

Creating Internal Lead Partners for Turnaround

December 2009

This report represents an extension of Mass Insight's research on Partnership Zones as a model for school turnaround. The findings in this presentation focus on the need for and creation of Internal Lead Partners.

Many of the findings and recommendations in this document are relevant to both External and Internal Lead Partners. Very few Internal Lead Partners currently exist in state or district education agencies, therefore recommendations are derived from in-depth interviews with district staff who have been part of Internal Lead Partner offices or similar district carve-out zones.

Mass Insight continues to lead research and development efforts in the turnaround sector both on a national level and for individual state partners. Our national Partnership Zone Initiative is funded by an initial grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with a partial match from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Executive Summary

- This document discusses the concept of an Internal Lead Partner, a type of Lead Partner.
 - Lead Partners are non-profit organizations or units of central offices on contract with the central office or states to manage small clusters of 3-5 schools.
 - Internal Lead Partners are divisions of the district central office that must fulfill the same responsibilities as external Lead Partners.
- The decision to use an Internal Lead Partner versus an external Lead Partner will depend on the specific characteristics of the district, supply of external Lead Partners, and desired outcomes of using a Lead Partner.
- The biggest barrier to success for Internal Lead Partners is the difficulty in achieving complete autonomy from the district central office.
- Internal Lead Partner offices should be staffed by both traditional and non-traditional district staff; those staff members should be hired based on expertise and should be held accountable for student performance.
- There are few existing Internal Lead Partners to draw lessons from:
 - Chicago has the most well-developed Internal Lead Partner office (in addition to the district's use of a variety of external Lead Partners) and illustrates numerous promising practices.
 - Cleveland, Louisiana and Miami-Dade each have carve-out zones that share some of the characteristics of an Internal Lead Partner, and provide a few promising practices as well as a handful of lessons learned.

- Introduction to Partnership Zones
- Overview of Lead Partners
- Defining the Internal Lead Partner
- Creating an Internal Lead Partner
- Promising Practices from the Field

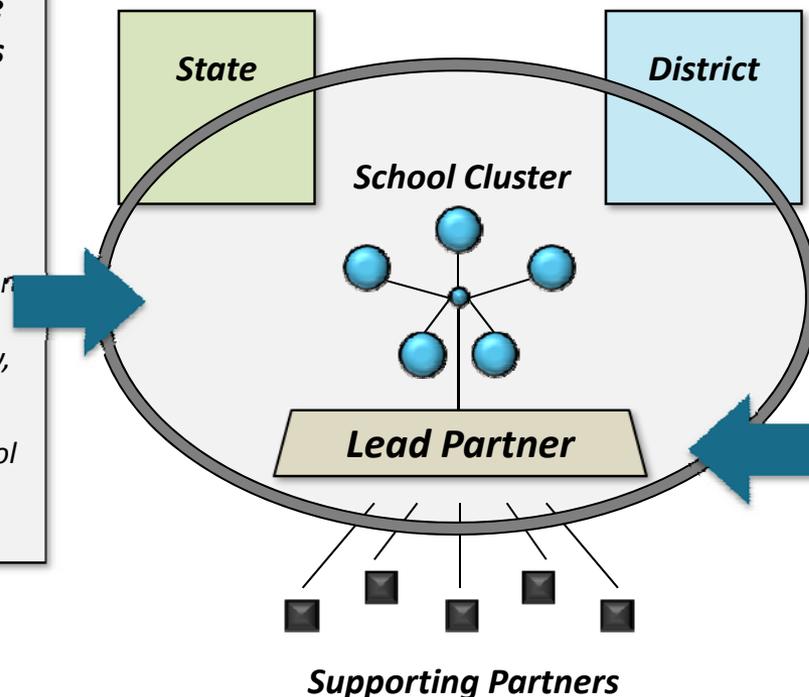
Partnership Zones are characterized by flexible, supportive operating conditions and high-capacity Lead Partners

The Partnership Zone framework employs two big ideas:

1 *Partnership Zones are part of the district but have more flexible operating conditions*

- Supported by state policy (targeted funding, compliance streamlining) and state turnaround office
- Flexibility to make mission-driven decisions and establish model systems for people, time, money, school programs
- Clusters remain within the school district and schools have access to central office services

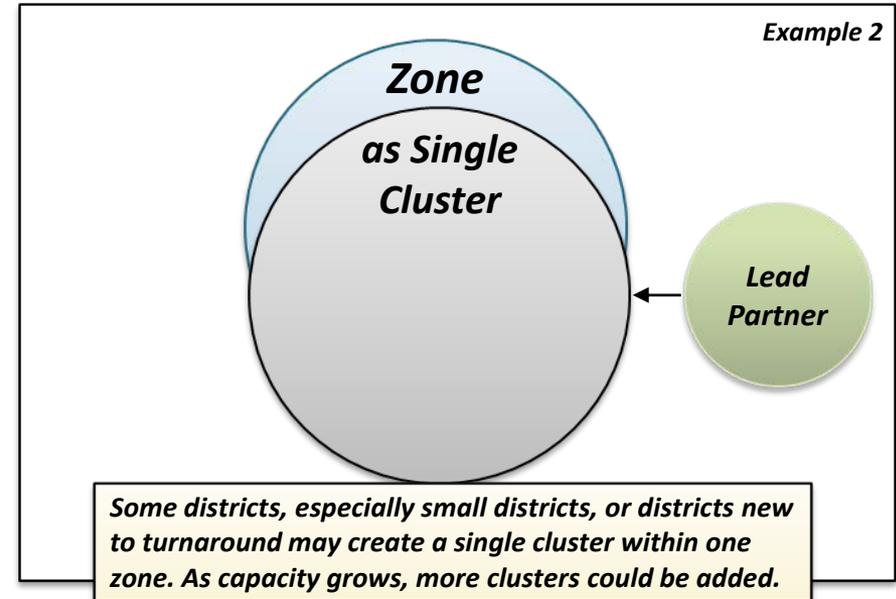
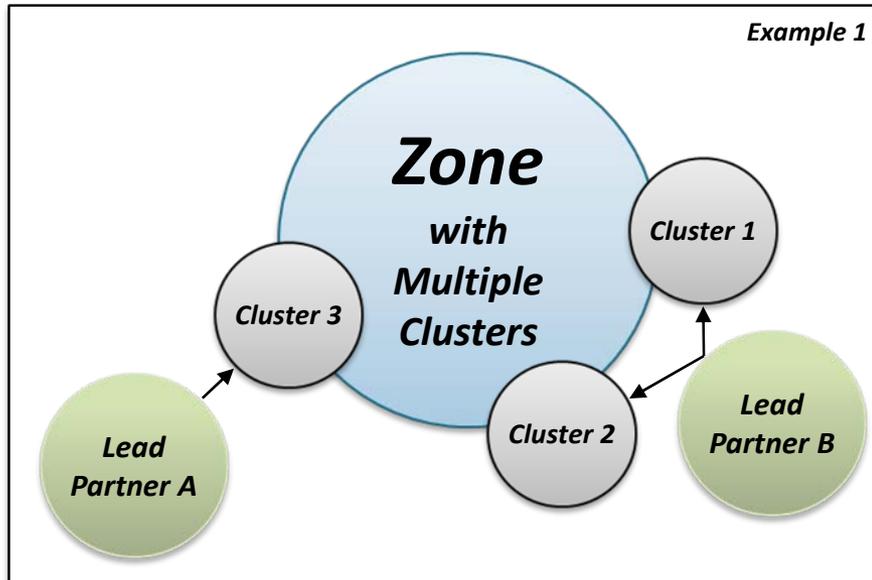
Partnership Zone



