

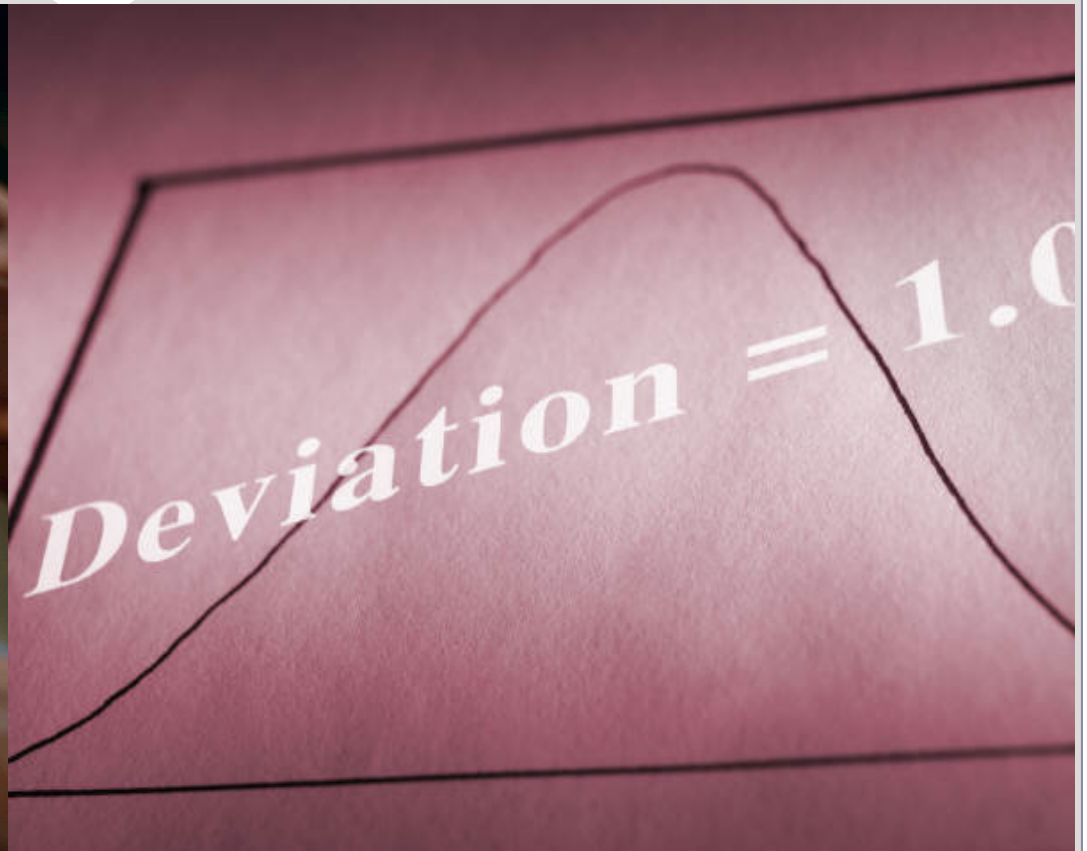
A Conversation about the Role of SEAs in Targeted School Improvement/School Turnaround





- *The State Role in School Turnaround: Emerging Best Practices.* Rhim & Redding (Eds) (In Press)
Center on School Turnaround
- <http://centeronschoolturnaround.org/cst-publication-the-state-role-in-school-turnaround-emerging-best-practices/>

SIG Outcomes...

