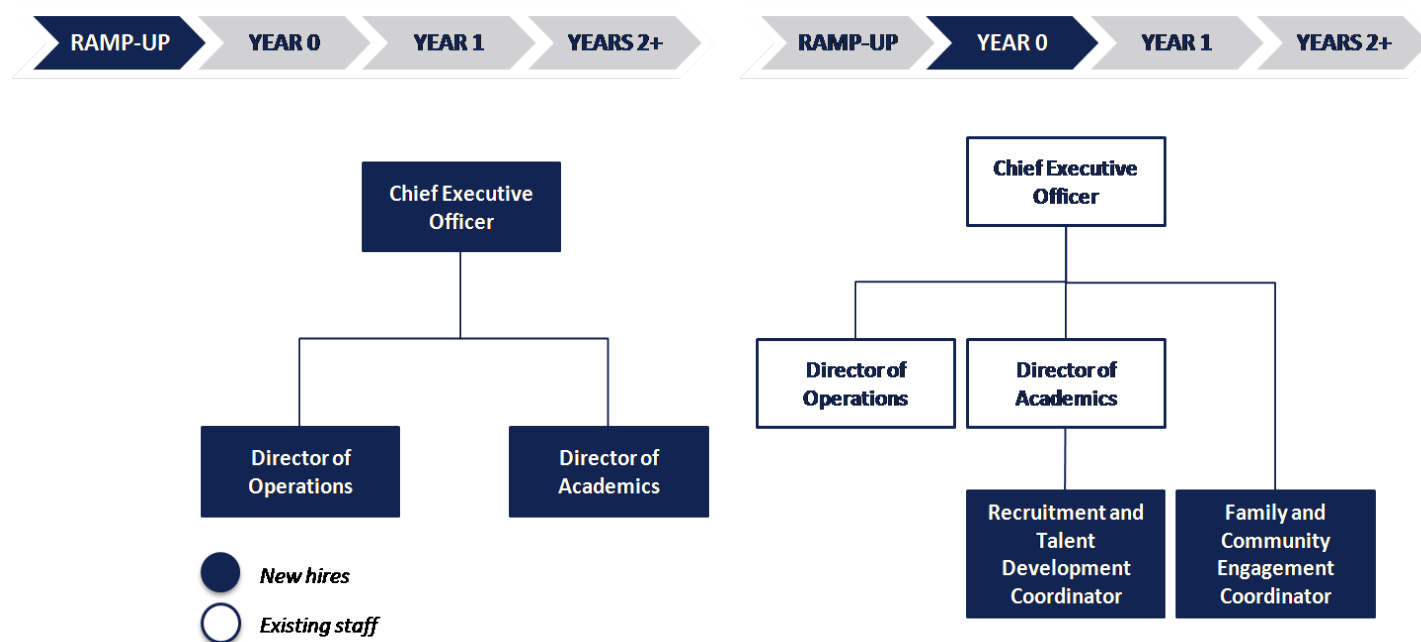
ESTABLISH GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

Develop a governance structure and file for appropriate legal status, if necessary (e.g., 501(c)3 nonprofit standing). The LP should also develop appropriate policies, accounting procedures, financial controls, and bylaws at this time.

If the LP is new, or one that has spun out as an independent entity from an existing parent organization, it should establish a board of trustees at this juncture. The board sets the strategic policy for the organization and shoulders fiscal accountability, as well as ultimate responsibility for all schools under the LP's management. As an entity that is responsible for overseeing the success of the LP's turnaround projects, the board has several areas of expertise that should be filled: business management, law, real estate, finances, and fundraising.

Create a staffing plan for both the development phases of the organization (Phases 1 and 2 in this guide) and the implementation phases (Phases 3 and 4). The plan should identify needs for both the home office team and the school-level team embedded in the turnaround schools. In addition, the staffing plan must create clear roles and responsibilities for all staff members (including revisions to the roles and responsibilities of existing staff, if any). The staffing plan may require restructuring current staff in order to fill capacity gaps, as well as hiring new talent to jumpstart the LP model.

In addition, the organization should determine what professional development might be needed for existing staff or new hires. Once the core team is in place, steps should be taken to build the internal knowledge base by seeking out formal and informal learning opportunities such as site visits to other LPs and high-performing schools, training in data analysis and curriculum design, and other key areas of need identified in the self-assessment.

In the beginning months of Phase 1, the early LP development work may be performed by only one full-time staffer, but as the project moves forward, it will require, at minimum, an organizational leader with proven management skills and an academic leader with a strong background in instruction. As the

> **"We've done a lot of work and have landed on the idea that [Explore Schools'] core school model is about 80 percent sufficient for success in turnaround. The 20 percent extra largely relates to community outreach, additional staffing (especially to support students with special needs), and intensive acculturation. These additional model elements are located at the schools."**
>
> *Lizz Pawlson, COO of Explore Schools*

team prepares for Phase 2, the workload will likely expand to require three to five full-time employees. This timeline may vary depending on the lead time and process for securing a school management contract; however, credible plans to staff up quickly must be in place well before the first contract is executed.

Exact staff numbers, specific titles, and some role functions may differ from LP to LP, depending on individual capabilities and needs. However, a rough guideline of what the build out of the staffing team may look like from pre-implementation (Ramp Up and Year 0) to implementation can be found in Figure 2. Details regarding further build out of the team, functions, and qualifications sought in these home office positions can be found in Appendix D.

The LP will also need to establish a preliminary budget at both the home office and school levels. Both budgets will be subject to future revision as more becomes known about funding from contract negotiations and federal, state, local, or private grants. In the case of the creation of an internal LP within a state or district office, the central office budget will need modifications to reflect any reallocation of positions from other departments to the LP team and new hires. The preliminary budget should include a cost structure for the organization (e.g., home office overhead vs. direct service expenses) and an estimation of sources of revenue (e.g., external funders or fee-for-service).[1] Typically, the largest part of the budget would comprise personnel-related expenses, which can be as high as 70 to 80 percent of expenses. For an independent LP, revenue will come largely from grants and major gifts during the early years, but it can switch to a fee-based revenue stream once the turnaround school is launched. With scaling, the independent LP could conceivably come to rely solely on the fee structure to cover home office expenses within five years. However, until then, most LPs will need to raise external monies to fund basic operations. An internal LP may be able to harness funds such as Title I, Race to the Top, School Improvement Grants (SIG), or i3 grants in order to support the initial creation of the internal LP team and activities to serve its cluster of turnaround schools.

ESTABLISH A FUNDRAISING PLAN AND BEGIN FUNDRAISING

Set up fundraising processes and develop a plan to fund the budget over the medium- to long-term. This includes identifying early stage funding for organization development, which often involves startup/incubator grants and SIG, and a plan to raise additional funds through public and private funds over the medium- to long-term. The latter is especially important if the LP does not plan to impose a management fee on its school(s), in which case there are long-term financial sustainability issues that the LP should consider. Even with management fees in place (either per-pupil or percentage of revenue), some LPs may choose to phase in the fee, and most LPs will generally not cover their expenses without scaling to a cluster and may experience operating losses at the school-level until their cluster is fully operational. As such, the LP will need to identify external funding sources and raise money, approximately $700,000 to $900,000 a year, during both Year 0 and Year 1. Not all of this will require entirely new money, however, as districts should strive to free up central office funds for both internal and independent LPs. Also, the figure is likely to be lower for internal LPs because the internal LP team will likely be built of reallocated central office staff and less likely than a new independent LP to require additional spending for operations and infrastructure. **Thus, the internal LP team will not be an extra expense but rather a more efficient and school-centric expenditure of central office resources.**

The LP should look into SIG and other state and district grants in the search for potential resources. The average 2010/11 SIG grant to a school implementing the federal turnaround model was approximately $950,000, and the median grant was approximately $790,000.[2] In certain cases, special non-SIG planning year funds or other additional funds may be available from the state or district; for example, AUSL received a one-time grant of $300,000 from CPS when it became the LP for the Harvard School of Excellence. CPS also pledged nearly 2 million dollars of additional supports to Marshall High School to aid its turnaround under the Office of School Improvement, the internal LP at CPS [3]. Other possible sources of government funding include Title I grants and i3 grants. However, it is strongly recommended that all LPs begin pursuing private funding opportunities through foundation grants, investors, and individual donors in this phase. Internal LPs may want to do this through the nonprofit fundraising body associated with their district or set up such a nonprofit entity if they do not already

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[1] Note that overhead expenses specific to the LP may be reflected in overall overhead costs for the central office in the case of an internal LP.

[2] Retrieved from http://data.ed.gov/grants/school-improvement-grants on September 25, 2011.

[3] According to Marshall High School's School Improvement Grant application for FY2011.

have one.

Given the structural financial shortfall that comes from the extra supports required to turnaround a failing school and the number of unknowns that organizations are likely to encounter, it is advisable for LPs to set higher fundraising goals for the planning year and first year of operations. This is in order to create a surplus that can be used to create a contingency fund that would address necessary new projects or budget gaps at the home office or school levels. In addition, some LPs have chosen to raise additional funds to significantly redesign and rehabilitate their new school facilities, over and above the money the district has committed to building renovations. For example, AUSL secured external grants for capital projects outside the scope of the CPS' facilities startup funding, in order to send a strong message of

In some places, school turnaround projects have received generous support from investment funds and foundations such as the Amgen Foundation, Keck Family Foundation, NewSchools Venture Fund, NYC Charter Investment Fund, and the Walton Family Foundation.

change to the students and school community in the form of a dramatically improved physical plant.

External activities

IDENTIFY SCHOOL SITES AND DESIGN A CLUSTER

Begin researching initial school sites and determine criteria for selection after preliminary planning and development. Several components of the turnaround model, and certainly the budget, will be impacted by the choice of the initial site. At the end of the selection process, the LP should have a list of three to five different school sites that would make up a turnaround school cluster even if the LP does not plan to launch all the schools in the turnaround cluster during Year 1.

There are several ways for independent LPs to approach this selection process.

- Determine the types of schools and districts that best align with the organization's mission, core competencies, and growth strategy. Key factors might be school or district size, favorable union context or the opportunity to expand to a complete K–12 pipeline, to name a few. For example, Talent Development has made addressing the high school drop-out crisis part of its central mission and is opting to expand chiefly in districts where it feels it can best improve gradua-tion rates.

- Expand existing partnerships in schools and districts. Potential LPs, such as supporting partners, universities, or local funders, will already have strong relationships in place in particular schools and districts; when making the leap to LP, they will often elect to expand to comprehensive man-agement in schools where they already have a significant presence. This type of evolution can be seen in Los Angeles. LA's Promise assumed an LP role at Manual Arts High School, a school where it had been providing tutoring and mentorship services for several years.

- Respond to districts or schools with identified needs and funding opportunities. As part of the SIG process and broader push for turnaround, many districts are beginning to actively recruit high-quality external partners and build internal teams to help manage turnaround schools' performance. Many states and districts have issued, or will issue, RFPs for independent LPs. The best RFPs will clearly articulate what the district can offer for potential LPs (including funding and partner autonomies), and what they expect in return (term of contract, renewal prospects, performance benchmarks). When opening their first schools, AUSL in Chicago and LEAD Public Schools in Nashville responded to district solicitations through a competitive RFP process.

- Evaluate districts or schools based upon a set of prede-termined organizational criteria. While not displacing the mission-driven desire to serve students in need, some LPs may wish to heavily consider other criteria that they feel might increase their likelihood of success. These might include school-level autonomies, perceived district, mayoral, and state support, other partners operating within the district, union conditions, and proximity to other target communities. For instance, before ultimately deciding on Boston, Unlocking Potential did an analysis of multiple districts based on a set of preferred criteria/conditions, such as geographic location, reform climate, expansion potential, and talent pipeline.

Internal LPs will want to establish a clear rationale that is based on measures of school performance. Ideally, a district turnaround office will have already determined standards for becoming part of and moving out of a turnaround zone, and decided which internal LP staff will be serving which cluster of schools. If these points of intervention, processes, and staffing have not already been determined, then the internal LP should work with the

> **"The ultimate reason for choosing Boston is that we felt like we had the support of local school and city leaders that would sustain us through the inevitable challenges of turning around underperforming schools."**
>
> *Scott Given, Founder and CEO of Unlocking Potential*

district turnaround office to do so.

Regardless of how it is selected, a site should have (or be able to quickly build) district capacity to manage the LP, i.e., a District Turnaround Office (DTO), which is an internal unit within a local education agency that streamlines support from multiple offices to manage and coordinate all district turnaround efforts, or an empowered individual who can act as a liaison and advocate for the LP within the district system. This liaison would have explicit authority to shape district resources and policies, providing meaningful leverage to execute the powerful and politically difficult changes necessary to give the LP sufficient authority to make the turnaround successful. In the case of an internal LP, the district may choose to have two distinct teams serving as the DTO and the internal LP, or a more integrated hybrid department that houses functions and positions that would be in the DTO and internal LP teams.

Questions for evaluating a district's or state's readiness for turnaround

1. Is there a visible focus on the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools, with specific two-year turnaround goals?

2. Is there a plan in place to inspire confidence in delivering these goals? If not, then is there evidence of steps to accept responsibility and ensure better access to quality education?

3. Is there an acknowledgment of the difference between turnaround and incremental improvement?

4. Is there a protected turnaround "zone" and alternative consequences that encourage voluntary improvement?

5. Is there a student information and data analysis system to assess learning and individualize teaching?

6. Will there be sufficient streamlined authority and autonomy to implement turnaround?

7. Is there a distinct and visible state/district entity with the necessary flexibility to act on behalf of the turnaround effort?

8. Is there any special funding for turnaround? What are the attached requirements?

Clustering

A structural catalyst to build communities and sustain change

Districts pursuing turnaround strategies should also consider pursuing a cluster-based organization of schools. Clusters are small, think three to five total schools, and ideally include a high school and its relevant feeder schools. If organizing by feeder pattern is impossible, clusters should be grouped to create intentional linkages, both vertically and horizontally, across schools. The cluster-driven approach facilitates knowledge and resource sharing and is integral to the success of turnaround clusters. Creating small, high school-driven clusters provides greater K-12 consistency for students that often lack such consistency in their day-to-day lives. Clusters should be accountable for student achievement and should be managed by a single, accountable Lead Partner unit.