2 *Lead Partners work with districts to support clusters of 3-5 schools*

- New-model partner with accountability for student achievement and responsibility to support school staffing on behalf of the district or state
- Lead Partners team up with principals to manage schools
- Lead Partner aligns the work of all outside programs and partners, and builds capacity for the district and schools

A single Zone may serve one district or several, and may be comprised of one school cluster or several



Zone: The “space” created by the state or district that allows schools to operate under a different set of operating conditions, regulations, authorities, calendars, and supports.

Cluster: The strategic, functional grouping of schools (ideally 3-5) that provides for some economies of scale and allows the schools to share practices and support each other through intensive transformation.

Lead Partner: The organization that facilitates the turnaround process of the cohort and contracts with the district or the state. One partner could run more than one cluster. Lead partners are external organizations or internal units (also on contract) with operating autonomy from the rest of the district central office.

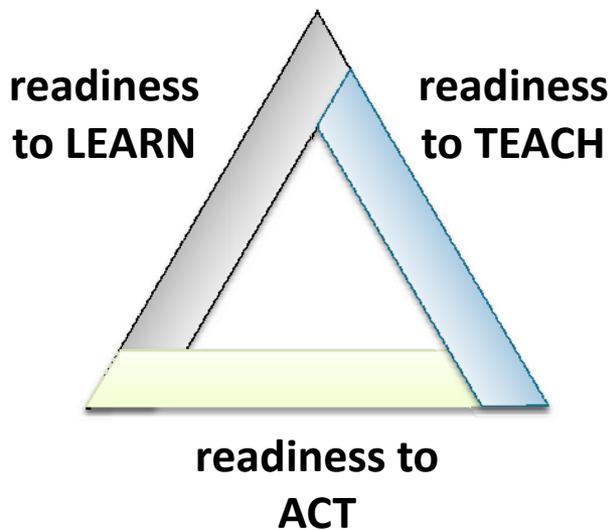
The key practices of HPHP schools provide the school-level roadmap for reform within a Zone

Higher-Performing High-Poverty (HPPH) Readiness Model

1 Safety, Discipline & Engagement
Students feel secure and inspired to learn

2 Action against Adversity
Schools directly address their students' poverty-driven deficits

3 Close Student-Adult Relationships
Students have positive and enduring mentor/teacher relationships



4 Shared Responsibility for Achievement
Staff feel deep accountability and a missionary zeal for student achievement

5 Personalization of Instruction
Individualized teaching based on diagnostic assessment and adjustable time on task

6 Professional Teaching Culture
Continuous improvement through collaboration and job-embedded learning

7 Resource Authority
School leaders can make mission-driven decisions regarding people, time, money & program

8 Resource Ingenuity
Leaders are adept at securing additional resources and leveraging partner relationships

9 Agility in the Face of Turbulence
Leaders, teachers, and systems are flexible and inventive in responding to constant unrest

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Lead Partners align authority with accountability for school clusters

*Lead Partners are **non-profit organizations** or **units of central offices** on contract with the central office or states for small clusters of 3-5 schools.*

Responsibilities of a Lead Partner

- **Sign a 3-5 year performance contract for student achievement** with the district or state; the agreement assigns the Lead Partner responsibility for a small ‘intentional’ cluster of schools where systems and programs will be aligned and holds the Lead Partner accountable for improving the student achievement
- **Assume authority for decision making on school staffing** (as well as time, money and program); in particular, the Lead Partner:
 - Hires a new principal or approves the current one
 - Supports the principal in hiring and replacing teachers and has responsibility for bringing in a meaningful cohort of new instructional staff
- **Provide core academic and student support services** directly or aligns the services of other program and support partners, who are on sub-contracts with the Lead Partner, and build internal capacity within the schools and by extension, the district
- Has an **embedded, consistent and intense relationship with each school** during the turnaround period (5 days per week)

Lead Partners offer benefits to both principals and district central offices

Benefits to key stakeholders under Lead Partner framework

Principals

- Clear out bureaucratic underbrush, e.g., streamlines state and district compliance mechanisms
- Provide increased flexibility for principals
- Eliminate “project-itis” (Lead Partner coordinates all Supporting Partners)
- Lead Partner bring managerial and operational expertise to the school, allowing principal to focus on instructional leadership

District central office

- Gives district a way to focus attention to worst performing schools
- Provides targeted support in key functional areas, including offering services that district had not the time or expertise to provide
- Model innovations within the Zone that can be applied to schools across the district

A particular environment is needed to foster, secure, and support Lead Partners

Element	Description
Guarantee of autonomies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and/or district begins dialogue with political, union, and community leaders to build support • District assures potential Lead Partners have control over people, time, money, program
Exemption from existing district rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States and districts agree to relinquish any right to impose academic interventions on the Lead Partner's schools during the turnaround period
A supportive political environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both privately and publicly professed support from key political leaders in district and state • Proactive and vocal support by district and state of Lead Partner's efforts throughout process whenever Lead Partner implements controversial changes
Enough time to achieve results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual guarantee that Lead Partner will have adequate time to build the appropriate school culture and implement the model with fidelity; interim goals must still be reached
Appropriate financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional financial resources are necessary to fund new programs, extended day, possible performance pay or recruitment bonuses, and facility improvements • The funding should be guaranteed for a set number of years, so the principal and Lead Partner can plan accordingly • The principal and Lead Partner should have autonomy and full discretion over the school's budget
Adequate facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sound facility that encourages learning and positive behavior is crucial to a turnaround • Students and teachers need to feel that they are in a safe environment and that they are valued as individuals
Enough preparation time to build buy-in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once a school is selected for turnaround, the principal and the Lead Partner (as well as the district) complete significant community outreach to educate parents, community leaders, teachers, and staff about the transition process. • Ensure that it is clear that while the adults in the building may go, all of the students will be able to stay

Lead Partners can be cultivated from multiple sources

Value proposition to Lead Partners

- Start-up funds to enter new geographies and roles
- Opportunity to implement their models with fidelity as a result of conditions change
- Potential for rapid scale based on state-wide expansion of zone concept
- Likely leadership support
- Ability to leverage existing facilities and other district infrastructure



Attract national organizations that are not currently within state



Incubate new organizations that are designed to scale from the start



Support existing local school management organizations in going to scale



Encourage entry by organizations working in state in related areas that could effectively support schools



