



Building Autonomy & Enabling Strong Leadership

Technical Assistance Workshop

VDOE — Office of School Improvement

September 20, 2010

Technical Assistance Sessions

Sept. 20th

- Strand B: Moving Towards School Autonomy
- Strand G: Leading Change

November

- Strand D: Working with Stakeholders & Building Support
- Strand H: Evaluating, Rewarding, & Removing Staff

January

- Strand K: Reforming Instruction

March

- Strand I: Providing Rigorous Staff Development
- Strand J: Increasing Learning Time

April

- Reflections and Planning for 2011-12

Today's Agenda

Reflections on process with ILPs and principals	9:00 – 10:00 AM
<i>Break, LTPs join</i>	10:00 – 10:15 AM
Introductions	10:15 – 10:45 AM
Strand B: Moving Toward School Autonomy	10:45 – 12:30 PM
<i>Lunch (update on teacher evaluation model pilots)</i>	12:30 – 1:30 PM
Strand G: Leading Change	1:30 -3:00 PM
Follow up, questions, and closing	3:00 – 3:30 PM
Indistar update, as needed	3:30 – 4:00 PM

Guiding principles for the day

- Recognize that we are all learning
- Respect each other's strengths and weaknesses
- Honor confidentiality
- Acknowledge that we're all behind and that there's a lot of catching up to do (planning year & year-1 overlap)
- Some of this will be uncomfortable and will force you to change how things have been done in the past

Strand B: Moving Towards School Autonomy

1. Examine current state and district policies and structures, and make modifications
2. Reorient district culture toward shared responsibility and accountability
3. Establish performance objectives
4. Align resources (\$, time, people) with program
5. Consider establishing a turnaround office or zone
6. Negotiate union waivers (if applicable)

Moving Towards School Autonomy (1 of 2)

What isn't autonomy?

Autonomy is not purely changing the principal and giving the new leader authority.

Autonomy and site-based management are similar, but are not synonymous.

What is autonomy?

Autonomy is having the authority to make decisions relating to people, time, money & program for the purpose of improving schools.

Autonomy also requires the ability to implement those decisions.

The district and/or the lead turnaround partner is still highly involved in a school's transformation, and all major decisions.

Moving Towards School Autonomy (2 of 2)

Why is autonomy necessary?

School level leaders need to have the ability to make mid-course changes and modify practices as needed

What is required to have autonomy?

Accountability - for all decisions

Skill - find external expertise when needed

Collaboration - to implement decisions

Focus - recognition that all changes are being made for the best interest of students

1. Examine current state and district policies and structures and make modifications

- What policies and structures need to be changed to do your job successfully?
- Who is impacted by such changes?
- Who has the authority to make the changes?
- Who could block/inhibit the successful implementation of those changes?
- Pilot the changes in the SIG schools/districts
- If successful, scale up to the rest of the district/state

Tool: *Manifesto for Principals*, Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, 2009

Timeline for policy/structure implementation

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify district policies / structures that need revision • Identify timeline for changes (i.e. quick & easy, pilot trial, long-term / district wide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILP leads immediate policy/practice change • Workgroups form (as needed) for more controversial & complicated changes • Implement quick & easy or pilot changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILP monitors implemented changes • ILP works with district to develop long-term changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILP monitors implemented changes • Long-term change plans are developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize and institutionalize successful quick & easy and pilot changes into practice • Scale up changes district wide when applicable • Educate staff & implement long-term changes

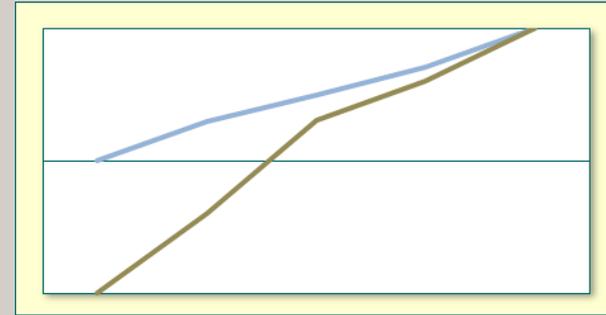
While ideal, it is not likely that all condition changes will be implemented in year-1. Some changes will take additional resources (time, expertise, and funds) to gain support and be implemented in year-2 & beyond.