LPs should plan to develop or leverage existing high school-driven feeder patterns to build a K-12 turnaround cluster of schools within a neighborhood. If there is a poorly performing high school, it is likely that there are a whole series of middle schools and elementary schools that are failing to serve students. Building a local, vertically integrated cluster creates a seamless education experience that allows each stage of education build upon the previous one. It facilitates the vertical articulation of academics and alignment of wraparound supports, the former becoming increasingly urgent with the implementation of the Common Core.

A K-12 cluster also strengthens the professional learning community and teacher collaboration and cooperation throughout a feeder pattern. Teachers learn from and with each other as part of a K-12 team, taking joint responsibility for scaffolding learning for students throughout their school experience. The cluster assists cross-grade and cross-content communication. It enables teachers and school leaders to backward articulate key learning deficits, then determine and implement solutions in the appropriate grades and classes with more ease. The structure and culture encourages teachers to work together to track their students' progress and manage key transition points more smoothly, such as students' transition from 8th grade to high school.

Beyond the schools, intentional neighborhood K-12 clusters help galvanize communities around their students and spur wraparound supports and local community development. This is especially important because the students who attend low-performing schools are likely to be from the local neighborhood. Feeder-based clusters represent an investment in the future of the students and of the communities, while encouraging a virtuous cycle of improvement as the schools, students, and communities grow together. This kind of holistic improvement strategy brings more sustainable positive progress and encourages creative solutions, as can be seen in the community schools movement and Promise Neighborhoods.

Clustering may also bring some budgetary implications, as scaling locally helps achieve efficiencies and economies of scale. However, expectations of financial efficiencies should be kept conservative considering the additional supports and resources that need to be invested into turnaround schools.

FIGURE 4. A HIGH SCHOOL-DRIVEN FEEDER PATTERN CLUSTER

High School

Middle School 1   Middle School 2

Elementary School 1   Elementary School 2

LAUNCH OUTREACH EFFORTS

Independent LPs begin outreach to potential partner states, districts, and communities by creating marketing materials (such as a website, brochure, or video) to communicate the organization's value proposition. Reach out to build relationships with key players in the district central office, including senior leadership and staff members responsible for partner management. This district outreach should include conversations that help both parties gain a clear understanding of the autonomies that the LP will receive, and how the LP will be evaluated and held accountable for its results.

Focused community outreach will happen in Phase 2, after securing a contract. However, the independent LP may want to take some time during Phase 1 to familiarize itself with the local community and gauge local support for a turnaround. During this time, the LP may also make note of relevant community and youth-focused organizations around sites, especially those with a strong community leadership presence that could provide formal or informal support for eventual partnerships. In doing this, the LP should be respectful of the district and be sensitive to the fact that they have not yet secured a contract.

Internal LPs develop and execute a strategic communications plan within the district and work with representatives from other central office departments to align processes and establish the roles and relations of the internal LP and other departments in the district in regards to the turnaround cluster. In this internal outreach process, the central office should develop a clear understanding of the autonomies of schools in the turnaround cluster, how the internal LP will be evaluated and held accountable for its results, and how the work within the turnaround cluster may affect the work of central staff employees outside of the internal LP team.

SECURE APPROVAL AS A PROVIDER AND PURSUE CONTRACTS

Independent LPs pursue a formal contract for services after identifying potential sites. There is more than one path to gaining required approval as a provider and securing contracts. Often, it involves responding to an RFP from states or districts for partner organizations. Even if the potential partnership was determined without an open, competitive RFP process, a formal proposal will usually need to be submitted. Most partner RFPs currently in use include a list of questions that allow the potential partner to present their model of school management while ensuring inclusion of the school design components considered critical by the district or state.

However, while RFP processes have been more common in the past, the process lends itself better to the acquisition of commodities rather than complex services, like that provided by LPs. Moving forward, districts and LPs may want to pursue a Request For Information (RFI) or a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) in the early stages of site approval. LPs may also launch their turnaround as a charter conversion, which would involve a charter application process.

Alternatively, the LP may complete a statewide vetting and qualification process, after which districts in that state may reach out to them after their own examination of the state's approved list of providers. In such cases, a contract may be drawn up directly between the independent LP and the district or state.

LPs must follow established protocol for securing contracts within each individual state or district to turn around a particular school site. Because these contracts can be awarded in a variety of ways, the level of organizational development required to secure a contract may vary significantly as well. For instance, many existing RFPs for LP/school management entities require a strong record of improving student achievement, which would be difficult for new organizations to demonstrate. In this case, negotiating directly with a particular district (outside of an RFP process) may be the best route for a nascent LP to gain access to a school for an early pilot or proof-point site.

What do Lead Partners offer to districts?

- Rapid, dramatic improvements and systemic change with less investment and political risk than a complete "one-swoop" restructuring of the entire district.

- An opportunity to incubate best practices and demonstrate results before pursuing a phased dissemination of those practices across the district.

- An opportunity to implement different management approaches and educational models within one district, to better cater to the diverse needs of the student population.

- A separate point of accountability that gives the district flexibility to apply multiple reform efforts while still providing continuity and cohesion.

- A responsive partnership that acts as a bridge between government education policies and activity on the ground.

- Improved integration and alignment of support from the central level to support student achievement in the classroom.

- A smaller scale of operations that adapts quickly to changing needs and circumstances.

TABLE 3. EXAMPLES OF INDEPENDENT LEAD PARTNERS AND THEIR PATHS TO BECOMING PROVIDERS OF TURNAROUND MANAGEMENT

Path to Provider	*Examples*
Entered an RFP process.	- AUSL (Harvard School of Excellence) - LEAD Public Schools (Cameron College Prep) - Renaissance School Services
Secured contract through conversation with district, as well as school site staff and community stakeholders (in some cases).	- Friendship Public Charter Schools (Anacostia High School) - LA's Promise (Manual Arts High School) - Mastery Charter Schools (Pickett Charter Middle School) - Renaissance School Services - Unlocking Potential (Gavin Middle School)
Secured contract through a majority vote of teachers.	Green Dot Public Schools (Locke High School)

CODIFY A PERFORMANCE PARTNERSHIP WITH AN MOU

LPs, internal and independent, collaborate with state or district leadership to draft a comprehensive MOU specifically outlining the terms of the performance partnership, such as management fees, length of contract, performance benchmarks, the division of back office functions (e.g., HR services, procurement) and required conditions (e.g., authority over people, time, money, and programs) before the partnership is executed. It is to both parties' benefit to make this document as clear as possible in laying out the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of each party. A fully developed and highly specific MOU represents upfront evidence that a state or district will commit to providing the agreed-upon capacity and conditions necessary for the LP to succeed.

In addition to formalizing the terms of the partnership, the MOU may be used to create common objectives, establish responsibilities and requirements of each party, create a structure for the working relationship, establish goals and benchmarks for both partners and districts, clarify consequences for failing to meet any of the conditions, establish budgets and funds and the release of those funds to the LP, and protect investments on both sides. Internal LPs should collaborate directly with other department heads to determine how existing processes may affect turnaround schools and what processes and policies within other departments may need to be modified to support the success of the turnaround cluster and anticipate dissemination of best practices to the rest of the district. Refer to Appendices E and F for some of the typical division of responsibilities between districts and LPs, as well as a general outline of an MOU document.

In drafting the MOU, the LP should be prepared to strongly advocate for key autonomies around people, time, money, and programs:

- **People:** LPs should negotiate for full ability to hire, train, evaluate, and remove or recommend the termination of staff. Some MOUs may stipulate that the LP and school leader hire teachers who are part of the district union, but it should also state that the LP has final decision on hiring and have LP representation on the hiring committee. Achieving the necessary degree of flexibility on this autonomy usually requires a waiver from certain provisions of the districtwide collective bargaining agreement and a site-based Election to Work Agreement that allows maximum decision-making flexibility over personnel at the school level.

- **Time:** LPs should be entitled to discretion to determine the daily and yearly schedule. Most LPs extend the school day and the school calendar to allow for more learning time, planning, teacher collaboration, and professional development.

Key areas of autonomy to consider

People

- Does the LP have full ability to hire staff?

- Does the LP have full ability to train staff?

- Does the LP have full ability to evaluate staff?

- Does the LP have full ability to excess staff?

- Is there a waiver from certain provisions of the districtwide collective bargaining agreement?

- Is there a site-based Election to Work Agreement or similar agreement that allows maximum decision-making flexibility over personnel at the school level?

Time

- Can the LP determine the daily schedule?

- Can the LP determine the yearly schedule?

Money

- What discretionary funding does the LP have access to?

- What expenditures does the LP have flexibility in?

- Does the LP have the ability to fundraise for the turnaround?

Program

- Does the LP have the autonomy to select curriculum?

- Can the LP tailor curriculum content as needed to facilitate differentiated learning?

- Does the LP have the ability to modify programs?

- Does the LP have the ability to create programs?

- Does the LP have the ability to eliminate programs?

- Does the LP have the authority to engage outside providers and supporting partners?

- **Money:** LPs should have a high degree of flexibility in the school budget, as well as the ability to raise additional funds. If the LP is opting out of shared district services (such as professional development or textbook purchases), then it should have the option of receiving unrestricted funds instead.

- **Programs:** LPs should ensure full autonomy to select its schools' curriculum and tailor it for different students' needs, as well as the ability to modify, create, or eliminate programs according to students' needs at the school level and to engage outside providers and supporting partners as needed.

In exchange for these autonomies, it is the LP's responsibility to provide corresponding accountability for both fiscal management and academic achievement. Quantifiable indicators should be used to demonstrate both absolute performance and improvement over time. For example, the LP should aim to demonstrate statistically significant gains in student achievement by the end of the second year, if not the first. Other metrics include teacher retention, student retention, graduation rates, suspension rates, and number of violent incidents. These accountability metrics should be incorporated into the MOU and folded into the LP's internal goals, as well as reporting. For more on metrics that would aid future evaluation of the turnaround refer to Appendix G.

The MOU should also clearly delineate the terms of services provided by the district. Agreements typically secure school facilities for LPs for free or at minimal cost, and specify that the district will retain responsibility for facilities maintenance, food services, and transportation. Some LPs also opt-in to data systems, payroll, and other back office operations provided by the district, allowing the LP to focus more on academics and

> **"You have to be bold to get a union contract that supports progress, but at the same time, you don't want to alienate or get in the way of teachers."**
> *Amy Orringer, Director of Strategic Planning at LA's Promise*

instructional support. LPs should consider the district's existing strengths before deciding how to leverage the district's programs and services, whether to develop internal capacity, and if certain functions need to be outsourced to other partner organizations.

Ideally, all the above requirements will be established prior to signing the MOU, but in practice, these agreements are the result of a long and iterative negotiation process, and some may take longer to establish (e.g., modified collective bargaining agreements). Furthermore, depending on the district or state's own schedule, some LPs may find that the bulk of the work to formalize and sign the MOU may be pushed to Phase 2. However, to the greatest extent possible, both internal and independent LPs should clarify the major understandings as early as possible prior to beginning planning in Phase 2.

Phase 2. Year 0: Pre-implementation Planning

Phase 2, 9–12 months			
Objectives: Prepare to open and manage the turnaround school or cluster of turnaround schools.	**Staffing:** ■ **Home office team staffing:** A core team of three that grows to five or more, with expertise in finance, development, recruitment, academics, communications, and technology or data management. The majority of, if not all, staff will be embedded in schools and spend most of their time on site once the turnaround process is launched. ■ **School team staffing:** Varies based on the model that the LP adopts and the available funding; at least one school-level leader (principal) should be hired to begin work during the planning year.	**Funding:** The organization is projected to need a base of approximately $700,000 to $900,000 to cover activities during this phase. Planning grants from the district/ state may cover some of these costs, but it is likely that the LP will have to rely on supplemental private funding.	**Time period:** The LP should require a minimum of nine months to ready the school for turnaround and may want to have 12 months or more, depending on the scale and complexity of the effort.

Identify priorities

PERFORM AN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Perform an in-depth needs assessment to better understand the existing school, its population, and strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in the current system once the school site is secured. The assessment is important because, as a turnaround, the new school will comprise much of the same student population and community as the school it is replacing. Gauging the existing school's needs will help customize the turnaround school plan for a specific environment and allow the LP to better address student needs. Creating targeted strategies from the beginning for old problem areas will send a strong message of change and help LPs implement a stronger turnaround model at each school site.

In conducting a needs assessment, the LP may want to divide its data collection and analysis into categories such as:

■ Student achievement and program effectiveness.

■ Staff quality, recruitment, and retention.

■ Curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

■ School organization and management.
  □ Administrative leadership.
  □ Professional development.
  □ School personnel issues.

■ School climate.

■ Family and community involvement.

Data collection may include observing classrooms, examining school records, and interviewing and/or surveying teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the local community. Sample questions can be found in Appendix H. Some schools may already have a school needs assessment available from the current year or the previous year. In addition to gathering its own data and looking at school needs assessments, the LP should examine existing metrics (such as state testing data or district-collected assessments) to determine high-priority issues.

Once those priority areas are identified, the LP should develop

strategies aligned with the LP and school's vision, mission, and goals. Strategies should include indicators of success, resources needed, timeline, point person(s) responsible, and target population. The resulting document can then be used to inform relevant sections of the larger school design document.

Build organizational capacity

CONTINUE FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Review the fundraising plan and protocols established in Phase 1 and make revisions as needed. Actively pursue government and private grants and cultivate a network of individual donors.

FINALIZE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FILL STAFFING NEEDS

Develop an organizational structure and finalize the staffing plan at both the LP and school levels. In addition to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the core team comprises a Director of Academics and Director of Operations. Collectively, they should have school management experience, teaching experience, operations experience, good communication skills, and, preferably, a strong local network in the same district as the school site. After the core team is established, the following roles are strongly recommended for the LP staff:

- Recruitment and Talent Development Coordinator

- Family and Community Engagement Coordinator

For more details on each position and desired competencies, refer to Appendix D.

The build out of the school team will vary depending on what is currently in place at the school, the results of the needs assessment, the availability of district support services, and, potentially, budget classifications for certain positions.