Develop central office units, with operating autonomy, dedicated to Lead Partner work

Internal Lead Partners

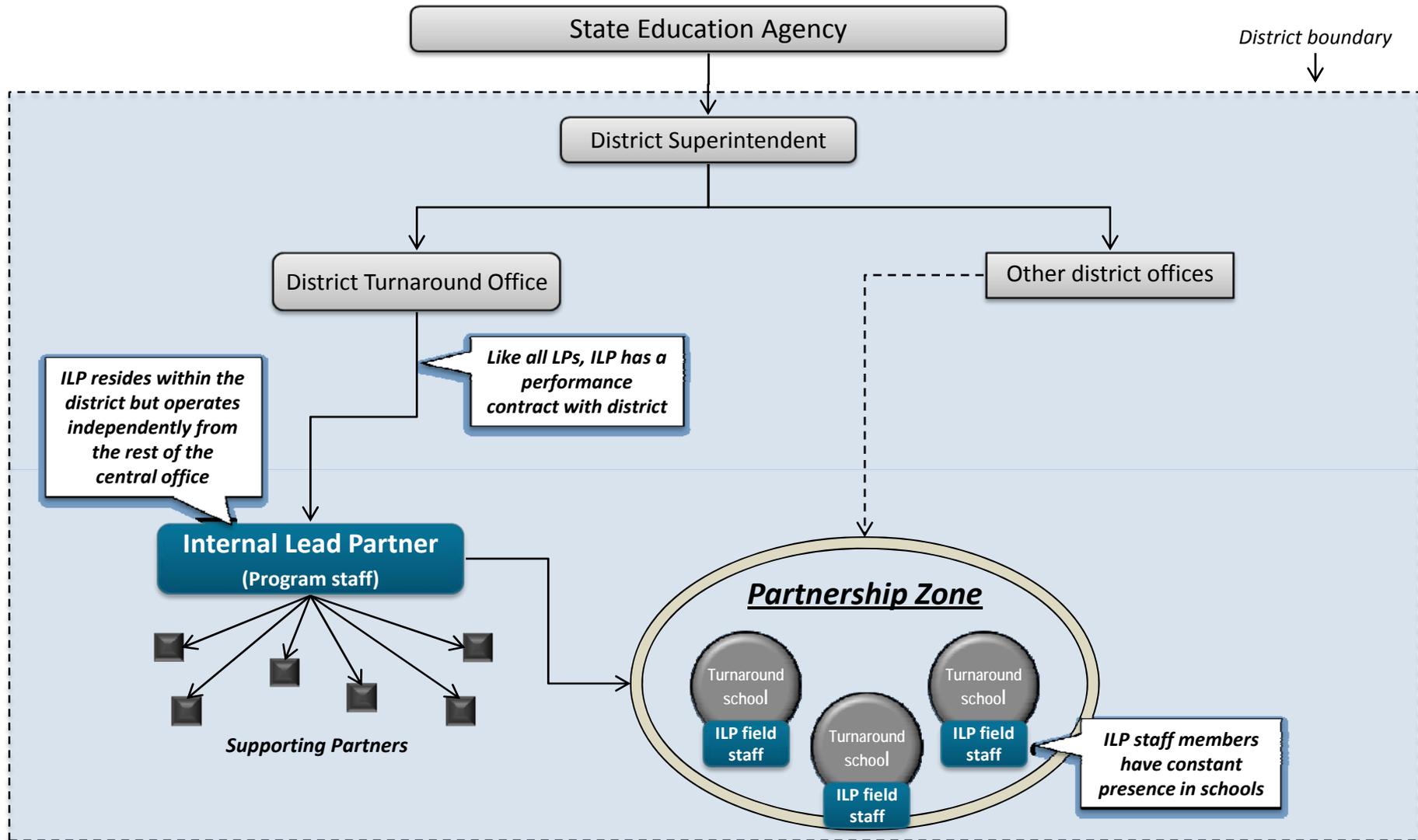
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What is an Internal LP?

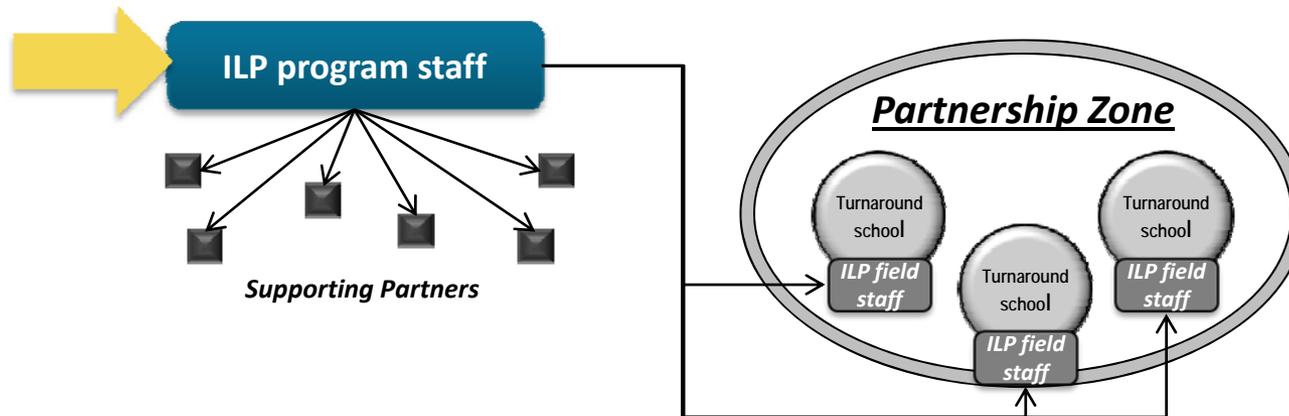
Definition of an Internal Lead Partner

- Internal Lead Partners are units of the district central office that have significant operating autonomy and performance-based responsibility for a cluster of schools
- Internal Lead Partners must serve the same role as external Lead Partners, in particular fulfilling the four main responsibilities:
 - Accountability for student performance
 - Authority over school staffing
 - Integration of core academic and student support services
 - Embedded, consistent and intense relationship with each school

An Internal Lead Partner is a unit of the district central office



The ILP program staff provides support across all schools in the ILP's cluster



ILP program staff

Internal Lead Partner program staff are responsible for providing services across all cluster schools and manage the strategic direction and performance of the entire cluster.

