A Solution-Finding Report

Title: Resources for School Restructuring

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Prepared for: Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center

This document responds to a request from the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center for a "handout of the [Center on Innovation and Improvement] resources on restructuring."

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Introduction

According to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a school which fails to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for four consecutive years—that is, for four years after being identified as in need of improvement and including one year of implementing "corrective action"—must institute "restructuring" (NCLB, Section 1116(b)(8). The definition of AYP is established by the individual states, and that progress must be measured primarily by reliable annual assessments of students' academic achievement. For convenience, a tabular summary of required actions for schools, as opposed to actions required of districts, for failing to make AYP is presented below. For those schools that fail to make AYP after one year of being engaged in corrective action, the local education agency must establish "alternative governance arrangements for the school consistent with State law"; these arrangements may include:

- reopening the school as a public charter school;
- replacing all or most of the school staff (which may include the principal) who are relevant to the failure to make adequate yearly progress;
- entering into a contract with an entity, such as a private management company, with a demonstrated record of effectiveness, to operate the public school;
- turning the operation of the school over to the State educational agency, if permitted under State law and agreed to by the State; and
- any other major restructuring of the school's governance arrangement that makes fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance, to improve student academic achievement in the school and that has substantial promise of enabling the school to make adequate yearly progress.

NCLB Requirements for Identified Schools and Districts

School Year After Being Identified (After Not Making AYP For Two Consecutive Years)	Schools	Districts
1ˢᵗ Year	• Identified as *in need of improvement* • Develop improvement plan that addresses reasons for not making AYP • Offer students public school choice until school exits improvement	• Identified as *in need of improvement* • Develop improvement plan that addresses reasons for not making AYP • Can no longer be a direct provider of supplemental education services (tutoring) to its students
2ⁿᵈ Year	• Implement school improvement plan • Continue to offer public school choice • Offer students supplemental education services until school exits improvement • By end of school year, district must implement *corrective action,* which may include replacing school staff, instituting new curriculum, decreasing management authority at school level, extending the school year or day, bringing in outside experts	• Implement district improvement plan • By end of school year, state must implement *corrective action,* which may include deferring program funds, instituting new curriculum, replacing district personnel, allowing students to attend school in another district, appointing new administrators, abolishing or restructuring the district
3ʳᵈ Year	• Continue to offer choice and supplemental education services • Implement corrective action	• Implement corrective action
4ᵗʰ Year	• Enter *restructuring* • Continue to offer choice and supplemental education services • District must develop and implement a 2-year plan which can include reopening the school as a charter school, making significant staff changes, turning school over to state education agency or private firm	• Implement corrective action
5ᵗʰ Year	• Implement school restructuring • Public school choice and supplemental education services must continue to be provided	• Implement corrective action

Source: Center on Educational Policy. (2005, March). *Identifying school districts for improvement and corrective action*. Washington, DC: Author.

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Links to Resources on Restructuring

The website (http://www.centerii.org) of the Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII) provides resources on School and District Improvement, Restructuring, and Supplemental Educational Services, among other topics. In each category, the site offers: 1) Research, Reports, and Tools; 2) State Spotlight; 3) State Policies, Programs, and Progress. The School and District Improvement section is particularly rich with subcategories. For the topic of this report, restructuring, see especially the following links:

- Four papers by Learning Point Associates series of four knowledge issues that are designed to help district leaders understand what is known about when and under what circumstances each of four specified school restructuring options works to improve student learning.

  Chartering
      http://www.centerforcsri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues2Chartering.pdf
  Turnarounds with new leaders and staff
      http://www.centerforcsri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues4Turnaround.pdf
  Contracting with external education management providers
      http://www.centerforcsri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues3Contracting.pdf
  State takeovers of individual schools
      http://www.centerforcsri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues1StateTakeovers.pdf

- Two documents prepared by the Education Commission of the States: *State policies for school restructuring*, a digest of state policies; and *Closing low performing schools and reopening them as charter schools: The role of the state*, focusing on one option for restructuring. Web addresses for the two documents are, respectively, as follows:
      http://www.centerii.org/resources/5702%20state%20policies%20for%20restructring%20ecs.doc
      http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/54/25/5425.pdf

- The *CII directory of state links and contacts in restructuring* is currently available on the CII website database. It includes contact information at all 50 state education agencies, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands for school restructuring. It also includes weblinks for several categories in school restructuring: policy guidance or state accountability law; leadership standards and professional development resources for principals (particularly guidance for turnaround of low-performing schools, if available); charter school resources and state law; and comprehensive school reform resources and programming.

- *Restructuring* documents from Illinois, documents which have been highlighted for their exemplary presentation of the topic.
      http://www.centerii.org/nclb.html

- Also useful is a guide prepared by the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CCSRI). This guide, *School restructuring under No Child Left Behind: What works when? A guide for leaders*, provides users with a step-by-step approach to restructuring, from organizing a district team, assessing the district's capacity, and governing restructuring decisions to conducting a school-by-school analysis and implementing a restructuring plan. The text of the guide is supplemented with templates, checklists, and other practical tools.
      http://www.centerforcsri.org/files/RestructuringGuide.pdf

<u>Forthcoming Publication on Restructuring by the Center for Innovation and Improvement</u>

Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial Improvement

The CII has engaged leading experts on restructuring to prepare a *Handbook on restructuring and substantial improvement* and related training materials to enable regional comprehensive centers to assist states in establishing policies, procedures, and supports to guide districts in their restructuring of schools. The *Handbook* will complement CCSRI's *Restructuring under No Child Left Behind: What works when?* The *Handbook* will consist of a set of modules, each practical and useful in its own right, all threaded together by an interlocking implementation guide.

The seven modules are:

Module 1. Systemic District Improvement and District-Directed School Improvement
Ken Wong, Walter and Leonore Annenberg Professor in Education Policy and the Director of the Urban Education Policy Program, Brown University

Module 2. The School Board and Central Office in District Improvement
Gordon Cawelti, Senior Research Associate, Educational Research Service, and Nancy Protheroe, Director of Special Research Projects, Educational Research Service

Module 3. Restructuring Options and Change Processes
Carole Perlman, Technical Advisor, Center on Innovation and Improvement

Module 4. School Leadership in the Restructuring School
Joseph Murphy, Vanderbilt University

Module 5. Continuous Improvement in the Restructuring School
Sam Redding, Director, Center on Innovation and Improvement

Module 6. Changing and Monitoring Instruction in the Restructuring School
Herb Walberg, Chief Scientific Advisor, Center on Innovation and Improvement

Module 7. Individual Student Achievement and Support in the Restructuring School
Sam Redding and Herb Walberg

Each module will include a summary "implementation guide" with a practical checklist of concrete actions the district may take to carry out the principles described in the module.