> **"I think it's key that many members of our team have real experience working in Baltimore. We know our students' needs. We know what Baltimore City's going to ask for, we know who to call when there's a problem"**
>
> *Chris Maher, former Deputy CAO of Friendship*

However, some functions are essential from the outset. Some responsibilities may be shared (for instance, the principal may oversee curriculum and instruction jointly with department heads), begin as part-time positions, or be taken on by teacher leaders. However, the following critical roles should be deliberately incorporated into the school's initial leadership team:

- Principal

- Director of Operations

- Director of Budget and Finance

- Director of Student Support[4]

- Director of Instruction (including curriculum planning and teacher development)

- Director of School Climate and Discipline

- Data Analysis Coordinator

SECURE SCHOOL TEAM TALENT

PRINCIPAL

Recruit top-notch talent to fill the vacancies at both the school and organizational levels after the staffing plan is confirmed. In particular, finding the right school leader is crucial. As the day-to-day orchestrator of the turnaround, s/he should have the experience and capacity to take ownership from day one and be able to work independently, with limited guidance from the LP. A detailed description of critical school-level turnaround leader competencies can be found in Appendix I.

Ideally, the Principal should be hired a year ahead of the school opening. Most LP principal hires were secured by the January preceding the turnaround launch. If possible, the principal should go through an apprenticeship with an existing turnaround school that has shown success and visit its future site to gauge the school's existing culture and climate. During the winter/spring preceding launch, the principal (and assistant principals, if possible) should go through executive leadership training to solidify academic, cultural, and operational leadership capabilities.

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[4] The student population of a turnaround school is likely to be far needier than a typical school in terms of social and emotional support, as well as academic support. Organizations that do not anticipate these needs may need to put additional supports in place after the school launch.

TEACHING STAFF

Recruit and hire teaching staff directly and/or through approved channels. Independent LPs typically create a hiring procedure separate from the district. In some cases, as with Chicago's Office of School Improvement, internal LPs may also create a hiring procedure separate from the rest of the district. Regardless of the hiring channels and procedures, the LP should have final authority over hiring decisions, with autonomy from district policies and freedom from traditional practices such as seniority-based staffing decisions. The final approval power of the LP also applies to staffing decisions by the principal, or staffing done with the support of the district HR department and union. The process should make an effort to integrate and retrain existing staff when possible, as well as recruit new talent, as illustrated in Figure 3.

To achieve the necessary hiring flexibilities, the LP will most likely need to negotiate with the district and/or union to operate under modified conditions and exemptions from the districtwide collective bargaining agreement. Ideally, the district would grant a waiver to provisions restricting hiring practices and site-based autonomies. The MOU establishing modified conditions should then be accompanied by an Election to Work Agreement, to be signed by all teachers in the building, outlining the working conditions of the school. Alternatively, some LPs that develop

from a charter network, like Green Dot Public Schools, may have their own union. In this case, they would negotiate a "thin contract," which is as streamlined and flexible as possible. A thin contract (comprising approximately 30–50 pages, versus an average of 100 pages for a typical district collective bargaining agreement) guarantees the teaching staff reasonable working conditions and protection against unjust discrimination but still affords the principal and LP the authority and flexibility to adapt requirements to changing school needs.

While some districts and unions may require the LP to restrict hiring to members of the local union, most of the partner-operated turnaround schools reported hiring new teachers through a variety of channels. For example, AUSL draws talent from their own teacher training pipeline, the AUSL Urban Teacher Residency Program, in addition to recruiting existing CPS teachers from across the system. Renew Schools has established formal human capital partnerships with Teach For America and TeachNOLA. It is not uncommon for many of the hires to be teachers with three to five years of teaching experience, who are looking for the next challenge to grow in their career. Common characteristics looked for are a strong commitment to the school culture and philosophy, highly effective teaching practices, excellence in collaboration and team work, good interpersonal skills, and a positive outlook. A typical job posting with more detail can be found in Appendix J.

FIGURE 5. FLOW CHART OF TEACHER RECRUITMENT
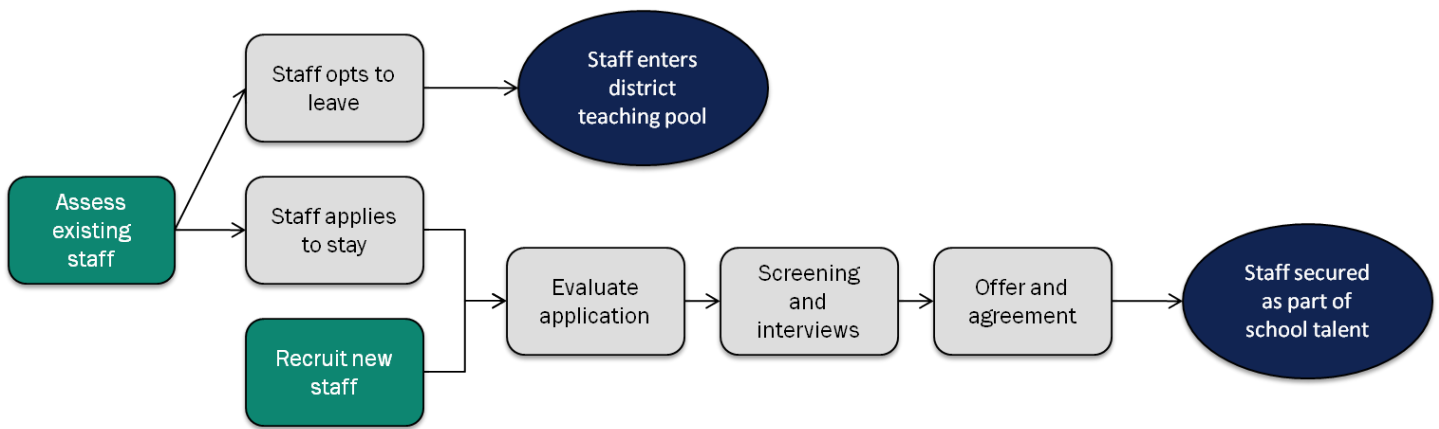
DEVELOP A FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Begin an ongoing and intensive effort to communicate with and solicit feedback from the community. Stakeholders outside of students' families may include local nonprofits/supporting partners, businesses, foundations, and even other LPs. This will have some overlap with the student recruitment activities, as it also involves community meetings, school events, town halls, one-on-one meetings, and possibly even focus groups or community service projects. LPs have successfully established warm community relations in a variety of ways, including a bus tour of the neighborhood (LEAD Public Schools), a personal tour for parents of the LP's currently operating charter schools (Friendship Public Schools), and a community launch celebration timed with the opening of school (Green Dot Public Schools).

Internal LPs, in particular, should create a joint engagement plan with the district turnaround office and be prepared to explain how their support for these schools and its students will differ from district support for them in the past.

RECRUIT STUDENTS

Develop and execute a plan to recruit/re-enroll existing students. The mechanics of enrollment may vary widely from site to site; ideally, the LP should have a zoned option for all students within an existing catchment area or from a feeder school. In most cases, students at the current school are guaranteed seats at the turnaround school, but their families must formally fill out a form or enter a lottery to accept a slot. Despite the guaranteed seat, most LPs report that well below 100 percent of the current student body enrolls in the new school, largely due to the fact that these families are highly transient to begin with and any extra enrollment steps create a barrier that requires persuasion to overcome. In some locations, such as New York City or New Orleans, students typically enter multiple school lotteries and may ultimately depart the turnaround school for a seat elsewhere. In cases where the turnaround schools are neighborhood schools designated as a zoned "attendance area school," such as AUSL, Green Dot Public Schools, and LA's Promise turnaround sites, no additional student recruitment is required.

Whether or not enrollment is a challenge, there should be outreach to existing students and families once the takeover is publicly announced. LPs should attempt to articulate their vision and to become a "known" quantity to students and families. The LP may choose to do this through community meetings, general marketing materials (e.g., pamphlets), or individual phone calls and visits to families. In Year 0, the goal should be to get the word out to increase familiarity with the turnaround school's brand and culture. These conversations will lay the foundation of the school's relationships with parents, and good customer service and ease of access to information and processes are critical. The process may involve hiring translators to help create materials and conduct some of the outreach. The bulk of the outreach will be conducted over late winter and spring, with a final push for undecided parents and check-ins for enrolled families in the summer.

> ### Student recruitment and family outreach activities have included...
>
> - Walking the neighborhood.
>
> - Meeting with families.
>
> - Hosting open houses.
>
> - Participating in community meetings.
>
> - Holding public meetings.
>
> - Hosting a meet-the-principal night.
>
> - Facilitating school visits.
>
> - Conducting media outreach.
>
> - Sending newsletters and other mailings.

CREATE AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Establish a committee to offer input on the turnaround planning process, recruiting a diverse range of participants (e.g., district leaders, school administrators, teachers, school counselors, parents, student representatives, and community members); use this committee to pre-emptively identify anticipated roadblocks and to ensure support for the turnaround effort. In some cases, there may be an existing community board that can act as an advisory committee until the turnaround school has launched and builds an advisory committee of its own.

School design

DRAFT A SCHOOL-LEVEL WORK PLAN

Draft a school improvement plan to serve as the roadmap for the school turnaround process. The school improvement plan should take into account any wider strategic plans for the district, turnaround zone, or particular cluster of turnaround schools, and align goals and activities accordingly. Include a detailed work plan for turnaround activities specifying key deliverables, ownership over projects, and timelines for completion. The

plan should address all components of the school, including: academics, staffing/HR, operations, data/assessments, culture/climate, family and community engagement, student supports, and finances.

The details will vary for each school and LP, but the outline below (see Table 4) provides an example of what the key deliverables and ownership may look like for the components mentioned above.

TABLE 4. EXAMPLES OF KEY COMPONENTS AND DELIVERABLES

Component	Ownership	Deliverables
Academic	Director of Academics (with Principal)	▪ Academic plan that outlines the school model (e.g., themed academies, small learning communities), curricula aligned with state standards, an instructional plan, and instructional technology plan and budget. ▪ Extended learning time plan that specifies modifications to schedule to accommodate an extended school year or day, and how the school day will be structured (e.g., block scheduling, double doses in math/ELA, time for interventions). ▪ Socioemotional support plan, which includes behavioral/ discipline elements.
Staffing/HR	Recruitment Coordinator (with Director of Academics and Principal)	▪ Recruitment plan for school administration and teaching staff. ▪ Professional development plan for school staff, including implementation of leadership training and summer institute.
Operations	Director of Operations	▪ Finance and operations plan. ▪ Modifications/renovation plan for facilities (if necessary). ▪ Subcontractor agreements, as necessary.
Data/Assessments	Director of Academics and Director of Operations	▪ A plan for data collection, analysis, and use. ▪ A new data platform or modified reports for district data system, as needed.
Culture/Climate	Principal	▪ School culture plan, which includes information on how the school culture will be embedded in school procedures.
Family and Community Engagement	Family and Community Engagement Manager	▪ Family and community outreach plan. ▪ Community Open House event leading up to the school site launch.

DEVELOP A SCHOOL-LEVEL BUDGET

Prepare a school-level budget for the turnaround process, separate from the broader home office budget. This will involve an audit of the school's existing financial records. The LP should also prepare a SIG budget that aligns with the school improvement plan (if applicable) in preparing a budget for the turnaround process. It is not uncommon for LPs that are charter organizations to have operational losses at the school level during the first three years of operation due to staffing up or the time it takes to build up to full student enrollment levels. These losses are typically stopped by supplemental funding from the LP budget.

The changing release schedules for some funds and the high variance in amounts have made it difficult to create a clear picture of "typical" revenue for a turnaround school. However, there are some funds that LPs commonly use for school-level revenue. Table 5 below gives examples of funding (outside of fundraising by the LP) used, as well as some potential sources, and how they can been used by LPs at their turnaround schools.

On the expenditure side, a large portion of the budget will go toward salary and benefits. The first year may also involve some expenditure for capital improvements that are not shouldered by the district in the outline of responsibilities for the physical site, such as some furniture and equipment purchases, and setting up the IT infrastructure within the school. Outside of any major facility expansion or renovation plans, these types of startup expenditures will be much smaller and staggered after the first year, involving mostly maintenance and upgrades. Additional spending during the first two or three years may include extra staffing on the administrative team to build school culture and meet socioemotional needs.[5]

Generally speaking, per-pupil expenditures are likely to be higher at higher grade levels. However, other variables include how many students are served by the school, whether the school is divided into smaller learning communities, and whether those smaller communities operate as separate small schools with their own administrative leaders. The cost of running a school also varies according to the school's location, which affects the school budget and additional required investments. For example, a new turnaround school serving 500 students in a major metropolitan area may need an additional investment of $800,000 in its launch year, while an equivalent school may require a sum closer to $500,000–$600,000 in a smaller city.

TABLE 5. EXAMPLES OF FUNDING THAT CAN BE USED BY LEAD PARTNERS FOR TURNAROUNDS

Revenue	Potential use by Lead Partners
Per-pupil allocation	School administration, instruction, professional development, instructional materials, guidance and counseling, pupil services, maintenance, food, and services (e.g., transportation).
Title I[6]	Teacher training/development, early childhood education programs, online courseware, and data systems.
Title IIa	Activities to improve teacher quality.
SIG	LP team development and services, performance management systems to evaluate and drive progress, job-embedded professional development, and family and community engagement activities.
IDEA	Support to improve teaching and learning for special education students.
Charter school startup assistance	Startup planning, educational plan implementation, set up of academic goals and objectives, and other startup-related costs.
District startup funding	Professional development for teachers, early hire of administrators before turnaround launch, and capital improvements.

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[5] This staff may include an extra assistant principal, dean, or coaches. If the LP plans on scaling, it may be to the LP's benefit to have these "extra staff" act as a specialized startup team that helps turnaround schools get up and running in their early years.

[6] For more on Title I, refer to Fullerton, J. & Hochman, D. (February, 2011). Title I Fiscal Requirements and School District Management: The Consequences of Intergovernmental Distrust.

IDENTIFY SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Determine what (if any) services will be subcontracted to supporting partners. This decision should use the community research and relationships cultivated in Phase 1, as well as the framework for the division of services and conditions drafted in the MOU between the LP and the district during Phase 1. The LP's autonomy to streamline and optimize services should help it better align external providers with the school's actual needs and allow for change as needs evolve.

The number and type of supporting partners engaged will vary significantly from school to school. In the high poverty environments that are typical of most turnaround schools, students and families often need a wide array of social services, and the school may become a hub for everything from health services to employment programs and emergency housing. These programs may be targeted toward parents and families as well as toward students. Enrichment programs are also a popular area for supporting partners, who may provide art, music, sports, or other after-school activities. In addition, while LPs should strive to create a system that cultivates a professional learning community at the school level, principals may wish to bring in external professional development or curriculum resources as needed.