2. Reorient district culture toward shared responsibility and accountability

- What is the overall goal of the transformation?*

-- The elimination of the achievement gap between the average achievement levels within the [transformation zone] and the state's average achievement levels for non-poverty students.¹

-- Increasing graduation rates and the elimination of "drop-out factories," defined as a high school in which no more than 60% of the students who start as freshman make it to the senior year.²



- Each entity involved in the transformation should have performance measures and objectives
 - school, teachers, principal, ILP/district team, Lead Partner, & state
- How were those objectives determined?
- Are the objectives formalized in an agreement or MOU?
- Who monitors progress against the objectives?
- What are the consequences for not meeting those objectives?

Tool: *District Behavior Shifts to Enable Success*, School Restructuring Guide, Learning Point Associates, 2010, tool 10

* 1. Goal defined by New Schools Venture Fund

2. "Drop-out Factories" as defined by the Alliance for Excellent Education *Evaluation Metrics*, Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, 2009

Timeline for shared culture implementation

September-December

- (Summer) Hold staff retreats/in-services to clearly explain the process & expectations
- Develop annual goals
- Develop monthly goals
- Hold monthly staff meetings to discuss progress & problems
- Hold parent open houses or breakfasts to explain process & responsibilities of parents/ community
- Implement team/grade level weekly meetings for reflection & problem solving
- Track progress in a public location (i.e. staff lunch room)
- Create distributed leadership teams (can be informal to start)
- Gather & gain support of key staff to act as culture/transformation ambassadors

January-March

- As a staff, reflect and celebrate on progress made to date
- Update monthly goals

April-June

- Discuss changes to implement for 2011-12
- Celebrate accomplishments

Summer 2011

- Hold staff retreat to discuss all upcoming changes, set goals, develop action plans as a staff
- Begin to handover some responsibilities to key staff members
- Develop formal distributed leadership team
- Hold community/ parent meetings to discuss upcoming changes

3. Establish performance objectives/indicators

Performance objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely), and most importantly linked to the ultimate goal of the transformation

Student Performance*

↑	student performance on state assessments (aggregate & subgroups)
↑	student performance on NAEP assessments (aggregate & subgroups)
↑	graduation & promotion rates
↓	failure rates & retentions across all grade levels
↑	college-going rates, college retention, & timely degree completion rates (high school)
↔	student performance averages should match or exceed the performance of similar demographic schools

School Climate*

↑	percentage of high-quality teachers
↓	percentage of teachers teaching "out of field"
↑	principal sustainability & retention
↑	percentage of principals receiving high-quality leadership training & support
↑	use of distributed leadership teams
↑	student attendance
↓	student disciplinary issues/suspensions (initial increase)

External Climate*

↑	public understanding of school turnaround
↑	press coverage across the state on failing schools, HPHP schools, and turnaround efforts
↑	number of lead operating providers in the state
↑	Realigned federal & state funds for turning around the lowest performing schools
↑	numbers of schools receiving charter-like conditions
↑	use of data & formative assessments to guide instruction

* Evaluation Metrics, Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, 2009

Performance objective/indicator timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop goals for all entities • Clearly post all goals and objectives • Develop action plans for each objective • Ensure the appropriate data system exists to track/monitor progress • Identify staff to lead data collections & analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete mid-year evaluations of all entities • Establish action plan for any off-track objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to track progress on all objectives • Adjust strategies as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate successes • Identify objectives that will not be met • Identify causes for off-track objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce consequences if specific objectives are not met • Develop objectives for 2011-12, with an emphasis on student achievement

Drastic changes in school culture and environment should be evident in the first year. Student achievement should improve, but will not likely skyrocket until year-2.

4. Align resources with program

- How are all dollars allocated to the school spent?
- What in-kind supports are provided to the school?
- Which external CBOs/FBOs are involved in the school?
- What communication exists between afterschool/SES organizations and the teaching faculty?
- How quickly can the principal recognize a need, shift dollars appropriately, and implement a program?
- How can time, the most expensive resource, be better utilized for both students and teachers?

Tools: [Resource Check Tool](#), Education Resource Strategies

Lemov, Doug. *Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College*, 2010

Resource alignment timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase communication and alignment between afterschool programs & the school day • Establish efficiency in the classroom (passing papers, lining up) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold team & grade level staff meetings to align subjects and grade levels • With the district, audit all school spending • Eliminate excess programs or costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create district policies to allow school-based budget decisions • Create teacher teams to develop (or implement an already established) assessment system & curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train principal & leadership team on budgeting & procurement • Review 2010-11 budgets • Plan 2011-12 budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize total alignment between assessment system and curriculum • Hold meetings with all extracurricular organizations, CBOs to align goals and practices • Eliminate external contracts that don't align with the program or goals

Put the time in up front to save time in the long-run.