Key Responsibilities

- Design and manage overall cluster turnaround plan
- Liaise with other district offices as necessary
- Manage key program functions across clusters:
 - Human capital
 - Curriculum and instruction
 - Policy/legal
 - Administration and finances
 - Community advocacy
 - Knowledge management
 - Socio-emotional support services
 - Data analysis and evaluation
 - Procurement of Supporting Partners

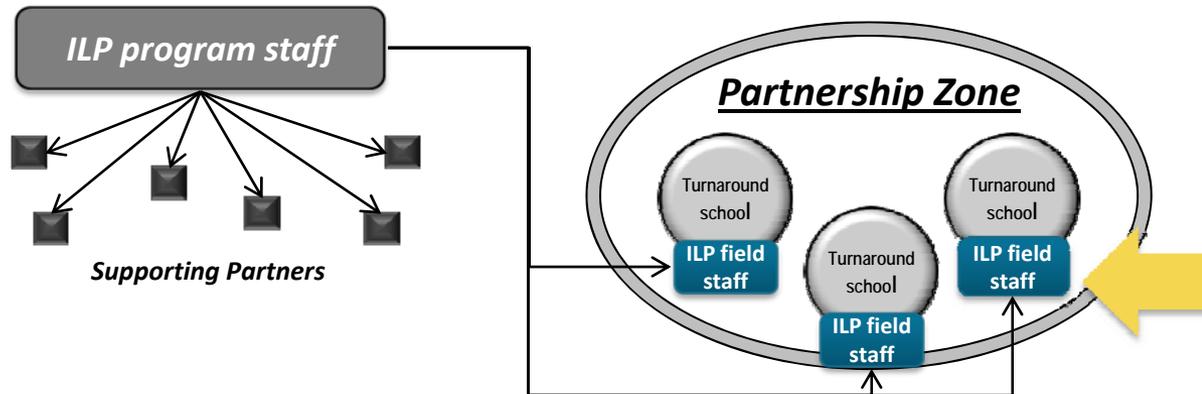
Structure

- Head of office reports to District Turnaround Office
- A small centralized staff serve all of the ILP's schools
- Exact staff size to vary depending on number of schools managed
- Staff members organized by functional expertise

Staffing Needs

- Deep functional expertise, especially in the turnaround environment
- Knowledge of district structure and operations (preferably some former district employees) but non-traditional thinkers
- Reallocate resources from existing district central office

Field staff support the schools & principal on a day-to-day basis



Field staff

Internal Lead Partner field staff are responsible for working closely with the principal and supporting the day to day needs of the school

Key Responsibilities

- Provide instructional and operational support directly to cluster(s)/schools
- Discuss progress and barriers with principals on a regular basis
- Deliver direct services or manage delivery of services from Supporting Partners
- Ensure that appropriate services are procured from ILP program staff and district offices
- Ensure alignment between Supporting Partners, ILP program staff, and district staff

Structure

- Field staff report to program staff at the headquarters
- Embedded field staff in each school (5 days/week)

Staffing Needs

- Experience working in high poverty schools, preferably in a turnaround environment
- Understanding of local community and school-specific knowledge
- Ability to work closely with principal and other partners

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Creating and managing an ILP carries both a variety of benefits and possible risks

The benefits and risks of using an Internal Lead Partner versus an external Lead Partner

Benefits

- ILPs have better knowledge of district and local operating environment than external Lead Partners
- May be more politically acceptable to use an internal provider
- May provide a better entry-point for broader district reform
- If used as part of a portfolio strategy, ILPs may create competition and urge other Lead Partners to enter the marketplace
- ILP can serve as a research and development arm for the rest of the district

Risks

- Existing district staff may not have expertise or experience significantly improving failing schools
- Difficult to maintain clear divisions between ILP and district central office
- Success depends on having strong and committed district leaders and ILP director
- If used as a single strategy, does not stimulate the development of a larger LP marketplace
- May face opposition from district staff if ILP triggers cuts in budget and staff of other district offices
- Less stability (more subject to budget cuts and political shifts)

Both supply and demand side factors inform the decision to use an Internal Lead Partner



The supply of external Lead Partners is limited



Sufficient talent and interest exists inside the district to open an innovative new unit



Significant political barriers (e.g., opposition from inside the district and/or community) exist to using external Lead Partners



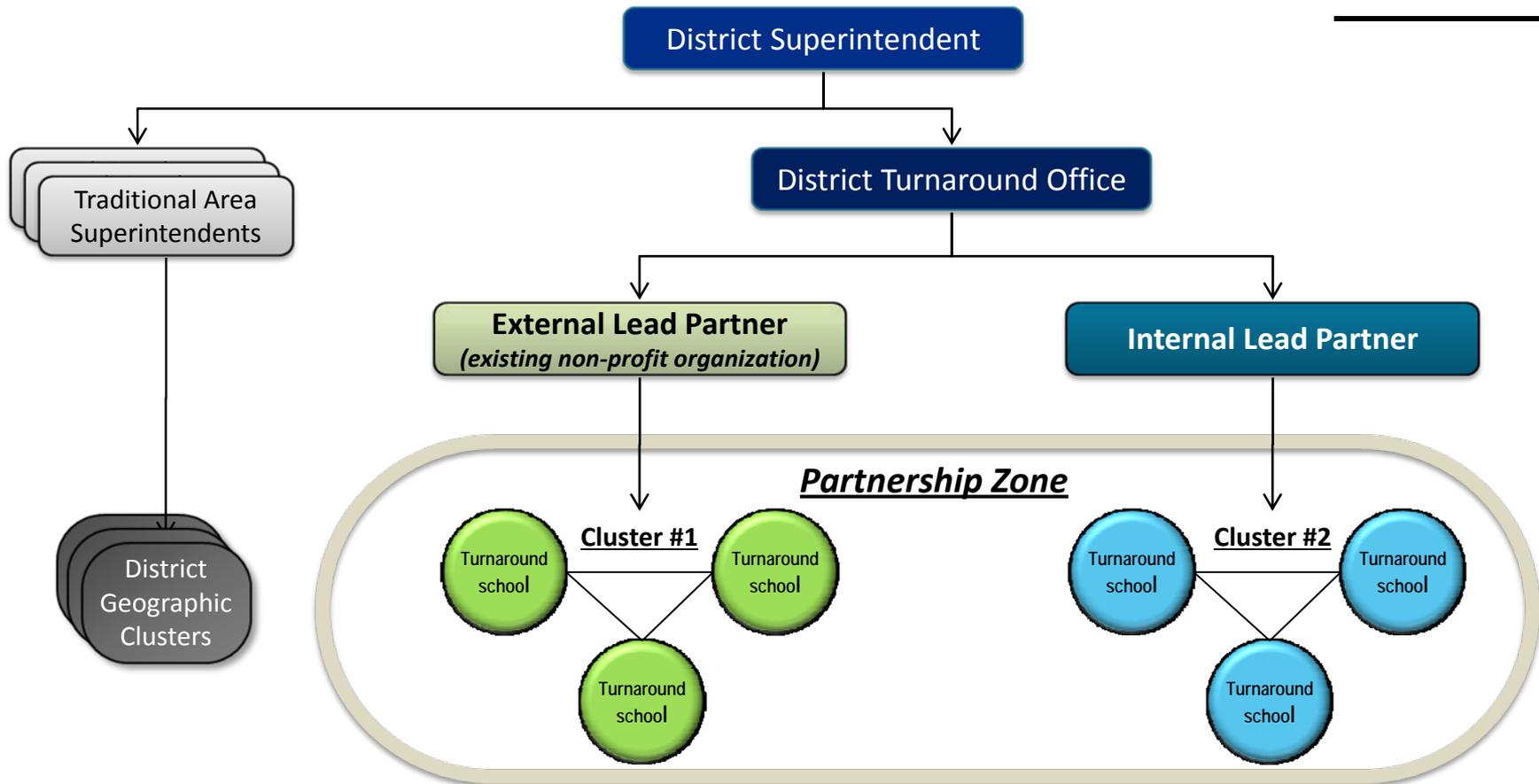
State or district policies restrict private organizations from managing schools



Because of district size or other factors, an Internal Lead Partner is uniquely positioned to initiate district reform

In a portfolio strategy, Internal LPs can co-exist with external LPs

Example district structure



When employed effectively, ILPs can inform and influence district practices

What areas are most likely to be informed by ILP practices?