The Men of Honor program at Harper High School in Chicago supports high-risk males who have experienced gun violence. The program uses rap for personal therapy and as a tool for change and is supported by Harper, the 7th District Police Department, Chicago Mayor's Office, and the Office of School Turnaround.

IDENTIFY AND/OR DEVELOP A DATA SYSTEM

Establish data systems and processes that will allow for ongoing performance management. Begin with an audit of existing sources of data and data systems at the district and school. Keeping pre-existing systems in place can help prevent duplication of district work and subsequent redundancies; however, the development of a new, separate data system can provide greater flexibility and faster access to data. Easy access is critical for the timely analysis needed to make data-based decisions to drive the turnaround.

In examining data management options, the LP should consider how uniformly compatible the data system is, and how well it can be used across schools. This is especially important considering the need to track students' progress throughout their educational trajectory and the difficulties that can arise in merging databases. If there is a data system available in the district, then is it being applied and used by all the schools in the district? Can it track the needed metrics, consistently, K–12?

Another important factor is ease of use. Who is the target user for the data system? Can it be easily integrated into daily use by teachers and administrators, or does it require special permissions and/or technical knowledge? Is there a platform with a user-friendly interface that parents and students can use to access the data and monitor individual progress?

Often, it may be a better use of limited LP resources to use existing data systems rather than building new, possibly redundant ones from scratch. However, there are instances where the existing district data system is overly cumbersome and impedes the LP's ability to get the timely feedback on practices and make necessary adjustments. In this case, building or purchasing a new database may reap dividends for the turnaround school and also represent a good investment for future schools as the LP expands, or if the system is rolled out to the rest of the district.

ORDER MATERIALS

Identify all instructional and operational resources needed (e.g., textbooks, equipment) and secure them, following district procurement processes as necessary. These initial purchases will lead to higher expenditures at the school level in the first year. However, these expenses will then decrease in following years, either to replacement levels (for items such as writing utensils) or to cycling levels of expenditure for maintenance and upgrades (for items such as computers).

Phase 3. Years 1–2
Turnaround Implementation Begins

Phase 3, 2 years			
Objectives: Implement the turnaround effort at the school	**Staffing:** The LP home office team structure in Phase 2 can be carried into Phase 3. The structure at the school level depends on the school, but it would be advisable to have two assistant principals or deans who focus on readiness to teach and readiness to learn, and three school-embedded coaches who support teachers and students.	**Funding:** The home office and school budget needs will differ according to various circumstances, but home office expenses and spending at the school level will total approximately $750,000 to $1 million each year. Lead Partners should adjust their fundraising plans accordingly.	**Time period:** Implementation begins with the school's opening; the turnaround implementation should show dramatic gains in student academic achievement within the first two years.

The purpose of this guide is to discuss the development of an LP organization rather than to describe the turnaround process in great detail; however, the mechanics of the turnaround process are certainly relevant to how a new organization should think about building up its capacity. The topics covered here are not intended to be comprehensive but offer an overview of components involved in turnaround implementation. Each

LP will find the need to add new components or make changes to components mentioned in this section as they tailor the execution to their circumstances and to their own strategic plan. It is essential that the LP monitor its academic, financial, and operational data from the beginning, responding to the data to make necessary course corrections to their turnaround plan.

Home office activities

ACADEMICS

1. PROVIDE ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Provide extensive academic support, as well as formal guidelines to be implemented at the principal's discretion. While the LP has the contractual responsibility of ensuring a successful turnaround, and there is embedded LP staff in the school site, it is important to grant the principal and school leadership team autonomy to exercise their leadership and act on behalf of the school. This will build capacity for later years when supports will be scaled back and mature schools will operate more independently.

While the Director of Academics and instructional coaches are the main sources of curricular leadership and support, in some cases, the LP may outsource a component of this to a partner organization. For example, Friendship used Creative Learning Systems for the "signature Friendship SmartLabs," Renew Schools engaged the Achievement Network to assist

with their assessments and data analysis, and Mastery brought in an outside organization to provide health and sex education instruction.

2. MANAGE DATA AND PROVIDE DATA TRAINING

Manage data to track the overall progress of the turnaround from both an implementation and performance standpoint. The LP should constantly examine the data to see if the efforts are working and what programs need to be modified, added, or removed from the school. To ensure consistent, high-quality data related to student achievement, the home office data management personnel may train teachers in how to integrate and use data in their instructional practices, as well as monitor and report progress made on key indicators by the school. While it is not essential for whoever leads the data analysis to have a teaching background, it can prove useful in tailoring workshops to be more relevant to teachers. For example, the data and technology person at Renew Schools leveraged his background as a science teacher to help the science teachers at Renew

better integrate technology into their practices.

BUDGET AND FINANCES

3. MANAGE FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

Aggressively pursue fundraising opportunities to fulfill current budgetary needs and to build a rainy day fund that can be used to cover operating losses at the school level or unforeseen expenses at the school site or home office. Development duties include grant writing for public and private funds, establishing relationships with individual donors, and pursuing organizational partnerships that may lead to direct funds or in-kind donations. Early on, the CEO will be responsible for overseeing fundraising, marketing materials, and events to help raise the profile of the school and the LP. Upon scaling, these responsibilities could be given to a Director of External Affairs.

4. OVERSEE SCHOOL BUDGET

Work with the principal to prepare and submit a budget for board and/or district approval. This process is expected to quickly evolve from a collaboration between the home office and school to a process that is chiefly principal-led, with LP support as needed. The LP home office will help reconcile the budget, project expenses and funding streams and ensure that revenue, especially that which is earmarked for a specific expenditure, is spent accordingly. The home office will also interface with the district to manage the budget approval and reporting processes.

5. MANAGE INTERNAL BUDGET

Manage the operating budget of the LP home office. This will include instituting systems to provide financial accountability to stakeholders, conducting internal checks, and facilitating external audits as necessary.

HUMAN RESOURCES

6. RECRUIT NEW TEACHING STAFF AS NEEDED

Recruit and onboard new hires as necessary. Even as Year 1 is underway in the school, plans for additional staffing must be in place. These plans may include mid-year hiring to address identified gaps or preparing for school expansion (either by adding grade levels or increasing the number of seats) in the following year. Recruiting and hiring may involve collaboration with the district's own HR department and teacher unions, as well as external recruiters or recruiting pipelines such as Teach For America, The New Teacher Project, and local teacher residency programs.

> "[Our data manager] does a lot of work with our science teachers because he served on a state board for science and is an experienced science teacher ... he is valuable because he's someone who can teach teachers how to do science, how to do technology, software, and how to up servers."
>
> *Eric Seling, Former COO of Renew Schools*

7. PLAN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continue to provide opportunities for teachers over the course of the year, including recurring training on site and, as feasible, mid-year retreats or off-site sessions such as the Summer Institute. The home office can also provide the principal with guidelines or modules for daily/weekly professional development activities. However, the LP should allow the school leadership team sufficient flexibility to respond to data and address self-identified professional development needs in the school. Some LPs may choose to bring in outside providers to aid with professional development. For example, LEAD Public Schools developed a partnership with Lipscomb University to facilitate its professional development initiatives.

LP home office staff may also facilitate the development of the school administrative team by providing further leadership and management training or exchanges with core staff at other turnaround schools.

8. OVERSEE EMPLOYEE HR SERVICES

Oversee all HR operations, such as payroll, benefits, and other core HR functions. The extent to which the home office needs to orchestrate these functions will depend on the individual LP and district. Distribution of these functions varied among partners surveyed; while most school-level employees had their pay and benefits administered by the district, several were overseen directly by the LP. The arrangement may depend upon the organization's history and existing capacity (e.g., does the home office already issue teacher paychecks at a currently operating charter school?), as well as district preferences and constraints as reflected in the MOU.

OPERATIONS

9. COORDINATE WITH DISTRICTS

Continually communicate with appropriate district staff around the provision of central services that were retained as district responsibilities in the MOU, such as facilities, food, purchasing, and/or transportation. The early months of Year 1 implementation will likely require a relatively high degree of home office involvement as systems are established. Once shared services are in place and running smoothly, ongoing coordination needs will be minimized.

School-level activities

ACADEMICS AND STUDENT LIFE

1. ADOPT RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Constantly collect, analyze, and use data to determine how to improve instruction for every student. This data-driven instructional culture usually involves some type of assessment every six to eight weeks, as well as frequent informal progress evaluations by the teaching team.

Harness the daily schedule, extended school day, and extended school year to create additional learning and support time alongside specific intervention plans. For struggling students, this additional instruction may include tutoring, skills classes, and supplementary support learning groups. High-achieving students should also receive differentiated support through enrichment classes and more demanding material to keep them engaged. Periods may be re-blocked to allow for more in-depth studies, differentiated instruction, and targeted interventions, as well as extended staff planning and collaboration times.

2. BUILD SCHOOL CULTURE

Institute and codify an achievement-driven school culture that includes appropriate rules, activities, and interventions to create a safe environment that is conducive to learning. The school culture should be renewed in a way that resets expectations to higher levels for all students and helps drive home the message of change. Daily rules and activities can range from dress codes and contracts signed by students and parents at the beginning of each year to stated core values of the school and the building of strong adult-student relationships. The latter may be formalized in the school schedule through regular meetings of small advisories or may be informally encouraged by facilitating extensive contact between students and teachers. Depending on the school, initiatives around building school culture could also involve explicitly addressing diversity in the student population, interpersonal skills, and student retention efforts. For example, Mastery's social and emotional learning program explicitly teaches and reinforces conflict management and violence prevention skills. Schools may also wish to create formal avenues through which students can help shape and influence school culture, for instance, by choosing their own mascots or advisory group names.

3. ESTABLISH STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Build a net of support services for students, families, and communities. Students at turnaround schools often come from a high-poverty, high-needs background, which requires more extensive, holistic support than typical school counseling and enrichment/extracurricular activities. The school should thoughtfully and deliberately provide socioemotional supports to help address the needs of different student populations, and to help families and communities better support students. In addition to a dean/assistant principal of discipline or behavioral interventionists, extra coaches, and a school structure that facilitates close adult-student relationships, it is helpful to have an additional layer of integrated counseling and support services. In order to best support its students' needs, AUSL engaged health and social services from both the district and outside partners, and coordinated family services. LA's Promise worked with the district and outside partners to create on-campus health clinics. LEAD Public Schools built a partnership plan that included organizations like the YMCA, Oasis, Youth Villages, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters to create a network of mental and social services for its students.

BUDGET AND FINANCES

4. MANAGE SCHOOL FINANCES

Provide input and assistance to the principal and school leadership team so that they can build and administer good budget plans. In the early phases of the first school, the Director of Operations may be embedded in the school on a daily basis and be deeply involved in the school's operations. However, as the school matures and/or as the LP scales to operate a full cluster of schools, daily operations will fall upon a school-based operations manager. The Director of Operations, while still conducting site visits, will operate as more of a home office figure that is not deeply embedded in a particular school. At that point, school-level personnel (a specialized operations manager or someone from the school leadership team, such as an assistant principal) will be responsible for budget reconciliation and finances day-to-day, while the principal will meet with the home office team regularly (e.g., once a month) to go over budget projections and financial strategy for the school.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

5. CULTIVATE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Communicate with and plan activities for students' families and the local community and continue to build and nurture relationships. While planning the engagement strategy will be the work of a designated staff member, family and community engagement should involve all staff at the school level, including teachers and the leadership team. The school may opt to create a parent lounge or resource room, open some of its space for public use, undertake service projects in the local community, or offer in-kind resources in the form of mentors, networks, and services. Depending on the student population of the school, ongoing multilingual or translation efforts may also be required.

6. COORDINATE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Solicit volunteers from the local community, especially parents, and coordinate their activities in the school. Volunteer activities can include listening to children read, walking children to and from school to ensure safety and good attendance, or helping at special events.

HUMAN RESOURCES

7. TRACK PERFORMANCE AND ASSESS TEACHING STAFF

Institute a rigorous teacher evaluation system that involves student data and classroom observations. Outline clear retention and promotion policies, with incentives in place for teachers who perform well or opt to take on extra responsibilities in addition to their regular duties. The ability to offer incentives and to dismiss or excess staff may be dependent upon the particular autonomies granted to the LP in the district MOU or union Election to Work Agreement. Even without the full range of authority, however, all schools should aim to provide teachers with timely, useful feedback and a clear plan to improve their instructional practice.

8. PROVIDE ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Build in staff learning opportunities throughout the year by providing:

- Weekly team planning time to collaborate on curriculum, evaluate lesson plans, and discuss and develop action plans for student problems and pedagogical challenges.

- Resources for teachers and administrative staff to seek their own opportunities for professional development through outside coursework and professional networks, including site visits to high-performing schools.

- Opportunities to engage in ongoing learning and exchange between schools in a local cluster (such as a multi-school lesson study group) or across functions, such as through a turnaround principals' network.

- Access to external professional development through third-party organizations, such as universities or school service providers.

Professional development should be ongoing and not isolated to one-off sessions dispersed throughout the school year. LPs should include professional development time in building its extended school time and school calendar. The principal should be able to block off time in the weekly schedule for teachers to collaborate and work on specific skill needs highlighted in performance data, helping to integrate professional development into regular practice and building a strong professional learning community within the school. Teachers should also be encouraged to seek out professional development opportunities on their own, ranging from an informal peer observation within their own department or at a different turnaround school, to a formal conference, course, or certificate program. For example, Mastery provided up to $1,000 annually to instructional staff for coursework or certification courses, and an additional $400 for education-related workshops and seminars at Pickett Charter Middle School.

OPERATIONS

9. MANAGE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

Manage daily operations in collaboration with school and district staff. Daily management should include regular school walkthroughs, budget reconciliation, data reports for internal use, and logistical oversight of ongoing operations such as transportation schedules. While districts typically maintain oversight for categories such as facilities maintenance, there should also be a process in place for schools to report needs or issues to the appropriate party. District Turnaround Offices (DTOs) are particularly elemental in such processes and should take the lead in expediting requests.

Phase 4. Years 3–5
Sustainability and Growth

Phase 4, 2+ years			
Objectives: Assess the sustainability of current school site's(s') operations and scale back direct management by the home office team. At this point, the LP may also re-examine its growth strategy to determine when and whether it will scale operations to include additional sites.	**Staffing:** Staff needs will vary based on the decision to scale or maintain current operations. Maintaining current operations could involve streamlining some of the staffing that was needed for the initial turnaround effort. Scaling would involve additional hiring as well as shifting some staff to the planning of the new site(s).	**Funding:** Depends on growth strategy.	**Time period:** Depends on growth strategy.