5. Consider establishing a turnaround office or zone (1 of 3)

- What supports do the school and the Lead Partner need from the district?
- Who are the district staff that are most crucial to the success of the transformation (ILP team)?
- If a carve-out zone is not needed, how can these relationships be formalized?
- What steps should be taken to ensure sustainability if there are leadership transitions?

Tools: Mass Insight Education and Research Institute case studies: Miami's School Improvement Zone, AUSL's Harvard Elementary School, Philadelphia's McDaniel Elementary School, Recovery School District's Science and Math Academy, and the Internal Lead Partner document

Division of responsibilities (2 of 3)

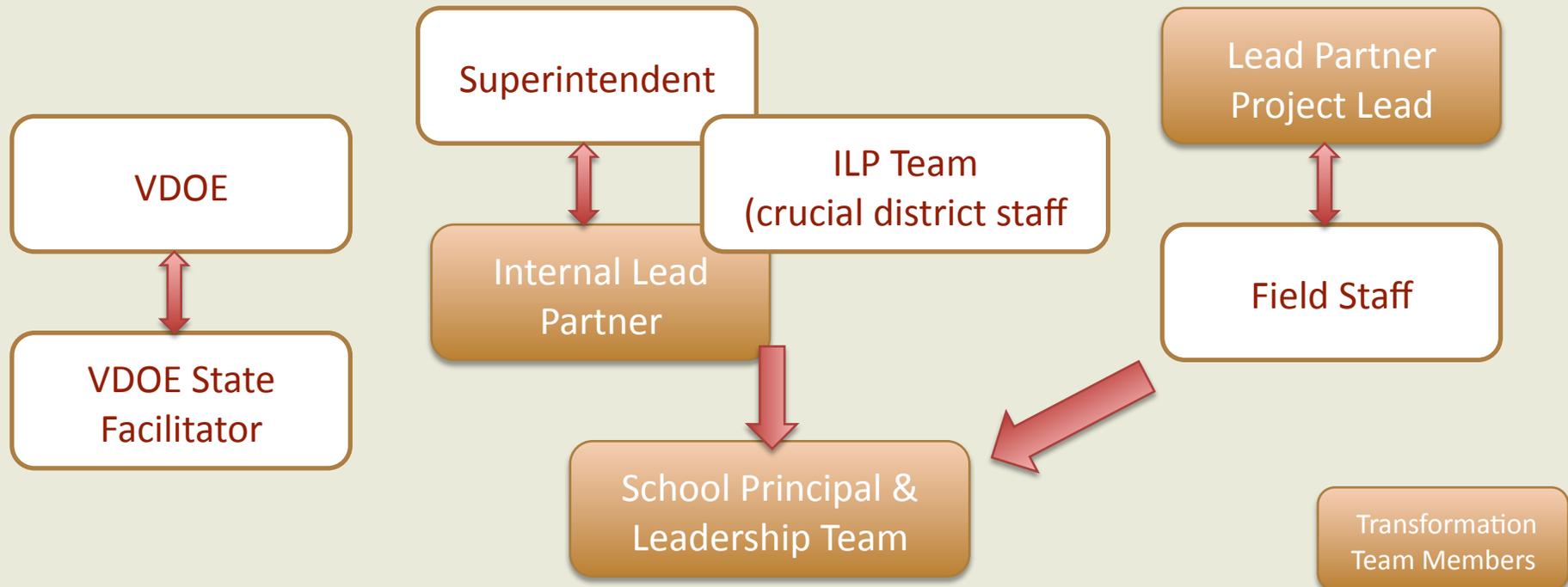
- Who's responsible for what?
- How do the entities hold each other accountable?
- How do the entities share specific responsibilities?

VDOE, Lead Turnaround Partner, Internal Lead Partner,
principal, leadership team, supporting partners

- Transformation plan creation
- Instruction
- Non-instructional support services
- Building/campus operations
- IT/Data
- Finance/budgets
- Facilities
- Human Resources
- Extra-curricular activities
- Evaluation of progress
- State and federal compliance
- Enforcement of consequences

Sample Organizational structure (3 of 3)

- How often do the ILP team, the school's principal (and/or leadership team), and the external Lead Partner meet?
- What does an action plan look like?
 - Objective; action step(s); by whom; with help from; status report due; deadline
 - (*School restructuring: What Works When*, Learning Point Associates, 2010, tool 13)



Transformation office timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify needs at the district level • Identify barriers at the district level • Discuss the need for and feasibility of establishing a separate office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not needed or feasible, implement relevant changes at the district level • If needed and feasible, create a working group to develop plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify purpose, functions, location (both physical and reporting lines), and funding streams • Develop organizational chart • Develop job descriptions for all positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and hire leader • Recruit and hire all other staff (could be shifted from current district structure) • Find the right people for the jobs, not jobs for existing staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally launch transformation office • Transfer work from the traditional district to the new office • Office Director and superintendent should meet regularly

Creating a transformation office will take a great deal of political capital, time, and possibly funding. Districts should consider using 2010-11 as a planning year, and launch a functioning transformation office for the 2011-12 school year.