- Human Resources - recruitment and hiring process
- Collective bargaining condition negotiations (process and content)
- Use of Supporting Partners, and ensuring that all partners are on performance contracts
- General proficiency of district (procurement, adjudication, etc)

Why is an ILP more likely to inform district practices, than an external LP?



- Reform comes from within the system
- District executives may not be threatened or skeptical of practices; may instead embrace them
- Other district staff may develop buy in more quickly
- New practices will be aligned (or developed around) current district practices and processes which may ease transitions

What structures and processes will encourage ILP learnings at the district level?



- Involve district executive in all major decisions
- Provide regular memos and updates to district leadership team on progress and any barriers
- Document all practices and collect and analyze data
- Track student performance data as well as other indicators
- Publicize lessons to the rest of the district to increase pressure on the district leadership to reform

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A number of factors characterize successful Internal Lead Partners (1 of 3)

1

Authority

2

Accountability

3

Capacity

4

Autonomy

A number of factors characterize successful Internal Lead Partners (2 of 3)

1

Authority

- Formal authority to make key decisions (people, time, money, program) and political support to back those decisions up
 - Ability to hire the right people for the ILP management office
 - Control over the school-level budget
- Flexibility to break away from the district services or compliance regulations as needed
- Collective bargaining agreements or elect to work agreements that clearly outline authority over which work conditions
- ILP director has direct access to key district executives
- District executives have the political will to support both the development and implementation of the ILP
- ILP has choice to use existing district services or select external services that the district cannot adequately produce

2

Accountability

- ILP office and staff are accountable for student performance in Partnership Zone schools
 - ILP must sign a performance contract with the district
 - ILP is allowed several years to achieve results
- All school and ILP office staff are made aware of accountability before signing a contract of employment
- If student performance fails to meet benchmarks, ILP is removed from managing schools (i.e., no leeway on accountability because of internal status)

A number of factors characterize successful Internal Lead Partners (3 of 3)

3

Capacity

- Commit significant funding (i.e., per pupil budget allocations) for several years
- Hire non-traditional staff for ILP office
- Focus on the human resources in the schools – teachers, principals, and specialists
- Use local/national experts to enhance programs
- Combine efforts with other local organizations or offices that share similar beliefs/practices
- Ensure that ILP staff are in the buildings with frequency and intensity
- Build strong formal and informal relationships with the right district offices (e.g., procurement, HR, etc.)

4

Autonomy

- While still technically part of the district, the ILP must be able to operate independently
- ILP separation should include both physical proximity and organizational authority
- Ideally, ILP should be organized as a separate 501c3
- In addition to official assurances of independence, ILP must also be removed from the political influence of the rest of the central office
- ILP must be free from most standard district practices and policies

Limited examples of Internal Lead Partners exist

It is important to recognize that a small number of places have done this type of work, so there are few examples to learn from. Our recommendations are based on the experiences of a few district programs and internal carve-out zones to date.

- **Chicago*** illustrates the closest match to our model of an Internal Lead Partner. The Chicago portfolio approach uses both external Lead Partners (contracted through the Office of New Schools) as well as an Internal Lead Partner (through the Office of School Turnaround). The structure and processes of CPS are provided in more detail on the following slides.

Many other districts and states have created carve-out zones to focus on low-performing schools, but few education agencies create separate offices to manage the turnaround schools' day-to-day operations. Profiles of the following zones are provided to show the similarities to a true Internal Lead Partner.

- **Cleveland (Ohio)**** recently launched their TurnAround Schools Initiative which created an office within the district that acts as an Internal Lead Partner. This initiative has some important elements, but does not necessarily include all the changed conditions, nor the accountability for increased authority, that are crucial components of the Internal Lead Partner model.
- **Miami-Dade's** School Improvement Zone had many characteristics of an Internal Lead Partner but was never fully developed on all dimensions of autonomy, authority, and accountability. Nevertheless, there are some important lessons to learn from the Zone effort.
- **Louisiana's Recovery School District** also invokes a portfolio approach. Underperforming schools become part of the RSD and are then managed by either RSD staff (who act as the Internal Lead Partner) or by an external organization (often a charter management organization).