By the third year of school operations, the LP can expect to see stabilization in operations and funding needs. The cost of operations, outside of direct staffing costs, will have fallen since the launch year, as initial infrastructure investments have been made and spending falls to maintenance or replacement levels. Most staff will already be in place and large numbers of new hires will no longer be necessary. This would be a good time to assess the progress of the school turnaround (using metrics designed early on and continually tracked throughout the course of operations) and to examine how far the school has come in meeting its academic and financial performance goals. If the school is performing well, then the LP should also solidify its supporting role and be sure that the school-level capacity exists to sustain the progress that has been made.

This would also be a good time to add school sites to create a turnaround cluster, going deeper (within a district) or wider (expanding to a different district). Going deeper usually involves greater commitment to the local community, adding more local sites and creating a K–12 pipeline over time. Going wider involves replication in other communities that show need and openness to the dramatic change of turnaround schools. Both going deeper and going wider provide schools with a larger professional learning community. However, going deeper with a local cluster of schools before going wider is strongly recommended. Creating a vertically integrated K-12 cluster with aligned wraparound supports is essential to breaking the cycle of low performance and sustaining improvements in student achievement. In addition, building a geographical cluster of schools allows the LP to leverage existing relationships and may offer some economies of scale.

Regardless of the approach, scaling is often necessary to break even on turnaround projects and wean off of reliance on external fundraising or one-time government funds. In some cases, charter organizations will charge higher management fees at more mature schools in order to offset the higher costs at their startups. Refer to Appendix K for an example budget of an LP that decides to scale.

The optimal size for mature LP networks has yet to be determined, but LPs that choose to scale must be careful to control their growth. After a certain critical mass, without sub-division into regional semi-autonomous offices, the LP may have insufficient agility to be adaptable and responsive to school site needs. The lack of ability to tailor policies and actions for each school and the natural momentum toward standardized processes across schools may result in the replication of the very type of overly rigid conditions that the LP was trying to address.

Further down the line, if a school turnaround cluster is deemed to be a success, and the district has changed to better provide differentiated support to its schools, then the LP may want to consider full re-absorption of the cluster into the district system. In considering this option, the LP, school leadership team, and district should be sure to discuss if and how the autonomies and accountability measures in place are to be sustained. The turnaround requires district transformation for long-term sustainability. Thus, significant changes must take place at the district central office before discussing the possibility of returning a cluster to regular district management.

III. CONCLUDING NOTES

The National Assessment of Educational Progress data from 2010–11 indicate that less than 35 percent of our 8th graders are proficient in reading or math. This is not a time to wait. We need to take action immediately and often to rapidly evolve today's under-performing schools and our processes for improvement to a place where success is the only option.

The content of this playbook is not meant to be followed with exacting precision but rather should serve as a roadmap to guide those looking to implement the Lead Partner (LP) framework. Given that the LP is not a rigid model, a number of the design and implementation details may vary significantly by context and available talent and resources. We encourage those entering the space to experiment with these variations in the hopes of developing even more innovative and powerful LPs.

As the components of the turnaround process described are not new, many of the practices described in this playbook will sound familiar. The importance of strong leadership, teacher quality, flexibility in operations, accountability, and family and community support are critical success factors in any turnaround school. What the LP model provides is a structured way to bring all of these components together in order to drive dramatic improvements in the first two years of turnaround and beyond.

> "Whether you look at it as a civil rights issue, as an economic imperative, or as a matter of national security, we have to get better faster than ever before at education."
>
> *Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education*

IV. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Potential Lead Partners and Competencies Mapping

The table below notes the general strengths and weaknesses of potential Lead Partner (LP) types in competencies and experiences required for turnaround. There may be significant variance within an LP source category, so a potential LP should perform an internal audit of competencies and experiences to indicate its specific team's strengths and weaknesses.

TABLE 6. POTENTIAL LEAD PARTNERS' EXISTING COMPETENCIES AND EXPERIENCES

		Competencies and Experiences Required						
		Management/ Operations	School Design	District Relations	Talent Development	Community Engagement	Turnaround Experience	Capital to Scale
Potential Lead Partners	CMO/SMO	X	X	\	\	X		\
	SSO		\	X	\	\	\	\
	Local funders	\		X				X
	Districts	\	X	X	\	X	\	X
	Unions			X	\			X
	Universities	\	\	\	\			X

X Applicable to most or all players in this category
\ Applicable to some players in this category

CMO Charter Management Organization
SMO School Management Organization
SSO School Support Organization

Note: Individual entrepreneurs who wish to enter into the LP role are included in the CMO/SMO category.

Appendix B. Sample Planning and Startup Budget

The budget below is a sample budget of a Lead Partner (LP) that plans to grow a cluster of schools; actual numbers will vary according to the location and the conditions and services negotiated by each LP. For example, expenses may vary if the district does not provide for a second assistant principal (or dean) position. There also may be significant additional facilities' expenses if the district does not provide funds for necessary renovations or does not provide favorable conditions for securing the school site (in many cases, sites were provided for free or for a negligible charge).

Revenue for start-up expenses have typically come from fundraising, which may be replaced by revenue from management fees if the LP decides to scale. However, the LP should also see if there are any startup grants available at the federal, state, or district level.

TABLE 7. SAMPLE LEAD PARTNER EXPENSES

Lead Partner Expenses	Ramp Up	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2
HOME OFFICE				
Personnel Expenses				
CEO/President	$56,818	$113,636	$125,000	$127,500
Director of Operations	$39,091	$78,182	$86,000	$87,720
Director of Instruction	$40,909	$81,818	$90,000	$91,800
Family and Community Engagement Coordinator		$11,667	$40,000	$40,800
Recruitment and Talent Development Coordinator		$45,000		
Strategy and Financial Analyst				
Benefits (home office-only)	$34,205	$82,576	$85,250	$86,955
Non-personnel Expenses				
Office facilities and equipment		$47,800	$27,800	$27,800
Events, Marketing and Travel		$35,000	$50,000	$44,000
Home office staff PD			$10,000	$10,000
Audits and services		$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Total Home Office Expenses	**$171,023**	**$505,679**	**$524,050**	**$526,575**
SCHOOL (INCREMENTAL TO NORMAL SPENDING)				
Personnel Expenses				
Principal		$62,000		
Associate Principal(s) or Dean(s)		$59,000		
Technical assistance		$17,500	$210,000	$214,200
Benefits		$41,550	$63,000	$64,260
Non-personnel Expenses				
Summer Institute and added PD		$150,000	$80,000	$80,000
Total Additional School Expenses		**$330,050**	**$353,000**	**$358,460**
TOTAL LEAD PARTNER EXPENSES	**$171,023**	**$835,729**	**$877,050**	**$885,035**

Appendix C. Organizational Diagnostics and Audits

The following tables pose questions to help assess an organization's resources and competencies against the needed structure, resources, and competencies of a Lead Partner (LP). The questions are most directly applicable to an existing organization that is considering transforming itself into an LP; however, those without an existing parent organization should use them to reflect on needs and capacities they possess, and what capacity would need to be built to perform successfully as an LP.

TABLE 8. QUESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

	Organizational Diagnostic Questions	Lead Partner Alignment Questions
Mission	• What are the stated mission, vision, and goals of the organization? • Do the organization's strategy, actions, and employee beliefs reflect these guiding principles?	• Is becoming an LP consistent with the mission and vision of the organization? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
Strategy	• What is the current strategy of the organization (e.g., current activities and programs to achieve the mission)? • What is the planned, long-term strategy of the organization? • Is the organization successfully executing the current strategy? Where does it fall short in execution and in achieving the mission? • What metrics does the organization use to measure its success? How has the organization performed on these metrics?	• Does becoming an LP align with, build off of, and reinforce the organization's existing strategy? How will fulfilling the LP role better position the organization to meet its mission and goals? • How is the planned growth and change consistent with becoming an LP? • How does current performance orientation support the development of an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
Operational Structure	• How is the organization currently structured to implement the organization's mission and strategy? • Are roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority formalized, clear, and appropriate? • How are activities coordinated and integrated across projects and divisions? How do team members communicate? • Is the current governance model effective? Is the board composition appropriate? Is the board effective and committed? Does the board have a positive relationship with management that leads to effective outcomes?	• Where will LP activities be housed, given the organization's existing structure? Is there a logical place where an LP would fit? Does the organization anticipate a large reconfiguration? • How do current roles, responsibilities, and decisionmaking authority lend themselves to creating an LP? • How will existing departments work with and serve an LP? • How is the current governance model suited to manage an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned

Organizational Diagnostic Questions	Lead Partner Alignment Questions
Systems and Infrastructure - What are the main business processes and systems that run the organization? Are they effective? - How effective are back office systems (legal, accounting, HR)? - Are current facilities, technology, and other infrastructure sufficient to meet the needs of the organization?	- Would these systems be able to handle the increased scale and changed scope of the LP? - Can they be expanded to support the additional back office needs? - How easily can the organization expand its facilities, technology, etc. to accommodate an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
Culture and Change - What is the organization's culture and climate? What are the core values of the organization? Is the organization performance-oriented? - Has the organization been open to change when appropriate? Has the organization successfully implemented agreed-upon changes? Has the organization managed rapid growth successfully? - Is leadership adaptable and able to change direction, following demands?	- How will this culture translate into the needs of an LP? - Will the organization be able to handle the growth and change required to take on the LP role? - Is the leadership team capable and willing to take on the LP role? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned

TABLE 9. QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCE ANALYSIS

	Organizational Diagnostic Questions	Lead Partner Alignment Questions
Human Capital	▪ Does the organization have the right number and type of people to execute the current strategy? ▪ How has the organization leveraged short- and/or long-term consultants to fill capacity needs? ▪ Is the leadership team effective at developing and executing strategy, managing people, managing finances, and driving toward impact?	▪ What other talent will be required to develop the LP? How much will the organization have to grow to manage the additional work (short- and long-term)? *Tied to LP competency analysis in Table 10* ▪ How can the organization continue to leverage current or new consultants to meet the needs of the LP role? ▪ Does the leadership team have the credibility and skills to lead an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
Financial	▪ What is the current revenue model of the operation? Does it successfully support the organizational strategy? ▪ How is the financial health of the organization? What financial assets does the organization have presently or expect under the current financials? ▪ Does the organization depend on private fundraising? If so, what is the organization's development and fundraising strategy?	▪ How does the current revenue model support the LP? ▪ Is the organization financially prepared to take on the needs of an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
Intangible Assets	▪ **Brand:** What is the brand perception of the organization? How does it vary by stakeholder? ▪ **Partners:** Is the organization experienced at building, leveraging, and maintaining strong relationships with myriad relevant parties (e.g., local and state government, for-profits, other nonprofits, community agencies, unions)? What partnerships does the organization currently have? How are those structured? ▪ **Clients:** What past and present clients has the organization served? What types of schools/districts has the organization worked with in the past? (e.g., charter, public, urban, rural, large, high-poverty, elementary, secondary)?	▪ How will the current brand value hurt or help the organization as it takes on an LP role? ▪ How will current partnerships translate into success for an LP? ▪ How will current client relationships translate into success for an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned

TABLE 10. QUESTIONS FOR COMPETENCY ANALYSIS

Organizational Diagnostic Questions	Lead Partner Alignment Questions
General • What are the staff and organization's core competencies or strengths? In what areas does the organization have expertise and/or experience? • Where is the organization lacking expertise and/or experience? • How are these competencies distributed among the staff (e.g., internal vs. consultant expertise)	• How do the competencies of the organization and its staff match up against the needs of an LP? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
School Design and Management Assess the organization's competencies in each of the following areas: **School design/execution** • Academics, curriculum, and instructional design • Data analysis and evaluation • Community/family engagement • Socioemotional support • Behavioral management • Culture/change management • Calendar/scheduling • After-/before-school programs • Turnaround-specific experience **Human capital** • Teacher and leader recruitment • Professional development for leaders/teachers **Operations** • School management and operations • Maintenance and facilities management	• How well does the organization meet the school design and management functions of an LP (listed in the left column)? • After identifying gaps, how will the organization develop the requisite skills and competencies to fulfill the LP role? How will the organization build capacity through professional development, new staff, consultants, and/or partners/subcontracts? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned

TABLE 10. QUESTIONS FOR COMPETENCY ANALYSIS (cont'd)

| Organizational Diagnostic Questions	Lead Partner Alignment Questions
Operations — Assess the organization's competencies in each of the following areas: ▪ Talent development/human capital management/recruitment ▪ Strategic planning/execution ▪ Decision-making processes ▪ Financial management/budgeting/accounting ▪ Resource allocation ▪ Operations planning ▪ Procurement ▪ Legal ▪ Compliance reporting ▪ Fundraising ▪ Grant writing ▪ Communications/media management ▪ Partner management (including contracts) ▪ Knowledge management ▪ Performance measurement/management	▪ How well does the organization meet the operations functions of an LP? ▪ After identifying gaps, how will the organization develop the requisite skills and competencies to fulfill the LP role? How will the organization build capacity through professional development, new staff, consultants, partners or subcontractors? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned
LEA/SEA Relationships — Assess the organization's competencies in each of the following areas: ▪ Ability to build effective relationships with districts/states ▪ Collective bargaining management ▪ Political navigation (e.g., ability to understand/advocate for changed policies at the district and state levels)	▪ Is the organization well-positioned to navigate the district and state relationships required of an LP? If not, how will the organization develop the requisite skills and competencies? ☐ Not aligned ☐ Somewhat aligned ☐ Very aligned

Appendix D. Staffing Plan

The following section presents a model staff structure and growth strategy, including typical roles, salaries, and experience desired for key positions, as well as a timeline for hiring both home office and school site staff. Details may vary from LP to LP, depending on individual talents and team needs.

STAFFING OVER TIME

The figures below are meant to provide an outline to help anticipate the kind of growth that an LP can expect in home office staffing with scaling. Actual staffing and growth will vary according to the team members' competencies and the home office and school-level needs.

