The Roots of Learning
Personal Competency in School Improvement and Turnaround
Sam Redding
Turnaround (Change) from Top Down

- Governance—restart or oversight
- Leadership—new principal
- Teachers—new teachers
- Partners—external expertise
- Time—change schedule
- Instruction—new materials and plans
- Professional Development—train staff
- Data—test and track
- Culture—safe and orderly
- Families—engage
What’s Missing?
Parents seek the *something other* and turn to extracurricular activities and out-of-school experiences to find it.

Teachers know that each student brings to a learning task a *something other*—certain attributes that affect how the student responds to the challenge.
Personal Competencies—The *Something Other*

Mastery
- Knowledge and Skill

Personal Competencies
- Cognitive
- Metacognitive
- Motivational
- Social/Emotional
MetaAnalysis of Influences on Learning

- **Student Attributes and School Effects**
  1. Classroom Management
  2. **Metacognitive Processes**
  3. **Cognitive Processes**
  4. Home Environment/Support
  5. Student-Teacher Social Interactions
  6. **Student-Behavioral Attributes**
  7. **Motivational-Affective Attributes**
  8. Peer Group
  9. Quality of Instruction—student engagement
  10. School Culture
  11. Classroom Climate
  12. Classroom Instruction—clear and organized
  13. Curriculum Design
  14. Academic Interactions
  15. Classroom Assessment

(Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993, 1997)
Personal Competency Framework

Context
- School
- Community
- School
- Classroom

Cognitive Competency

Metacognitive Competency

Motivational Competency

Social/Emotional Competency

Learning Habits

Mastery
- Knowledge
- Skill

Competency Reinforcement
Contexts for Competency Enhancement

- School community—families, students, school personnel, volunteers
- School—curriculum, programs, school culture
- Classroom—instruction, classroom culture
Enhancement and Reinforcement

- **Competency Enhancement**: the intentional development of students’ personal competencies within the contexts of the school community, school, and classroom

- **Competency Reinforcement**: the strengthening and modification of personal competencies and patterns of behavior that results from both the process of pursuing mastery and mastery itself
Mastery and Learning Habits

- **Mastery**: meeting criteria for specific objectives related to knowledge and skills

- **Learning Habits**: the conversion of individual competencies into coordinated patterns of behavior activated when confronting new learning tasks
Cognitive Competency

- Prior learning that organizes the mind and provides associations and understanding to facilitate new learning
- Memory—cognitive content
- Curiosity
Metacognitive Competency

- Self-regulation of learning and use of learning strategies
- Logical and divergent thinking

1. Goal setting and planning (including choice of strategies)
2. Monitoring progress through the plan’s implementation
3. Adapting the plan based on feedback (self-appraisal or from the teacher or program)
Motivational Competency

- Engagement and persistence in pursuit of learning goals
  1. Agency and Self-Efficacy
  2. Value
  3. Growth Mindset—Carol Dweck

- Aspirations
- Intrinsic—mastery, purpose, autonomy (Pink)
- Extrinsic—reward and consequences
- **Mastery** (Brophy)
Social/Emotional Competency

- Sense of self-worth, regard for others, and emotional understanding and management to set positive goals and make responsible decisions
  1. Manage Emotions
  2. Set and Achieve Positive Goals
  3. Show Empathy for Others
  4. Establish and Maintain Positive Relationships
  5. Make Responsible Decisions
- **Traits**—Grit and Resilience
  - See Angela Duckworth on grit
  - See Reclaiming Youth International--Circle of Courage®:
    - Native American values
    - belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity
Relational Suasion

- The teacher’s ability to influence a student’s learning and personal competency by virtue of the teacher’s personal knowledge of and interaction with the student and the student’s family
Enhancing Cognitive Competency

1. Review prior learning, connecting to new topics.
2. Expect that specific knowledge is memorized.
3. Reinforce mastered knowledge through review, questioning, and inclusion in subsequent assignments.
4. Include vocabulary development as learning objectives.
5. Identify and teach common facts, ideas, phrases, and quotations.
6. Assign rich reading and its application in written work and discussion.
7. Use writing assignments to encourage the association and integration of new learning and deep understanding.
8. Encourage each student’s natural curiosity by providing pathways of exploration and discovery.
1. Think out loud to show how a learning task is approached and pursued.
2. Pair students as problem solver and active listener.
3. Teach specific learning strategies and techniques.
4. Teach the process of (a) goal setting and planning; (b) progress monitoring; and (c) adaptation from feedback.
5. Include self-checks and peer-checks as part of assignment completion.
6. Show how to chart and graph assignment completion and objective mastery.
7. Include the documentation of learning processes and strategies employed in the completion of an assignment.
8. Teach procedures of logic, synthesis, and evaluation to employ in critical thinking.
9. Teach techniques for divergent thinking to expand the universe of considerations in creative thinking.
Enhancing Motivational Competency

1. Promote a growth mindset.
2. Connect learning tasks to the student’s personal aspirations.
3. Differentiate assignments.
5. Stretch the student’s interests to find value in new topics (acquired relevance).
6. Celebrate mastery.
7. Help parents understand their influence on their children’s mindset.
Enhancing Social/Emotional Competency

1. Include social/emotional objectives in the instructional plan.
2. Teach and reinforce positive social skills and relationships.
3. Model responsible behavior, caring, optimism, and positive verbal interactions.
4. Adopt evidence-based programs that enhance social/emotional competency.
5. Establish classroom norms for personal responsibility, cooperation, and concern for others.
6. Be attentive to students’ emotional states and guide students in managing their emotions.
7. Help students set constructive goals for learning and social relationships.
8. Teach students to understand the consequences of their decisions and to take responsibility for them.
9. Use cooperative learning methods.
10. Encourage questioning, seeking help from others, and offering help to others.
11. Arrange for support services from psychologists and social workers when students demonstrate a need for support.
12. Work closely with parents to promote social/emotional competency at home.
### Personal Competency in School Turnaround and Improvement Strategies

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Resources

- Center on School Turnaround
  - [www.centeronschoolturnaround.org](http://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org)

- Center on Innovations in Learning
  - [www.centeril.org](http://www.centeril.org)
  - See Research and Practice Briefs

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