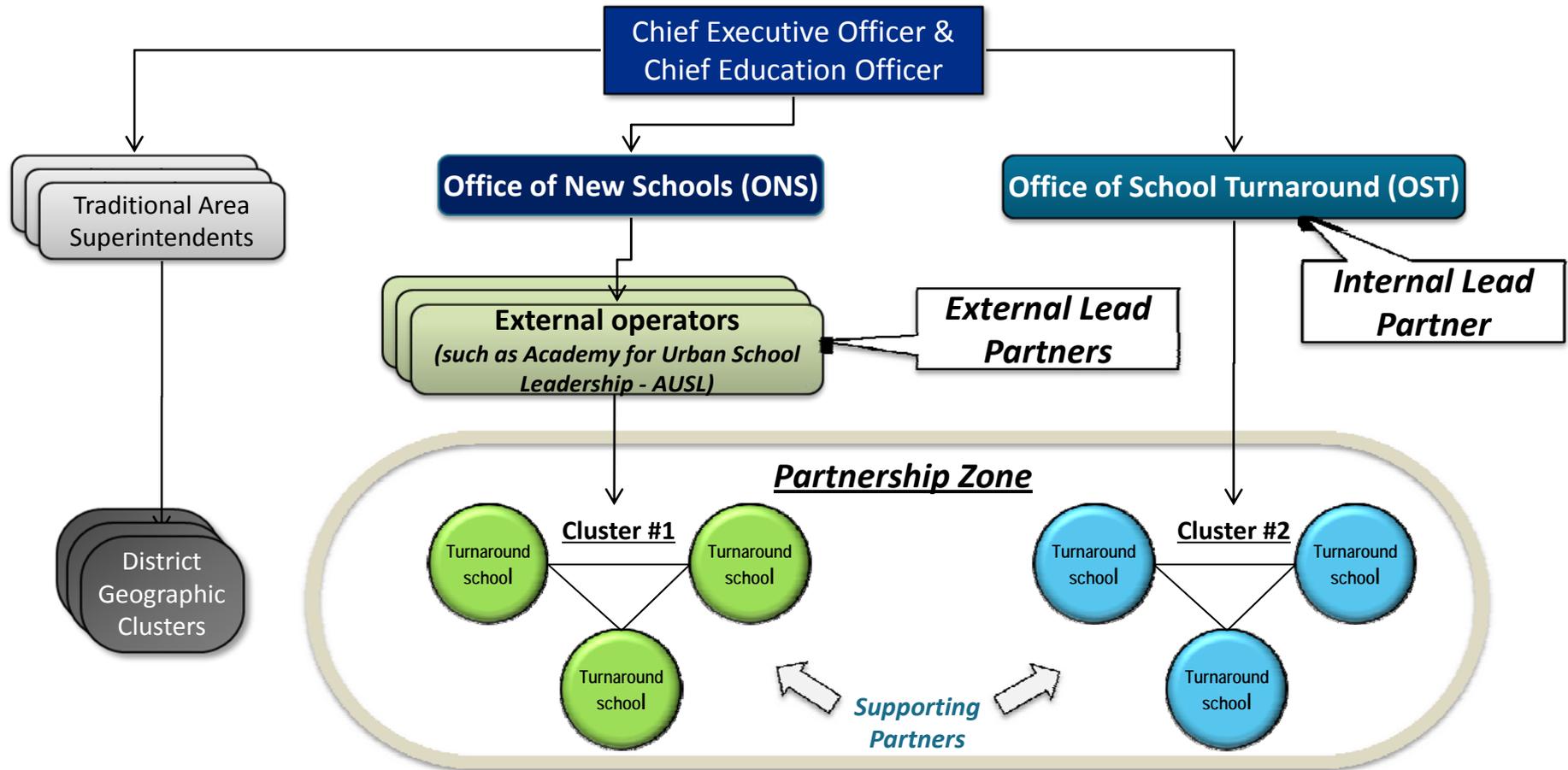
*Structure as of December 2009, CPS is currently undergoing some reorganization **Based on strategy created Aug. 2009, current implementation may vary

The benchmarked models vary widely in how closely they fit the ILP framework

	Chicago	Cleveland	Miami-Dade	Louisiana Recovery District
<u>Authority</u>				
Decision-making authority (people, time, money, program)	Yes	Partial	Yes	Yes
Modified CBAs	Yes	No	Yes	N/A
District political support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (state & district)
<u>Accountability</u>				
Accountability for student performance	Partial	Partial	No	Partial (in process)
Continued management based on performance	Partial	Partial	No	Partial (in process)
<u>Capacity</u>				
Additional financial resources	Yes	Partial	Partial	Yes
Adequate human resources	Yes	Partial	Partial	Yes
Staff embedded in schools	Yes	Partial	Partial	No
<u>Autonomy</u>				
Separate & distinct from district central office	Yes	Partial	Partial	Yes
Control over resources	Yes	No	Partial	Yes

Chicago Public Schools portfolio approach to turnaround

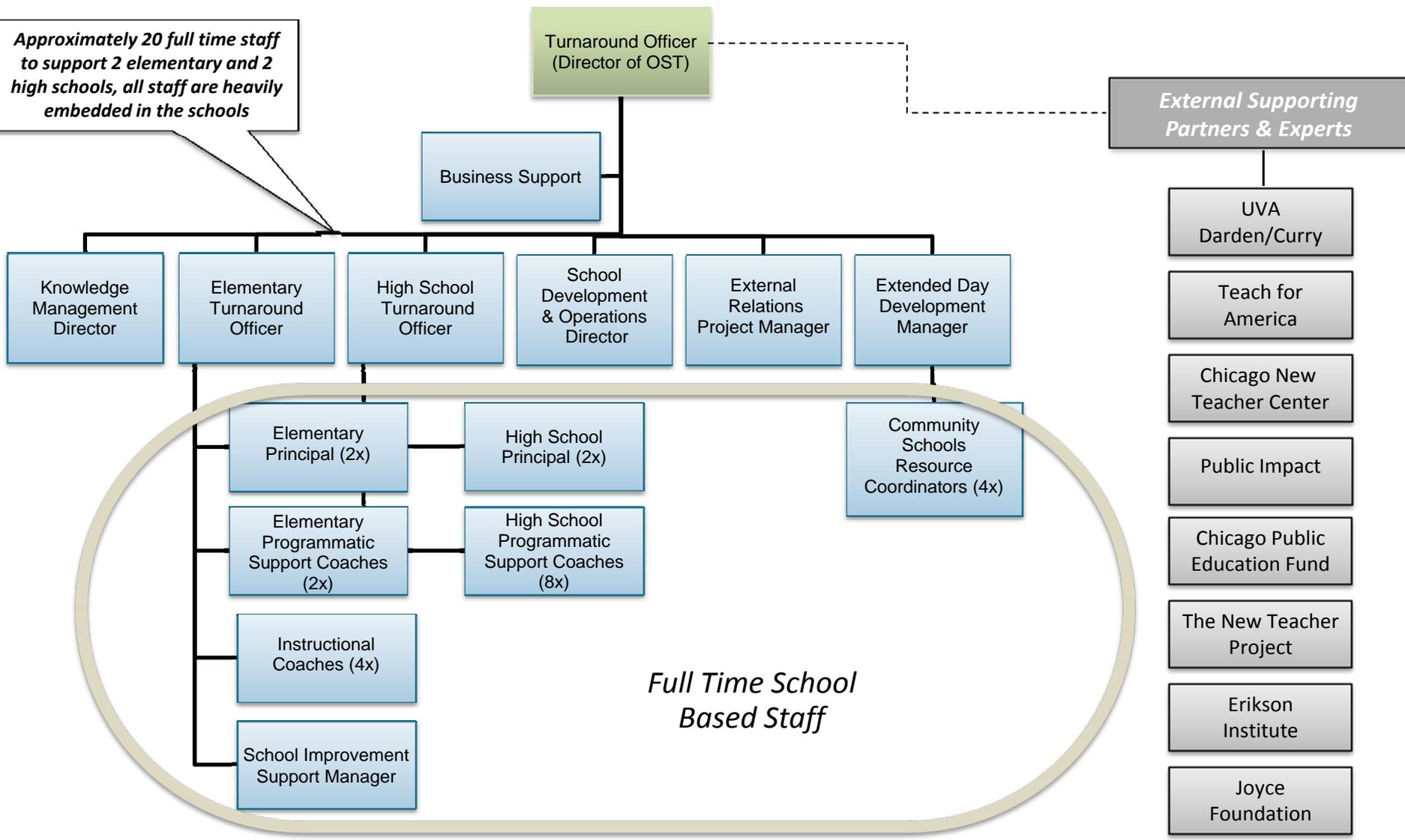
(1 of 5)



As the external and Internal Lead Partners develop capacity, both types of Lead Partners could manage multiple clusters of schools. OST is already starting to divide their schools into clusters based on grade levels (K-8 and 9-12).