FIGURE 6. EARLY STAFFING MODEL FOR THE LEAD PARTNER
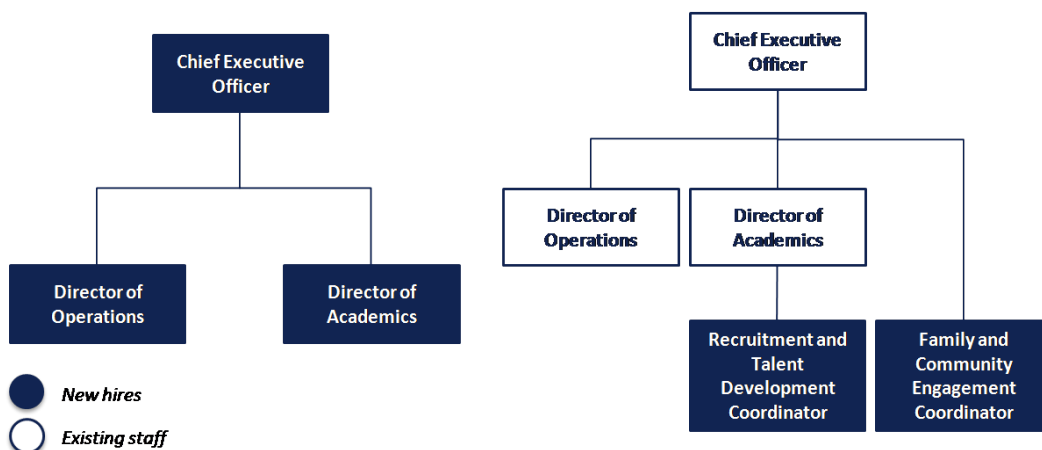
FIGURE 7. STAFFING MODEL OF A LEAD PARTNER GROWING A CLUSTER OF THREE TO FIVE SCHOOLS
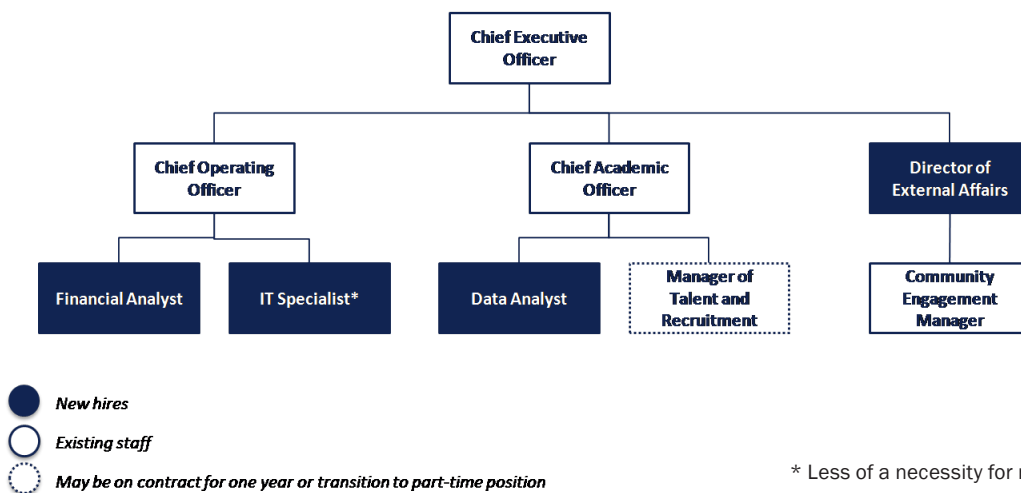
* Less of a necessity for non-charter Lead Partners.

Further expansion and scaling may lead to:

- Separation of operations, IT, and finance/comptroller functions into distinct departments.

- Addition of a special projects position under the COO and/or CAO.

- Further layers around the data analyst position, creating a data division under the CAO.

- Expansion of the CAO office to include specialists for teaching and learning, SPED, English language learners (ELL), etc.

- Administrative support such as an executive assistant to CEO.

STAFFING ROLES

Below is a summary of core central staff duties, qualifications, and salary ranges for the startup staffing structure in Year 0. The profiles below reflect an aggregation of information gathered from LP budgets, job postings, interviews, and 990 forms, supplemented by information from additional sources such as districts, charter schools, other nonprofit postings for equivalent roles and functions, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Actual salaries will differ in implementation, depending on the candidate's qualifications, LPs' needs, living expenses of the location, and site-specific circumstances.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Salary range $85,000–$152,000

Description	Primary Duties	Desired Qualifications
Responsible for strategy, goal setting, and achievement of LP. Also responsible for success of school turnaround goals.	• Serve as primary point of accountability for success of turnaround (increased achievement and financial stability). • Instill organizational culture and values. • Architect initial strategic plan, business plan, and staffing plan. • Develop and implement fundraising strategy. • Lead district MOU negotiations (with Director of Operations). • Evaluate performance of LP staff and facilitate professional development opportunities. • Responsible for board and/or advisory council development prior to school launch.	• BA required. • Deep experience in school management, preferably in a turnaround setting. • Established network and relationships in turnaround and school management sectors. • Established network and relationships in site community.

DIRECTOR OF ACADEMICS/CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Salary range $75,000–$115,000

Description	Primary Duties	Desired Qualifications
Responsible for instructional practices and student support to drive student achievement, including curriculum development and teacher professional development.	• Draft curriculum scope and sequence and instructional guidelines. • Manage initial recruiting and training of school-level teaching staff. • Provide teacher and principal professional development. • Ensure student support services (ELL, SPED, advanced, social-emotional, intervention codification) meet student needs. • Manage student and teacher assessments (materials, timeline, and logistics). • Report assessment and performance data to CEO. • Oversee instructional coaching.	• BA required; graduate degree in education strongly preferred. • Teaching and curriculum design background, with emphasis on student support and differentiated instruction. • Specific experience in improving instructional quality. • Familiarity with continuous formative assessment and student data analysis. • Expertise with instructional technology.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Salary range $80,000–$142,000

Description	Primary Duties	Desired Qualifications
Responsible for internal and school site operations, financial oversight of budget, IT and infrastructure, and designing and implementing systems to support school and LP.	▪ Establish written protocols for home office and school-level processes. ▪ Manage district and vendor relationships. ▪ Set up and manage facilities, including IT needs, contracting as needed. ▪ Oversee finances and budget, including grant reconciliation and risk assessment, contracting as needed. ▪ Participate with CEO in district MOU and contract negotiations. ▪ Maintain presence at school site and collaborate with school leadership operations lead for day-to-day operations. ▪ Draft operations reports. ▪ Collaborate with CEO to set, track, and meet organizational goals, objectives, and strategic plans.	▪ BA or equivalent required; MBA or other advanced degree preferred. ▪ 5+ years of senior management experience. ▪ Demonstrated success in financial and budgetary oversight. ▪ Experience managing cross-functional teams. ▪ Experience with complex operations and systems. ▪ Education sector experience preferred, but not required.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORINDATOR

Salary range $35,000–$50,000

Description	Primary Duties	Desired Qualifications
Build family and community support for and involvement in the school.	▪ Conduct family and community outreach campaigns. ▪ Drive student enrollment and retention. ▪ Foster community relationships and involvement in the school through participation in community organizations, one-on-one meetings, and special events. ▪ Help the principal represent the school site. ▪ Coordinate community use of school space. ▪ Recruit and manage volunteers.	▪ BA required. ▪ 2+ years experience working in marketing, advocacy, and/or event coordination. ▪ Strong communication, presentation, writing, and interpersonal skills across audiences. ▪ Demonstrated organization, time management, and follow-up skills. ▪ Depending on site, additional language skills may also be required.

RECRUITMENT AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT COORINDATOR

Salary range $35,000–$50,000

Description	Primary Duties	Desired Qualifications
Support hiring process during Year 0 and be responsible for application management throughout the duration of the hiring process.	- Collaborate with Director of Academics to manage hiring process, including initial job postings, resume screening, interviews and demonstration lessons; final hiring decision lies with CEO. - Coordinate applicant visits and interviews with internal staff. - Develop human capital pipelines. - Conduct relevant research, maintain databases, and compile recruitment data.	- BA required. 3+ years of relevant recruitment and administrative experience. - Strong customer service and communication skills. - Excel skills required, database skills preferred. - Experience in education preferred.

This sample timeline was complied based on the timing of actual hires, as well as interviewees' reports of their ideal hiring timeline.

FIGURE 8. SAMPLE HIRING AND STAFFING TIMELINE

Position	Phase 1	Phase 2										
	March to August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul/Aug
CEO	Hired and staffed											
COO	Hired and staffed											
CAO	Hired and staffed											
Family and Community Engagement Coord.						0.5 FTE hired and staffed						
Recruitment and Talent Development Coord.		Hired and staffed										
Principal						Hired and staffed						
Assistant Principal I						Hired and staffed						
Assistant Principal II							Hired					Staffed
Coach I							Hired					Staffed
Coach II							Hired					Staffed
Coach III							Hired					Staffed
Teaching Staff			Hired									Staffed

Appendix E. Division of Responsibilities between Parties

In the ideal version of the Lead Partner (LP) model, the LP shoulders the responsibility for most activities involved in implementing a school turnaround. The district provides operational support, promotes sharing and dissemination, and holds the LP accountable in its operations and performance. However, in some cases, due either to local constraints or local resources, the district may provide more direct support to aid the school turnaround. The table below reflects some common divisions of responsibilities between the LP and district in their respective roles in the turnaround. The roles and responsibilities outlined in the MOU discussed in Appendix F should be closely aligned with the content of the table below.

TABLE 11. COMMON DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE LEAD PARTNER AND DISTRICT

Category	Lead Partner Activities/Responsibilities	District Activities/Responsibilities
School Design and Management		
School Design and Execution		
Academics, curriculum, and instructional design	Primarily LP responsibility. May outsource some elements (e.g., arts, athletics, sex education, or assessments) to third-party organizations.	District holds LP accountable for progress in students' academic performance.
Resources for instruction implementation	Primarily LP responsibility. May harness resources from the district or other parties. Internal LPs are more likely to leverage district resources.	District may provide ELL and SPED services and support — more common during the startup phase and in the case of internal LPs.
Data analysis and evaluation	Primarily LP responsibility, sometimes using the existing district data system and sometimes creating its own. The LP may have a data specialist at the school level. At minimum, the LP holds a professional development session to help school staff interpret and use data.	District provides access to existing data system. May also provide additional support in data analysis, depending on needs and prior agreement.
Community and family management	Primarily LP responsibility. Begins with LP staff, but shifts to include school staff. It is helpful to include the principal early on in these efforts.	District collaborates with the LP to aid PR/communications effort early on.
Socioemotional support	LP responsibility. Substantial investment in paraprofessionals and other supports is required to help address this — especially important in a high-poverty context.	District provides support services as needed, according to agreement and additional purchase of services.
Behavioral management	LP responsibility. LP home office helps school staff design and implement a schoolwide behavior management system for students.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.

Category	Lead Partner Activities/Responsibilities	District Activities/Responsibilities
School Design and Management		
School Design and Execution		
Culture/change management	LP responsibility. LP and school staff work to establish a positive culture at a school through norms, standards, and procedures.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.
Calendar/scheduling	LP responsibility. LP home office develops a school year calendar and schedule to maximize instructional time for students and professional development/ common planning time for teachers.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations. Availability of certain services (e.g., transportation) according to district calendar may affect LP.
Out-of-school time programming	LP responsibility. LP home office designs and develops after school, weekend, and summer programming options for students, including those provided through high-quality subcontractors.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.
Human Capital		
Professional development for leaders/teachers	Primarily LP responsibility. LP designs and executes a thoughtful and customized professional development program for teachers, leaders, and other staff members.	District may provide additional professional development sessions or modules that the staff may opt-in on.
Teacher performance management	Primarily LP responsibility. LP designs and implements an evaluation and management system for teacher performance. May use district resources and systems, especially in the case of internal LPs.	District may provide data systems and HR support.
School talent development and management	Primarily LP responsibility. LP recruits, develops, and retains high-quality teachers, school leaders, and additional staff. Develops talent pipelines.	District HR department may help with, provide, and/or develop a talent pipeline.
Operations (school-only)		
School management and operations	Shared responsibility. LP assumes responsibility for most of the day-to-day management and operations.	District may provide payroll and benefits services, and IT/data infrastructure.

Category	Lead Partner Activities/Responsibilities	District Activities/Responsibilities
School Design and Management		
Operations (school-only)		
Maintenance and facilities management	Shared responsibility. LP designs and allocates spaces at secured facilities, as necessary. The LP contacts the district for maintenance needs and may invest LP money for additional renovations.	Often the district provides facilities to LP at a minimal rent, is responsible for upkeep, and may provide money for initial renovations.
Financial management	Primarily LP responsibility. LP creates and reconciles budgets, issues reports, and implements audits.	District holds LP responsible for sound financial management of the school.
Operations		
Talent management	Primarily LP responsibility. Recruits, develops, and retains high-quality staff.	District channels may be used for human capital pipeline and professional development.
Financial management	LP responsibility. Partner may bring in outside expertise or contract out some accounting functions, if internal capacity cannot meet need. LP usually develops internal capacity when scaling.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations. District is typically not involved in LP financial management after the contract for the school site is finalized.
Legal	Independent LP responsibility. May bring in outside expertise or contract out some functions, if internal capacity cannot meet need. Internal LPs may choose to use the district's existing legal services.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.
Fundraising	Primarily LP responsibility. There may be some fundraising at school level, but this is largely a home office function.	District includes the LP's school in grants as they would with any other district school.
Operations	Primarily LP responsibility. LP may elect to share some back office operations with the district.	District may provide some back office operations, such as payroll or data systems, especially in the case of internal LPs.
Communications/media management	Primarily LP responsibility. Home office manages a multifaceted communications effort, including brand management, message development, and public relations, and broader stakeholder management.	District participates in initial communications efforts to show a united front, especially if there is hostility in the community regarding the new school.

Category	Lead Partner Activities/Responsibilities	District Activities/Responsibilities
Operations		
Partner management	LP responsibility. Manages partners and subcontractors to ensure effective collaboration and hold them accountable for performance.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.
Strategic planning/execution	LP responsibility. Develops both short- and long-term strategy, and manage its execution.	Minimal or no involvement in most situations.
Performance management	Primarily LP responsibility. LP sets goals and ensures that those goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner, aligning its performance management system against state, federal, and contractual accountability requirements.	District holds LP responsible for performance on agreed-upon indicators.
District and State Management (primarily Lead Partner responsibility)		
Relationships with district/state	LP builds collaborative and productive relationships with state education agencies and local education agencies.	District reciprocates efforts to build relationship and has a district liaison dedicated to the turnaround cluster.
Collective bargaining management	Depending on context, LP applies for waiver from CBA, enters an MOU with the district and/or initiates negotiations with union.	Depending on context, district may provide exception from the rule for the LP or negotiate separate agreements.
Political navigation	Interprets and leverages existing policy frameworks, and navigates political conditions at the state and local level.	District cooperates in navigating existing frameworks.
Local knowledge	Works with the local community and builds relationships with multiple, influential stakeholders. Builds a deep understanding of the dynamics of the district and state environment.	District helps LP understand the district environment.
Process management	Manages federal and state administrative processes, compliance/accountability requirements, federal grant applications/RFPs, and procurement processes.	District cooperates and collaborates on processes as necessary.