6. Clarify working conditions and responsibilities

- Union waivers are not necessary in VA, but do all teachers and staff understand the transformation plan and its ultimate goal?
- How will unsupportive teachers/staff be brought on board?
- Should all teachers and staff sign an Election to Work Agreement to clearly define roles, goals, and responsibilities?

Tools: Examples of Election to Work Agreements -

http://www.massinsight.org/publications/stg-resources/93/file/7/pubs/2010/04/20/F_Duggan_Election_to_work_agreement_09_10.pdf

http://www.aps.k12.co.us/schools/pilot/docs/staff_agreement_form.pdf

Working condition timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all staff clearly understand commitments, responsibilities, and the transformation process • If applicable, develop an Election to Work Agreement • Identify struggling and strong teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create distributed leadership/mentoring teacher teams • Develop PD plans for struggling teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue PD for struggling teachers, and monitor progress (or lack thereof) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review working condition success or problems • If problems, begin working with teachers/LP/principal to develop EWA • Review teaching staff performance and counsel out, relocate, remove, or rehire as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all teachers and staff sign the EWA • Hold extensive staff development & retreat for all existing staff and forl new hires

Strand G: Leading Change

1. Become a change leader
2. Communicate the message of change
3. Collect and act on data
4. Seek quick wins
5. Provide optimum conditions for turnaround team
6. Persist and persevere, but discontinue failing strategies

1. Become a change leader

- Be visible
- Actions speak louder than words
- Set early & high expectations for yourself and everyone else
- Include key staff in all major decisions
- Ensure that staff are part of the solution, but don't be afraid to force a change if needed
- Make mid-course corrections as needed
- Model promising practices
- Clearly and visibly track progress

Tools: Mass Insight's McDaniel Elementary School case study, 2009

Duke, Daniel. *Keys to Sustaining Successful School Turnarounds*, UVA Darden School, 2005.

Change leader timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly explain the goals and process to all • Complete a few quick wins • Walk the walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with leadership team regularly • Request honest feedback from key staff members • Meet with community leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete mid-year analysis of all changes • Make mid-course corrections as needed • Celebrate accomplishments • Set goals for rest of year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate your own progress & changes • Acknowledge limitations or areas that require additional work • Meet with leadership team to discuss overall transformation process • Celebrate accomplishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set personal goals for 2011-12 • Attend workshops or seek out professional development opportunities

While mostly pertaining to principals, district ILP's and LP staff must also lead the change.

2. Communicate the message of change

Ensure that the primary message includes:

- the achievement of students
- shared responsibility

Secondary messages can include:

- teamwork and collaboration
- data-driven decision-making
- community-oriented goals

- Send regular updates on the progress and changes (newsletters, e-briefs, website, public television, etc)
- Ensure that staff understand the changes and can communicate the message effectively
- Get the support of a few key stakeholders within the building, and within the community, to promote the message
- Hold community meetings / parent nights / open houses

Tools: *Setting the Theme, Diagnostic*, Reinventing Education Change Toolkit, 2002

Communication timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop the vision, goals, objectives & messages with staff• Meet with key staff and community members• Hold parent/ community open houses or meetings• Explain & publicize the transformation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use local media to highlight changes and progress• Silence or collaborate with critics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrate 1st semester accomplishments, emphasize the work yet to come	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate year-1's changes• Recognize teachers, community leaders, students and staff who exemplify the vision and change process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop messages for the 2011-12 school year• Hold staff retreats to ensure everyone's on the same page• Meet with community leaders to gather support and learn about any opposition

When in doubt, over communicate. Transparency, accountability, and consistency will increase trust in the transformation.