Chicago's Internal Lead Partner – the Office of School Turnaround (OST) (2 of 5)

Approximately 20 full time staff to support 2 elementary and 2 high schools, all staff are heavily embedded in the schools



Chicago's Office of School Turnaround (OST) (3 of 5)

Overview

- Chicago illustrates the closest match to the Internal Lead Partner
- The portfolio approach uses both external Lead Partners (contracted through the Office of New Schools, ONS) as well as an Internal Lead Partner (through the Office of School Turnaround, OST).
- OST currently manages 2 elementary and 2 high schools and plans to add additional schools for the 2010-11 school year

History

- Limited number of providers in Chicago available to manage the increasing number of chronically low-performing schools
- Determined that scale up of external LPs would be too slow
- Historically had focused on improving leadership in low-performing schools, but recognized that these schools need much more than just newly trained leaders to achieve sustainable turnaround

Process

- Once schools are selected to be part of the Zone, OST staff examine needs, develop intervention plans, adjust the school's staff as needed, complete extensive community outreach, address climate and culture of the building through outreach and facility improvements
- The 1st year is used to set the rules, processes, and ready the school for major changes
- The 2nd year is used to address instruction and curricula; OST staff focus on student learning and sustainability of efforts

Functions

- OST acts as a special forces unit -- respond to school's needs in a timely manner and troubleshoot problems as needed
 - e.g., Schools had attendance problems, when OST looked into the causes they discovered that it was partly due to students not having clean clothes, as a result OST purchased a washer, dryer and detergent
- Ensure that schools receive significant facility improvements during the transition summer
- OST staff have offices at the district's central building, but rarely use them and are instead in the field every day

Chicago's Office of School Turnaround (OST) (4 of 5)

Staffing

- OST staff is composed of non-traditional educators and content experts
- Director of OST had extensive private sector experience before affiliating with the district
- All school staff attend 6-8 weeks of summer professional development
- One staff member leads each grade/school level strategy and acts as a cluster manager
- Other content expert staff are shared with both the K-8 and 9-12 teams to increase knowledge sharing
- Principals are recruited from inside the district when possible, but external recruitment is done when needed

Funding

- CPS guaranteed \$1-1.5 M per school for over 5 years
- Funds were used to cover additional time, professional development, administrative expenses of OST, facility improvements, and ongoing discretionary needs

Areas of Focus

- OST staff determined that chronically low-performing schools share many of the same barriers and inefficiencies
- Based on this diagnosis, each school's intervention strategies, and all program and process decisions, are focused around eight areas of need:
 - Human Capital
 - Rigorous & relevant instruction
 - Social & emotional learning
 - Extended day
 - Community engagement
 - Administrative needs
 - Policy & legal
 - Knowledge & performance management

Chicago's Office of School Turnaround (OST) (5 of 5)

District Alignment

- Leadership of the ONS and OST recognized that both offices were evaluating principal candidates on the same criteria, so they joined together with TNTP to recruit, interview, and hire principals; both leaders wanted the best principals to work in CPS turnaround schools, but did not necessarily mind which LP hired those principals
- OST Director met weekly meetings with ONS leadership to ensure alignment of programs when necessary, and resolve district central office barriers
- Distributed monthly reports to district executives to ensure alignment and transparency

Results to Date

- Since the OST schools were launched in the 2008-09 school year, major jumps in student performance data have not yet resulted. OST expects double digit increases for the 2009-10 school year.
- All four schools show progress in a variety of early indicators, such as: attendance, disciplinary issues (after an initial increase due to stronger enforcement), school climate, and teacher retention.

Lessons Learned

- Stay focused on moving forward – during the outreach process; made it clear that OST was creating a new system, and complaints about the old system are not relevant
- Get ahead of the noise from the community – ensure that clear outreach is done with the community, explain the transition process and how it will impact students, be available to answer questions, connect with community leaders
- Balance where the office staff come from (internal vs. external experts) to ensure that there's local buy-in but also increased capacity and support from the national experts

Cleveland's TurnAround Schools Initiative

Overview

- Cleveland Metropolitan School District recently launched their TurnAround Schools Initiative which created an office within the district which is designed to act similarly to an ILP
- Cleveland was on “Academic Watch” for 6 of the last 7 years on Ohio’s state report card
- Three district regions have 100% of schools in Academic Watch or Emergency status
- 5 year strategic plan created in 2007 for entire district, which included TurnAround Schools Initiative
- Initiative includes 10 schools, all PreK-8 in years 5-7 of NCLB School Improvement
- Planning began in September 2008 and was led by Education First Consulting, current implementation is being support by the Boston Consulting Group

Theory of change

- Academic Intervention Team (AIT) and Core Planning Team provide leadership and analyze: proficiency, attendance, school climate, and current Academic Achievement Plan (AAP)
- Redesign AAP for TurnAround Schools
- Superintendent has publicly stated, that if the schools don’t improve, they will be closed, and staff and students will be redistributed (especially likely due to decreasing enrollment)
- Universal Interventions (applied to all schools)
 - Assistant Superintendent oversees all TurnAround schools
 - FT curriculum specialist
 - PT data analyst
 - PT on-site leadership coach
 - On-site math or reading coach
 - Scope & sequence plan for core curriculum
 - Increased professional development
 - Parent support groups
- Additional Interventions (applied as needed)
 - Increased student services (additional social workers or counselors)
 - Focused PD for staff
 - Enhanced communication with parents/community
 - After School/ Extracurricular Planning

Lessons Learned

- Initiative has some of the right components but is lacking in other areas:
 - Significant changes to conditions (besides scheduling adjustments and extended day) are not part of the plan to date
 - Cleveland Teacher’s Union has been involved in the Initiative, and the CTU leadership is one of AIT Co-Chairs
 - While the Assistant Superintendent is in the schools on a regular basis, she is not supported by a dedicated Initiative staff and this limits the intensity of support
 - Progress and recommendations of actions for each school will be made in summer 2010

Miami-Dade's School Improvement Zone

Overview

- Created a carve-out zone of 39 of the lowest performing schools
- Zone was not a full Internal Lead Partner – had the features of a strong carve-out zone but the office did not have direct accountability for performance, nor was it fully autonomous from the rest of the district
- Did not use Lead Partners to manage the schools, but Zone staff aligned various district services and a variety of supporting partners
- Provided more flexible operating conditions:
 - Extended day and year
 - Redesigned instructional schedules
 - New curricular programs
 - Additional financial resources
- Six month intensive planning period to begin Zone work mid-year
- When the 3-year Zone negotiated period ended, very few of the practices or processes implemented in the Zone were scaled up to the district

Staffing & Structure

- Developed a separate Collective Bargaining Agreement with the teacher's union
- Created a separate "regional" district for the turnaround zone
- Zone Associate Superintendent had direct line to district executive
- Several Zone principals were replaced