Appendix F. Conditions and MOU Creation

The district is an important facilitator when it comes to creating the conditions necessary to implement the Lead Partner (LP) model for turnaround. Without the district's continued cooperation, the LP will be severely limited in its ability to influence variables that are critical to achieving its performance goals.

The following sections examine conditions desired by LPs to enable the maximum chance of turnaround success. These conditions, and other policies and procedures governing the relationship between LPs and districts, should be addressed in an MOU or equivalent work agreement that clarifies rights, responsibilities, and expectations for both parties.

CONDITIONS

The key areas in which to establish autonomy are people, time, money, and program. As shown in Table 12 below, of the 12 organizations researched, nine consistently exercised autonomies in people, time, and program in accordance with the LP model. Autonomy around money was still under negotiation for one of the nine during the time that this research was conducted, but the other eight secured significant, if not total, autonomy in how funds were spent, as well as the flexibility to raise additional funding as needed.

TABLE 12. AUTONOMIES NEGOTIATED BY NINE LEAD PARTNERS

	People	Time	Money	Program
AUSL	X	\	\	X
Explore	X	X	X	X
Friendship	X	X	\	X
Green Dot	X	X	X	X
LA's Promise	X	X	X	X
LEAD	X	X	X	X
Mastery	X	X	X	X
Renew	X	X	X	X
Unlocking Potential	X	X	X	X

X Secured significant autonomy   \ Secured some autonomy

In exchange for these autonomies, LP and school leaders must be highly accountable to the district for ambitious, specific performance goals. The MOU should specify the details of this accountability, including performance targets, appropriate qualitative and quantitative metrics, and available support if performance lags. Benchmarks for success should be jointly developed by LP and district representatives, and include both leading indicators (e.g., organizational efficacy, financial stability, student attendance rates) and lagging indicators, which may require more time (e.g., AYP status, graduation rates).

Prior research by the STG has indicated the importance of flexibility in people, time, money, and program, with people most often cited as the most important factor. The MOU (and/or thin contract or Election to Work Agreement) should specifically outline all available autonomies with respect to staffing, including:

- Leadership selection
- Leadership compensation
- Leadership evaluation
- Teacher selection

- Teacher compensation and benefits (including participation in existing teacher pension system)
- Teacher reassignment
- Performance evaluation
- Grievance procedures

In addition to these fundamental autonomies, buy-in and alignment between district and school policies were cited as key success factors. These may be addressed in the MOU as well and may be reflected in the following areas:

- Adequate funding

- Provision of facilities

- Major renovations of facilities

- Planning year

- Access to student data and other existing district systems

MOU OUTLINE

Below is a descriptive outline of a sample MOU between a district and LP. It is advisable to have the most streamlined and flexible agreement possible, especially in regards to labor conditions and staffing. However, no agreement will work in all contexts, and it is imperative that an MOU be an outgrowth of a joint negotiation between both parties and that it adequately represents each entity's vision, priorities, and constraints.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
<DISTRICT> AND <PARTNER>

<DATE>

Purpose: This Memorandum of Understanding between <DISTRICT> and <PARTNER> establishes the framework for the relationship between the Parties that will support the transformation of the educational culture of <SITE>.

LEAD PARTNER
    Partner Name
    Mailing Address
    City, State
    Phone: (xxx) xxx-xxxx
    Contact: PersonResponsible, person@partner.org

SCHOOL DISTRICT OVERSIGHT
    Office Name
    Mailing Address
    City, State
    Phone: (xxx) xxx-xxxx
    Contact: PersonResponsible, person@district.org

STATEMENT OF VISION

This section provides a statement of the intention of the district and LP's vision for collaboration and gives an overview of the relationship, including autonomies, and division of responsibility. The specifics of the relationship, authorities/autonomies, and terms of agreement are broken down in the sections that follow.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Article I. Relationship and Authority
This article sets out the relationship between the district (contracting agency) and LP, as well as the authority granted to the LP. It also stipulates the LP's financial solvency, sets rules around notification of LP management changes, and mandates compliance to local, state, and federal laws, and maintenance of corporate status and good standing.

Article II. Term and Renewal
This article sets the term of the agreement, with specific dates, and puts forth the renewal and termination criteria.

Article III. Funding and Compensation
This article outlines the LP's budget autonomy, including management fees, fundraising, purchasing services from the district, and funding for additional programs. It should specifically address the use of general funds, categorical funds, SIG funds, and a funding formula that establishes how and when per-pupil funding amounts may be recalculated. Partners should secure the right to participate in joint fundraising through district grant applications as well as the right to raise supplemental funding independent of the district.

Article IV. School Design

This article should clearly state the responsibilities, rights, and authorities of the LP and the district, as well as details regarding employee selection and supervision. LP autonomies around people, time, money, and program should be secured and outlined in this section.

The LP's rights and responsibilities should include the hire and supervision of a principal, recruitment and supervision of staff at the school, and design and implementation of the curriculum. This autonomy should fully extend to the instructional model, student assessment systems, budget and expenditures, data analysis procedures, extracurricular activities, and parent and community engagement. LPs may also want to negotiate for the right to provide extended learning time and the authority to modify, eliminate, or create programs as they deem necessary. District responsibilities should include providing the LP with a direct contact/advocate within the district system, continuing non-academic services and purchased services, and ensuring compliance of the LP and school. In exchange, the district has the right to transparency and firm accountability for student achievement. In addition, the district may require that the partner participate in applicable accountability standards and evaluations currently in use by the district, with the LP retaining latitude to revise or supplement district processes in keeping with applicable collective bargaining agreements and amendments.

Of all the potential autonomies, employee selection and supervision will likely require the most intense and collaborative negotiation process, and the end result may show greater variance from context to context. The final agreement should address the selection, evaluation, compensation, and renewal/dismissal of the principal; the selection, evaluation, compensation, and dismissal of teaching staff; the pension eligibility of employees working in the school; the presence of LP-embedded employees in the school; the selection of non-instructional staff; training and professional development; collective bargaining rights; and, if necessary, an alternative grievance procedure.

Article V. Non-Academic Operations

This article delineates responsibilities regarding non-academic operations, including school site and back office services. Individual districts and LPs will need to determine responsibility for each of the areas. If warranted, schools may wish to develop their own "Supplemental Roles and Responsibilities Manual." Areas that the parties should address include: facilities, maintenance and operations, accounting, payroll and HR, technology infrastructure, dining services, transportation, school security, and procurement.

Article VI. Enrollment and Admissions

This article codifies policy regarding enrollment and admission of the student population for the school. The agreement typically gives existing students the right to re-enroll, presents a non-discrimination clause, and states that the school under LP management must serve a similar student population to that which existed in the school prior to LP management. In addition, it specifies attendance boundaries, maximum enrollment capacity, and policies around admissions and recruitment.

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

Article VII. Accountability and Assessment of Success

This article addresses performance accountability for the LP's management of the school in three basic arenas: organizational stability and viability, faithfulness of implementation, and effectiveness at raising student achievement. The document should include specific benchmarks and timelines for program implementation as well as establishment of performance outputs and outcomes. It may also address specific areas that will improve the ability to gather evidence of success, including agreements on shared access to data and leading and lagging indicators of performance, such as school climate surveys, district walk throughs, or qualitative check-ins. It should also identify supports and interventions for deviating performance, and remedies available to either party if there is failure to make reasonable progress toward mutually agreed-upon performance benchmarks.

Article VIII. Termination

This article specifies the conditions for contract termination initiated by the district or initiated by the LP, as well as the termination procedure.

Article IX. No Presumption Regarding Drafter
This article acknowledges that the document is a reflection of both parties' mutual understanding and that the identity of the drafter shall not be applicable in interpreting or enforcing the agreement.

Article X. Alternate Dispute Resolution
This article stipulates cooperation in good faith and lays out the process for dispute resolution between the district and LP, to be followed in all cases except those posing an imminent threat to health or safety. The process may typically involve a written notification of dispute, an initial issue conference, and mediation proceedings, if necessary. The agreement should specify an agreed-upon time frame for dispute resolution (expressed in number of days since receipt of the first written complaint), and how the burden of arbitration expenses will be shared by both parties.

Article XI. Declarations
This article lays out the confidentiality of information shared between the district and LP, the ownership of intellectual property, the LP's rights to subcontract services as permitted by law and applicable collective bargaining agreements and amendments, and indemnity and intentions for each party to hold the other harmless to the fullest extent permitted by law. It may also address the policy for amendments going forward and the status of other provisions should another provision of the agreement be waived or deemed invalid, and include a valid non-discrimination statement. The declarations should also include a clause that names other agreements to be developed concurrently or consequently, and how this agreement will supersede or be superseded by other negotiations or understandings.

Article XII. Governing Law
This article states the agreement's compliance to and governance by state laws. It also states that invalidity of any individual provision will not void the agreement or affect the validity of other provisions.

Article XIII. Recitals Part of Agreement
This article states that any and all recitals in the document are part of this agreement and the understanding of the district and LP.

Date of Agreement _____

By: _____   By: _____
District or LEA representative   *Lead Partner representative*

Dated: _____   Dated: _____

By: _____   By: _____
School committee or board of education member   *Union representative (if applicable)*

Dated: _____   Dated: _____

Appendix G. Performance Evaluation

The use of evaluation data should be constant and consistent from the outset: the Lead Partner's (LP's) strategy should inform the evaluation framework, which should, in turn, determine the data systems that will be established in the planning process. The sections below examine evaluation indicators.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Evaluation must be an ongoing process that occurs throughout the turnaround effort. The LP should identify a well-curated and manageable set of metrics that can be tracked and analyzed, resisting the urge to track a comprehensive list that is time-consuming to collect and cumbersome to analyze. LPs should align metrics with current data reporting requirements (e.g., SIG, NCLB). Within these metrics, it is critical to differentiate between and track both leading and lagging indicators of growth and improvement. Both should be linked to specific goals of turnaround and strategy for change.

Leading indicators will allow leaders to spot early trends, make mid-course corrections, and predict long-term results.

> *Example: attendance rate, hours of professional development, number of disciplinary incidents*

Lagging indicators will indicate the long-term success of the school turnaround, monitor sustainability of implementation, and highlight the efficacy of different strategies.

> *Example: ELA proficiency rates, graduation rate, teacher quality and effectiveness, and college-going culture*

ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS

TABLE 13. SAMPLE ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS TO TRACK FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Category	Metric	Use
Demographic	Enrollment (general)	Descriptive information that captures the composition of the student population. Helps highlight potential challenges that the school should address and keep in mind. For example, a high proportion of ELL students may require bilingual communications material when reaching out to parents, as well as additional student supports in the classroom.
	Enrollment (percent of existing students who enroll in the turnaround startup, Year 1)	
	Race/ethnicity breakdown	
	Gender breakdown	
	Percent of ELL	
	Percent of SPED	
	Percent of gifted and talented	
	Percent that qualify for free/reduced lunch	
	Title I status (NCLB)	
	Percent of potential first-generation college students	

Category	Metric	Use
School environment	Average daily attendance rate	Improvements to the school environment lay a foundation for long-term success by creating a more positive school climate and increased stability. These metrics are leading measures of turnaround, and the LP should see rapid improvement in these indicators during the first two years of turnaround.
	Truancy rate	
	Dropout/retention rate	
	Number of suspensions	
	Number of violent incidents	
	Student stability (percent that move in and out during school year)	
	Site visit or quality review scores	
Achievement data	Graduation rate (4-year, 6-year)	These metrics look at the ultimate goal of turnaround: student achievement. Many of these are usually lagging indicators. However, the LP should be able to drive dramatic progress in AYP and standardized test scores within the first two years.
	State standardized test scores	
	NAEP scores	
	NCLB school-level accountability status	
	Adequate Yearly Progress	
	Average GPA	
	Course passage rate	
	Credit accumulation	
	Number enrolled in an AP or IB course	
	Percent passing AP/IB	
	PSAT, SAT, and ACT participation rate and scores	
	Enrollment, retention, and completion of next stage of education (middle school, high school, or college)	
	Percent employed/in postsecondary programs after graduation	
	Percent receiving temporary assistance/food stamps after graduation	
Perception data	School safety and culture	These metrics should show improvement in the first two years (making them good leading indicators) and sustained improvement after the initial startup years.
	Student engagement	
	Academic expectations	
	Parent/community engagement	
	Stakeholders' understanding of school turnaround	

Category	Metric	Use
Human capital and instructional data	Student-to-teacher ratio	These metrics can be used to evaluate the initial success of the LP's efforts to build human capital (leading indicator), and as the school culture takes root, to represent long-term investments in current teaching staff (lagging indicator).
	Average class size	
	Student-to-support staff ratio	
	Educators' qualifications (teaching license, years of experience, degrees)	
	Percent of core classes taught by highly-qualified teachers (NCLB definition)	
	Average number of staff absences	
	Hours of professional development	
	Informal and formal teacher evaluations	
Facilities and resources data	Safety and cleanliness of facilities	Many of the improvements indicated by these metrics should be immediate. However, measures of efficiency, such as the accuracy of budget projections, may take longer to appear. Financial sustainability (i.e., balanced budget on operating expenses) may not be fully reached until the end of Year 3 of school operations for some LPs.
	Safety and availability of school transportation	
	Accuracy of budget projections	
	Financial sustainability	
	Percent 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	

Appendix H. Assessing School Needs

The categories and questions below present a starting point to help Lead Partners (LPs) develop interviews, surveys, and focus groups to better understand the school's needs. This list is not a comprehensive tool in itself, but an aggregation of relevant questions from needs assessments and related tools used by districts in Colorado, Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Vision, Culture, and Values

1. Does the school have a clear vision/mission? If yes, what is it?

2. What is the rationale behind the school's vision/mission?

3. Give two examples of how this vision/mission is applied to the school.

4. Give two examples of the characteristics built through this vision/mission.

5. What are the core values of this school?

6. Are these values applied consistently? Where is the school's practice lacking?

7. Is there anything you would like to add to the core values?

8. Describe some of the barriers to building a positive, high-achieving (academically, emotionally, and relationally) school culture.