3. Collect and act on data

Hold weekly/bi-weekly meetings to:

- Analyze student performance
- Facilitate conversations with strong/weak teachers to share promising practices and problem solve
- Analyze school climate/culture
- Develop action steps to address any climate/culture issues
- Create goals for the next week

- Frequently share data to understand each other's strengths & weaknesses
- Meetings can include the leadership team, content area teachers, grade level teachers, small school or teams of teachers, or a combination of teachers and administrators
- Create a “safe” environment to analyze data
- Ensure that data is accessible

Tools: Mass Insight's McDaniel Elementary School case study

Guide to Using Data in School Improvement Efforts, Learning Point Associates, 2004

Data timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine which metrics can be measured with current system • Identify goals for each metric • Identify staff to lead data collection & analysis • Propose changes to data system • Collect base data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data on behavior & school climate metrics, and formative assessments, if they exist • Analyze data with leadership team each week • Analyze data with entire staff each month • Create a central location for data analysis • Share data with students and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist teacher teams with data analysis • Incorporate data-based decisions into every day language • Research and propose revamped data system, assessments, and curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handover more data analysis responsibility to teachers • Complete end of year climate & behavior assessments • Review performance data with students • Work with students to set goals for 2011-12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze all data from the year • Draw conclusions on strengths & weaknesses • Revamp data collection systems • Implement new curriculum and/or assessment system, as needed • Train all new teachers and any struggling teachers

Using data as a basis for decisions must become the norm and not the exception.

4. Seek quick wins

- What's the most visible thing that you can do to show that change is occurring?
- Differentiate this transformation from all other past (incremental or failed) improvement efforts
- Bring on key team members (distributed leadership team & community members) to share implementation of quick wins
- Recognize the contributions of team members
- Examples could include:
 - Being more visible in the building and classrooms
 - Complete facility improvements/updates: paint walls, improve basic conditions of the building and grounds
 - Consistently enforce discipline
 - Hold regular staff meetings to address problems, discuss changes, and celebrate improvements
 - Display goals and progress publically and transparently

Quick wins timeline



Ensure that all quick wins are sustained – if a behavior or condition reverts to past behaviors and conditions, the mentality of a “just another passing reform” will undermine the transformation and the success of any initial quick win.

5. Provide optimum conditions for turnaround team

- Create an environment that allows for candid discussions about conditions
- Implement new practices/policies and remove barriers in the following areas:
 - Leadership
 - School policy
 - Program
 - Organizational processes and procedures
 - Personnel and staffing
 - Classroom practices
 - Parental and community involvement
 - School facilities
 - Budget and fiscal decisions

Tools: *Manifesto for Principals*, Mass Insight Education & Research Institute, 2009

Conditions timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to create a list of optimal conditions • Note which conditions require changes • Develop timeline for crucial vs. “helpful to have” condition changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement any quick win (easier changes) • Develop action plans for the most crucial (and more complicated) changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress on changes • Implement action plans on more complicated or controversial changes • Begin discussions with state, as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create action plans for implementation of changes for 2011-12 • Begin to implement • Evaluate progress of 2010-11 changes • Refine 2010-11 changes, as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement policy/practice changes • Educate and train staff (school & district)

While ideal, it is not likely that all condition changes will be implemented in year-1. Some changes will take additional resources (time, expertise, and funds) to gain support and be implemented in year-2 & beyond.

7. Persist and persevere, but discontinue failing strategies

- Meet with leadership team regularly to analyze data and monitor progress against timelines
- Recognize the possible causes of decreasing success:*
 - Forecasting problems: time/resource shortages
 - Unexpected obstacles: roadblocks you couldn't see before
 - Loss of momentum: the team gets tired
 - Critics surface: the project becomes more controversial
- Explore the pros & cons of continuing, discontinuing, or altering a strategy
- Develop an action plan to continue implementation or to phase out a partially-implemented strategy

Tools: *Mastering the Middles, Diagnostic, Reinventing Education Change Toolkit, 2002

Mid-course change timeline

September-October	November-December	January-March	April-June	Summer 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin holding regular leadership team meetings to monitor progress on all strategies and progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress on all objectives • Identify all strategies that may experience trouble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold mid-year strategy meeting to discuss all strategies and practices • Identify the causes of any faltering strategies • Make decision to eliminate, continue, or modify strategy • If changes are necessary, clearly explain reasoning to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate plan • Continue to monitor progress • Complete year-end evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common barriers (i.e. is the same problem hampering multiple strategies?) • Create action plan to overcome barriers • Create action plan to continue implementation of strategies in 2011-12

Follow Up

- **Assignment:**
 - Create a memo that details changes to Strands B and G in your work plan
 - 1-3 pages, narrative overview of work plan changes
 - Submit memo by email to your VDOE Office of Improvement facilitator and Julie by November 1st
- **Questions:**
 - Please contact me with any questions or clarifications, jcorbett@corbetteducation.com or 312-479-7719