Lessons Learned

- While Zone staff had significant authority over the conditions, principals did not have much discretion over day-to-day decisions
- Zone had strong support from the District Superintendent, but politics, lack of community engagement, and limited financial resources hampered the continuation of the Zone
- The commitment to support such an initiative must be strong and sustainable
- Roles and responsibilities of Zone staff should have been more clearly defined
- The Zone office must be fully autonomous from the rest of the district

Louisiana's Recovery School District (1 of 2)

Overview

- Created by the state legislature in 2003, RSD is a carve-out district of low-performing schools under the oversight of the Louisiana Department of Education
- In early 2005, the RSD managed five schools in the city of New Orleans
- Post Hurricane Katrina, the RSD was radically expanded to oversee reconstruction and reorganization of schools in areas of particular devastation
 - School selected with a prior record of poor performance
 - Over one hundred schools were added to the zone after Katrina
- RSD's original focus was on the New Orleans parish, but has expanded to a handful of schools in other parishes as those schools have reached chronic under-performance
- RSD lacks many ILP characteristics including full autonomy, accountability, and embedded presence in school

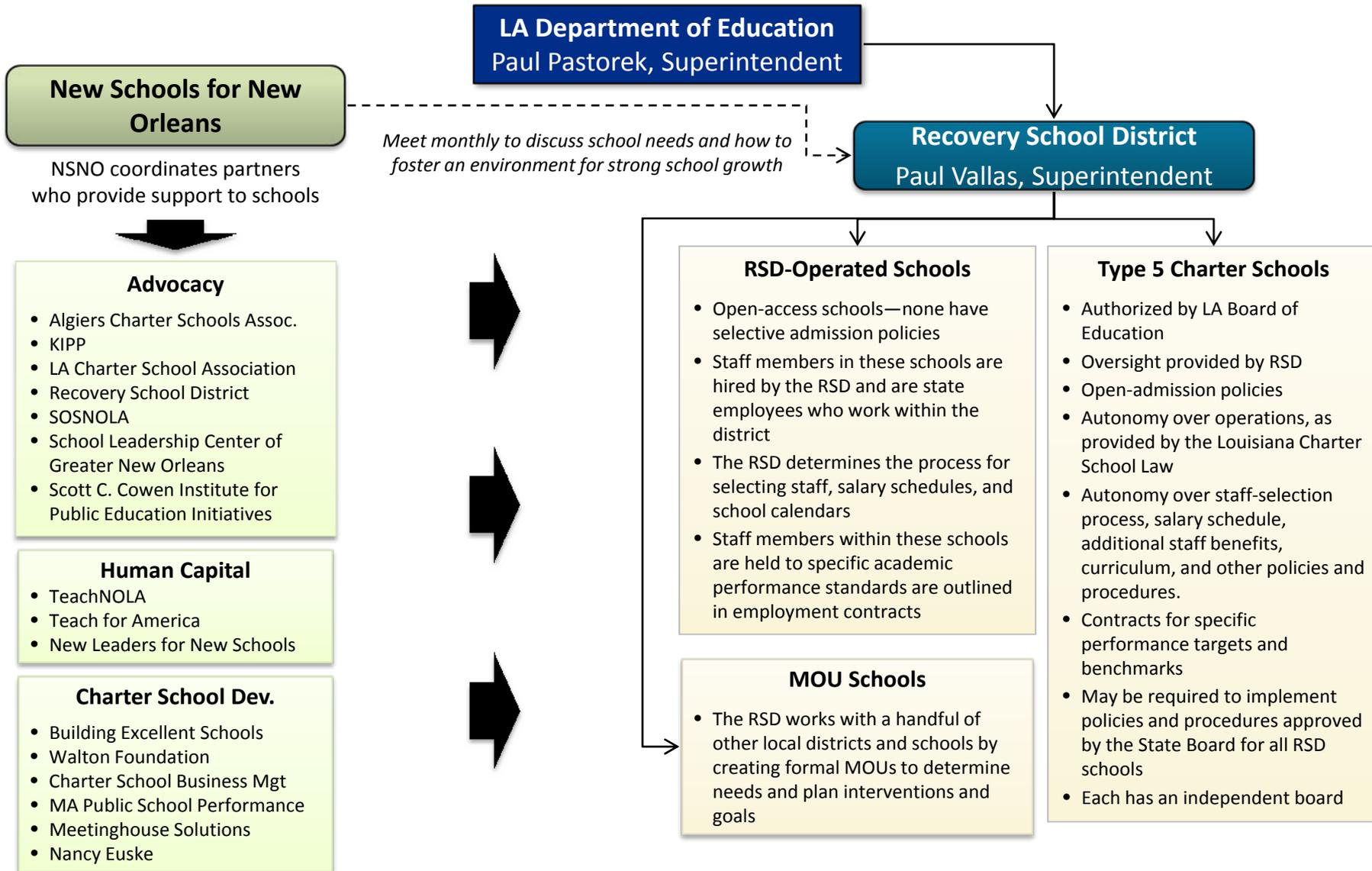
Strategic Support

- New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) is an independent organization that provides extensive support all NOLA schools, with a focus on charter schools
- NSNO provides founder fellowships to launch new charter schools, aligns a variety of Supporting Partners, and trains leaders in management planning, coaching, teacher recruitment, board development, and periodic quality reviews
- NSNO works with the RSD, the state education agency, national partners, and the New Orleans community to advocated for high quality schools across the city
- NSNO is now working with former RSD staff to create an organization to turnaround under-performing charter schools

Lessons Learned

- In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, RSD scaled too quickly resulting in poor quality
- Should hold all managing organizations (Internal or external Lead Partners) accountable by creating performance contracts, is now working to ensure performance contracts are completed throughout the RSD
- Even with a clear organizational structure, it's very difficult to draw boundaries between the state education agency and a state-level Internal Lead Partner
- Strong leadership from the top is absolutely necessary to create sustainable changes

Louisiana's Recovery School District (2 of 2)



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

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

For more information on The Turnaround Challenge and our Partnership Zone Initiative, please visit our website at www.massinsight.org or contact us at turnaround@massinsight.org.

Resources:

- AYPF Presentation, *District-level Initiatives in Chicago, IL and Prince George’s Co, MD*, Dec 2008, <<http://www.aypf.org/forumbriefs/2008/fb120508.htm>>
- Chicago Public Schools, <www.cps.edu>
- CMSD & BCG, *CMSD Strategic Development Initiative: Progress update and path forward*, Aug 2009
- Education First Consulting, *Cleveland Metropolitan School District: Developing a School Strategy to Help All Students Achieve*, August 2009.
- Interviews of current and former CPS, MDCPS, & NSNO staff
- *Miami Dade Case Study*, Mass Insight Education & Research Institute, June 2009
- Ott, Thomas. *Cleveland schools superintendents Eugene Sanders faces challenge in promise to transform district*, The Plain Dealer, Oct. 1, 2009
- Sanders, Eugene. *TurnAround Schools Initiative strategic plan*, Cleveland Metropolitan School District, Oct 2008

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