9. Are students given responsibility over their conduct and over the school? How?

Leadership

1. Do your school leaders have the authority to make mission-driven decisions with regard to people?

2. Do your school leaders have the authority to make mission-driven decisions with regard to money?

3. Do your school leaders have the authority to make mission-driven decisions with regard to time?

4. Do your school leaders have the authority to make mission-driven decisions with regard to programs?

5. What can the school leaders do to better support the educators and students at this school?

Academic Standards

1. What are the academic expectations for students at this school?

2. Does the school have a finely-tuned system for differentiating instruction based on assessment results?

3. Does the school have a well-defined educational approach that focuses on achievement and engages all students?

4. What kind of students is the school composed of? Is there a high proportion of ELL students or students with special needs?

5. Does the school have an effective system of student support?

External Stakeholder Engagement

1. How often and through what channels/ways does the school communicate with families and the community?

2. Is there a high level of parental participation such as volunteering, PTA participation, and parent-teacher conferences?

3. What, if any, partnerships are there between the school and other organizations in the community?

Professional Development

1. What kind of professional development is provided in this school?

2. What kind of professional development would really help improve teacher quality and student success?

3. Does the school provide a rich professional environment where teachers work in flexible and team-based ways to motivate, understand, and serve students, as well as to continually develop their own skills and capacity?

Data and Success

1. Is there a clear articulation of goals and objectives for the school?

2. What metrics are used to gauge the school's success in meeting those goals and objectives?

3. What metrics do you think should be included in measuring the school's success?

The following material on turnaround leader competencies was taken from *School Turnaround Leaders: Competencies for Success* (June, 2008) with the permission of Public Impact.

TURNAROUND LEADER COMPETENCIES: FOUR CLUSTERS OF COMPETENCE

These four clusters represent the competencies — or consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, acting and speaking — needed for school turnaround leader success. They were derived by mapping the cross-sector research on turnaround leader actions to high-quality competency studies of successful entrepreneurs and leaders in large organizations.[7]

Validation, refinement and further customization of these competencies will be possible as the number of successful school turnarounds grows and comparisons among more and less successful school turnaround leaders are possible.

Driving for Results Cluster — This cluster of competencies is concerned with the turnaround leader's strong desire to achieve outstanding results and the task-oriented actions required for success. These enable a relentless focus on learning results. Competencies in this cluster include:

- Achievement: The drive and actions to set challenging goals and reach a high standard of performance despite barriers.

- Initiative and Persistence: The drive and actions to do more than is expected or required in order to accomplish a challenging task.

- Monitoring and Directiveness: The ability to set clear expectations and to hold others accountable for performance.

- Planning Ahead: A bias towards planning in order to derive future benefits or to avoid problems.

Influencing for Results Cluster — This cluster of competencies is concerned with motivating others and influencing their thinking and behavior to obtain results. These enable working through and with others. Turnaround leaders cannot accomplish change alone but instead must rely on the work of others. Competencies in this cluster include:

- Impact and Influence: Acting with the purpose of affecting the perceptions, thinking, and actions of others.

- Team Leadership: Assuming authoritative leadership of a group for the benefit of the organization.

- Developing Others: Influence with the specific intent to increase the short- and long-term effectiveness of another person.

Problem-Solving Cluster — This cluster of competencies is concerned with leader's thinking applied to organization goals and challenges. These enable solving and simplifying complex problems, and include analysis of data to inform decisions; making clear logical plans that people can follow; and ensuring a strong connection between school learning goals and classroom activity. Competencies in this cluster include:

- Analytical Thinking: The ability to break things down in a logical way and to recognize cause and effect.

- Conceptual Thinking: The ability to see patterns and links among seemingly unrelated things.

Showing Confidence to Lead — This competency, essentially the public display of self-confidence, stands alone and is concerned with staying visibly focused, committed, and self-assured despite the barrage of personal and professional attacks common during turnarounds.

- Self-Confidence: A personal belief in one's ability to accomplish tasks and the actions that reflect that belief.

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[7] Competencies selected from *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*, Spencer and Spencer (1993). Leader actions selected from *School Turnarounds: A Review of the Cross-Sector Evidence on Dramatic Organization Improvement*, Public Impact for the Center on Innovation and Improvement (2007), and *Turnarounds with New Leaders and Staff*, Public Impact for the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2006).

This sample job posting for a teaching position below was created by aggregating and analyzing active postings for current and future turnaround schools in the Lead Partner (LP) market.

TEACHER

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Teachers hold primary responsibility for the development and implementation of curriculum, and for driving student success. Therefore, The School seeks dynamic teachers who are committed to driving student achievement by continuously improving curriculum and instruction collaboratively as part of a grade-level team or subject team.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

- Create a safe and welcoming school culture that fosters student achievement.

- Develop and implement curricula and activities to accommodate all learners and help them meet and exceed academic standards.

- Design and implement assessments that measure student progress toward standards.

- Use assessment data to refine curriculum, improve school standards, and inform instructional practice.

- Provide consistent and appropriate rewards and/or consequences for student behavior.

- Participate in collaborative curriculum development, teaching team activities, and building a professional learning community.

- Participate in school-wide functions.

- Communicate effectively and maintain close relationships with students, families, and colleagues.

- Participate in an annual staff orientation and training in the summer.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Proven track-record of high achievement in the classroom.

- Accomplished in and enthusiastic for academic subject.

- Self-disciplined, driven, and committed to a philosophy of continual improvement [or some other bullets on school culture, discipline/organizational skills].

- Resilient and full of contagious positive energy.

- Proactive and team-oriented, with strong interpersonal skills.

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree preferred.

- Minimum of two years teaching experience, preferably working with underserved populations.

- [Details regarding certification added as needed].

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Competitive.

The School is an equal opportunity employer and hires without consideration to race, religion, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or disability.

Appendix K. Growth Strategy

The sections below examine how different Lead Partners (LPs) have handled their growth strategy in regards to scaling and budget considerations for scaling.

LEAD PARTNERS' SCALING

LPs vary in the way that they choose to scale. Some may scale rapidly from the beginning, while others may wait and see how their first school turnaround experience goes before committing to a growth strategy. The table below illustrates the expansion plans of some of the independent LPs researched, including their non-turnaround schools.

TABLE 14. GROWTH PLANS OF INDEPENDENT LEAD PARTNERS

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Y14
AUSL	1	2	3	4	5	8	11	14	19					
Explore	1	2	2	3	4	5	6							
Friendship	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	7	9	10	11
Green Dot	1	1	2	3	5	5	10	12	17	18	18			
LA's Promise	1	1	2	2	3									
LEAD	1	1	1	1	2									
Renew	2	5	6	7										
Unlocking Potential	1	1	2											

All of the LPs profiled in the above table have been choosing to go deeper (growing within a district) before going wider (expanding to a different district). Going deeper helps leverage existing relationships and builds the LPs' presence within a particular community. In addition, it also allows for geographical clusters that can take greater advantage of economies of scale. In most cases, the LP chose to create feeder schools or build entire K–12 pipelines over time. This gives greater control over a student's educational experience and helps to align the instruction and experiences that those students receive over the course of their education.

Going wider also has its advantages. In going wider, the LP may be able to spread best practices more quickly in multiple districts and influence the larger reform discourse more quickly. However, premature multidistrict expansion may spread the LP too thin and may not maximize the relationships, systems, and other resources that the LP has invested in cultivating.

LEAD PARTNER BUDGET

In the pages following is a sample budget with the assumption of scaling by going deeper and building a K–12 pipeline, with plans to build a cluster of five schools. The structure below and on the next page is more representative of an independent LP than an internal LP. Actual revenue and expenses will vary from LP to LP and school to school.

TABLE 15. SAMPLE REVENUE OF A LEAD PARTNER LOOKING TO SCALE

			Open High School			Open K–8	
Lead Partner Revenue	Ramp Up	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Government grants (e.g., RTTT)			$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000
Service fee			$367,900	$441,480	$441,480	$687,839	$746,110
Fundraising needs	$171,023	$835,729	$309,150	$243,555	$513,669	$159,212	$97,280

TABLE 16. SAMPLE EXPENSES OF A LEAD PARTNER LOOKING TO SCALE

Lead Partner Expenses	Ramp Up	Year 0	Open High School			Open K–8	
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
HOME OFFICE							
Personnel Expenses							
CEO/President	$56,818	$113,636	$125,000	$127,500	$130,050	$132,651	$135,304
Director of Operations	$39,091	$78,182	$86,000	$87,720	$89,474	$91,264	$93,089
Director of Academics	$40,909	$81,818	$90,000	$91,800	$93,636	$95,509	$97,419
Family and Comm. Engagement Coord.		$11,667	$40,000	$40,800	$41,616	$42,448	$43,297
Recruitment and Talent Development Coord.		$45,000			$45,000		
Strategy and Financial Analyst						$60,000	$61,200
Benefits (home office-only)	$34,205	$82,576	$85,250	$86,955	$99,944	$105,468	$107,577
Non-personnel Expenses							
Office facilities and equipment		$47,800	$27,800	$27,800	$27,800	$33,000	$30,000
Events, marketing, and travel		$35,000	$50,000	$44,000	$70,000	$62,000	$55,000
Home office staff PD			$10,000	$10,000	$18,000	$15,000	$15,000
Audits and services		10,000	10,000	10,000	15,000	$20,000	$20,000
Total Home Office Expenses	**$171,023**	**$505,679**	**$524,050**	**$526,575**	**$630,520**	**$657,340**	**$657,886**
SCHOOL (INCREMENTAL TO NORMAL SPENDING)							
Personnel Expenses							
Principal		$62,000			$62,000		
Associate Principal(s) or Dean(s)		$59,000					
Technical assistance		$17,500	$210,000	$214,200	$218,484	$222,854	$227,311
Benefits		$41,550	$63,000	$64,260	$84,145	$66,856	$68,193
Non-personnel Expenses							
Summer institute and added PD		$150,000	$80,000	$80,000	$160,000	$100,000	$90,000
Total Additional School Expenses		**$330,050**	**$353,000**	**$358,460**	**$524,629**	**$389,710**	**$385,504**
TOTAL LEAD PARTNER EXPENSES	**$171,023**	**$835,729**	**$877,050**	**$885,035**	**$1,155,149**	**$1,047,050**	**$1,043,390**

SCHOOL BUDGET

Notes regarding the school budget:

- The revenue side of the budget depends greatly on the state, district, foundations, and funding climate at the time of the turn-around. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's report, Public Education Finances 2009, per-pupil amounts for current spending ranged from a low of $6,356 in Utah to a high of $18,126 in New York.[8]

- The cost of operating a high school can be twice as much as the cost for an elementary school.

- Increasing learning time by 10 percent can increase costs by 6 to 7 percent,[9] and increasing time by 30 percent can cost an additional 20 percent per student.[10]

- The budget assumes that food and transportation costs are covered by district.

- An external Lead Partner that is a charter operator may need to build in money to cover any school operational losses.

SAMPLE K–8 SCHOOL BUDGET

- Mid-size city

- 600 students

- SPED students, 15 percent; free/reduced lunch, 95 percent

- 15:1 ratio of student to teacher

- 40 teachers

- 8 aides/interns

- Average teacher salary = $58,000

- Average intern salary = $30,000

[8] http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/g09-aspef.pdf

[9] *A Review of Research on Extended Learning Time in K–12 Schools.* (August 2008). Oregon: ECONorthwest, The Chalk Board Project

[10] Silva, E. (2007). *On the Clock: Rethinking the Way Schools Use Time*. Washington, D.C.: Education Sector

TABLE 17. SAMPLE K–8 BUDGET

	Year 1 (4)	Year 2 (5)
Revenue		
Student funding	$5,077,170	$5,077,170
School Improvement Grant (SIG)	$ 750,000	$750,000
TOTAL REVENUE	**$5,827,170**	**$5,827,170**
Expenses		
Teaching staff	$2,560,000	$2,611,200
Teaching staff benefits	$768,000	$783,360
Incentive pay	$25,600	$26,112
Non-teaching staff	$697,000	$710,940
Non-teaching staff benefits	$209,100	$213,282
Non-personnel, instructional	$393,000	$318,000
Non-personnel, non-instructional	$298,000	$178,000
Lead Partner service fee	$291,359	$349,630
Extended day	$600,000	$600,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$5,842,059**	**$5,790,524**
BALANCE	**$(14,889)**	**$36,646**

SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL BUDGET

- Mid-size city

- 800 students

- SPED students, 15 percent; free/reduced lunch, 95 percent

- 16:1 ratio of student to teacher

- 50 Teachers

- 8 aides/interns

- Average teacher salary = $64,000

- Average aide/intern salary = $30,000

TABLE 18. SAMPLE HIGH SCHOOL BUDGET

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenue					
Student funding	$6,608,000	$6,608,000	$6,608,000	$6,608,000	$6,608,000
SIG	$750,000	$750,000	$750,000		
TOTAL REVENUE	**$7,358,000**	**$7,358,000**	**$7,358,000**	**$6,608,000**	**$6,608,000**
Expenses					
Teaching staff	$3,440,000	$3,508,800	$3,578,976	$3,650,556	$3,723,567
Incentive pay for teaching staff	$34,400	$35,088	$35,790	$25,554	$22,341
Teacher benefits	$1,032,000	$1,052,640	$1,073,693	$1,095,167	$1,117,070
Non-teaching staff	$865,000	$882,300	$899,946	$792,722	$808,577
Other staff benefits	$259,500	$264,690	$269,984	$237,817	$242,573
Non-personnel, instructional	$405,000	$335,400	$270,804	$123,000	$113,000
Non-personnel, non-instructional	$327,000	$186,000	$185,000	$141,200	$135,000
Lead Partner service fee	$367,900	$441,480	$441,480	$396,480	$396,480
Extended day	$576,000	$600,000	$584,000	$160,000	$120,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$7,306,800**	**$7,306,398**	**$7,339,673**	**$6,622,496**	**$6,678,608**
BALANCE	**$51,200**	**$51,602**	**$18,327**	**$(14,496)**	**$(70,608)**

Note: Many turnaround schools opted for shared services with the district and often occupied facilities for free or with a minimal rent agreement.

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