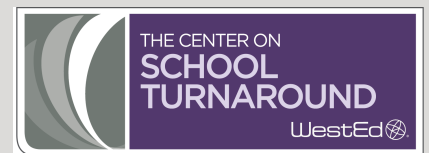


SIG Research

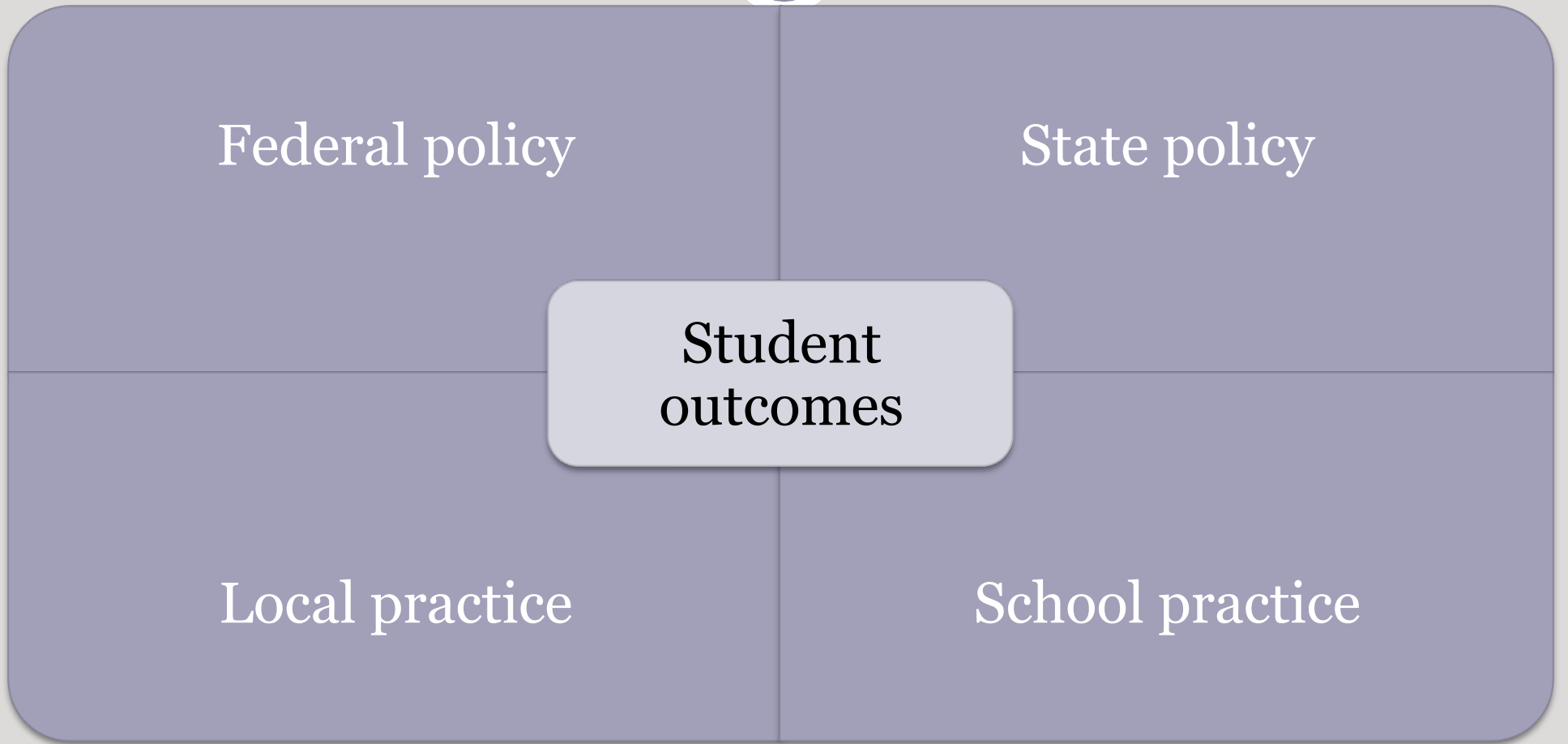


What does it tell us?

- 2/3 SIG schools showed gains
- Gains similar to schools without SIG dollars



Critical factors that can influence change





School improvement
2014...



It's not your mother's
incremental
improvement

ED has focused much of its resources and attention on helping states and districts turn around the lowest-performing schools.



Race to the Top

School Improvement Grants

Lowest-Performing Schools

Alignment of existing federal resources

ESEA Flexibility



Status of School Improvement Efforts

Status of SIG Awards

- ED has awarded nearly \$4b of \$5b appropriated through FY12
- Most FY11 & FY12 funds will be used to fund 2nd & 3rd years of 3-year grants that began in SY 2011-12
- Cohort III Awards (16 States)

Description of SIG Schools

- Over 1,300 schools in cohort 1 and 2 implementing SIG model (Tier I/II)
- Over 45% of Tier I/II schools in cohort 1 are high schools
- Transformations make up 74% of Tier I/II and 95% of rural Tier I/II

Quality of State SIG Implementation

- Implementation challenges (ILT and principal/teacher eval), because of insufficient capacity, will, or both
- Most common monitoring findings: award process and ILT
- Role of external providers

SIG Story Line

Providing unprecedented investment in turning around lowest-performing schools

Targeting drop-out factories and providing districts flexibility to tailor interventions

Changing relationship between SEAS and LEAs, but some wasting opportunity

Resulting in dramatic, double-digit gains for many schools in first year



Characteristics of SIG...



Urgent

Evidence-based

Optimistic

High stakes

Controversial

Flawed

Inspiring

Expensive

Frenetic

**Highly
dependent on
implementation**

Relentless

Contradictory

Contrasting SIG implementation strategies...



Kitchen sink

New on top of old

Lack of coherence

Scattershot

Random

Peripheral

Laser focus

Prioritized

Data driven

Source: Yatsko et al. 2012

Implementation Challenges



- Fidelity to the model given local contextual issues (e.g., collective bargaining agreements, leader and teacher talent pipeline, resistance to change).
- Limited will and skill to implement aspects of model (e.g., use of data)
- Inadequate planning time
- Leveraging increased learning time
- State oversight and accountability
- Navigating federal compliance requirements

Source: Center on Education Policy, 2012; INSTLL, 2012;

11 *Rhim & Redding, 2012; Yatsko 2012*



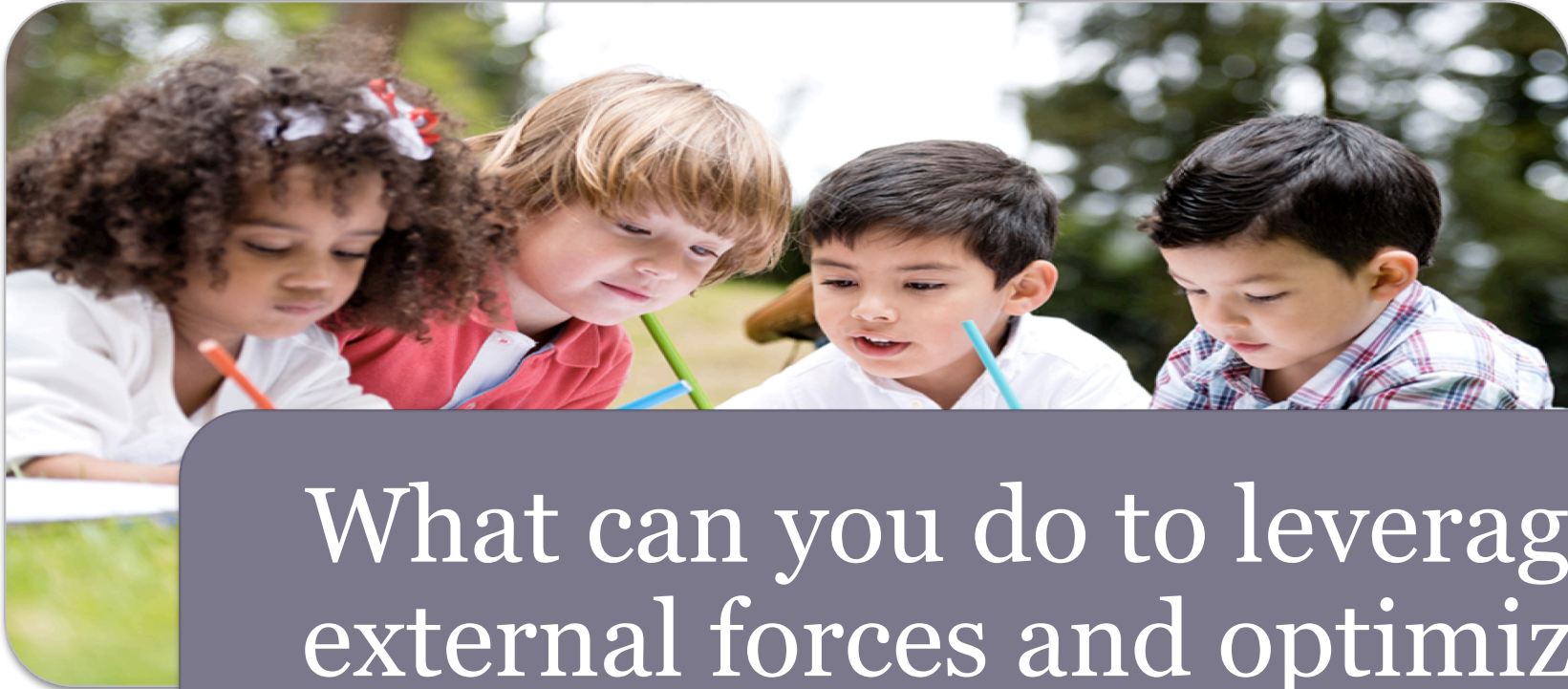
One universal truth



No
magic
bullet

Enter the clichés...





What can you do to leverage external forces and optimize internal policies and practices to improve long-term outcomes for students?

Emerging Lessons



Leverage the role of the SEA

Engage local school boards

Initiate systemic district change
that drives improved instruction

Optimize resources



Leverage the Role of the SEA





What can YOU do at the SEA level to move districts and schools forward to meet their goals?



SEA resources are spread very thin relative to overall K-12 public education expenditures.

Many of the resources allocated to the SEA are provided through federal categorical programs (e.g., Title I of ESEA, Special Education, and school nutrition) and therefore highly regulated (Murphy & Oujidani, 2011).



Chief state school officers and staff members more directly charged with driving the SEA's turnaround agenda have the opportunity to catalyze turnaround efforts by developing an intentional activist strategy to leverage the chief's bully pulpit (Rhim, 2014)

SEAs can bring attention to the need for dramatic change and cultivate critical buy-in to make the difficult changes required for organizational turnaround.





“Heightened attention to issues such as turning around low-performing schools, fixing state data systems, and improving teacher evaluations all require state education officials to play a new and far more demanding role, often under the scrutiny of the media spotlight.” (Brown, Hess, Lautzenheiser & Owen, 2011, P.1)



Communicate sense of urgency and commitment

Drive school turnaround policy agenda

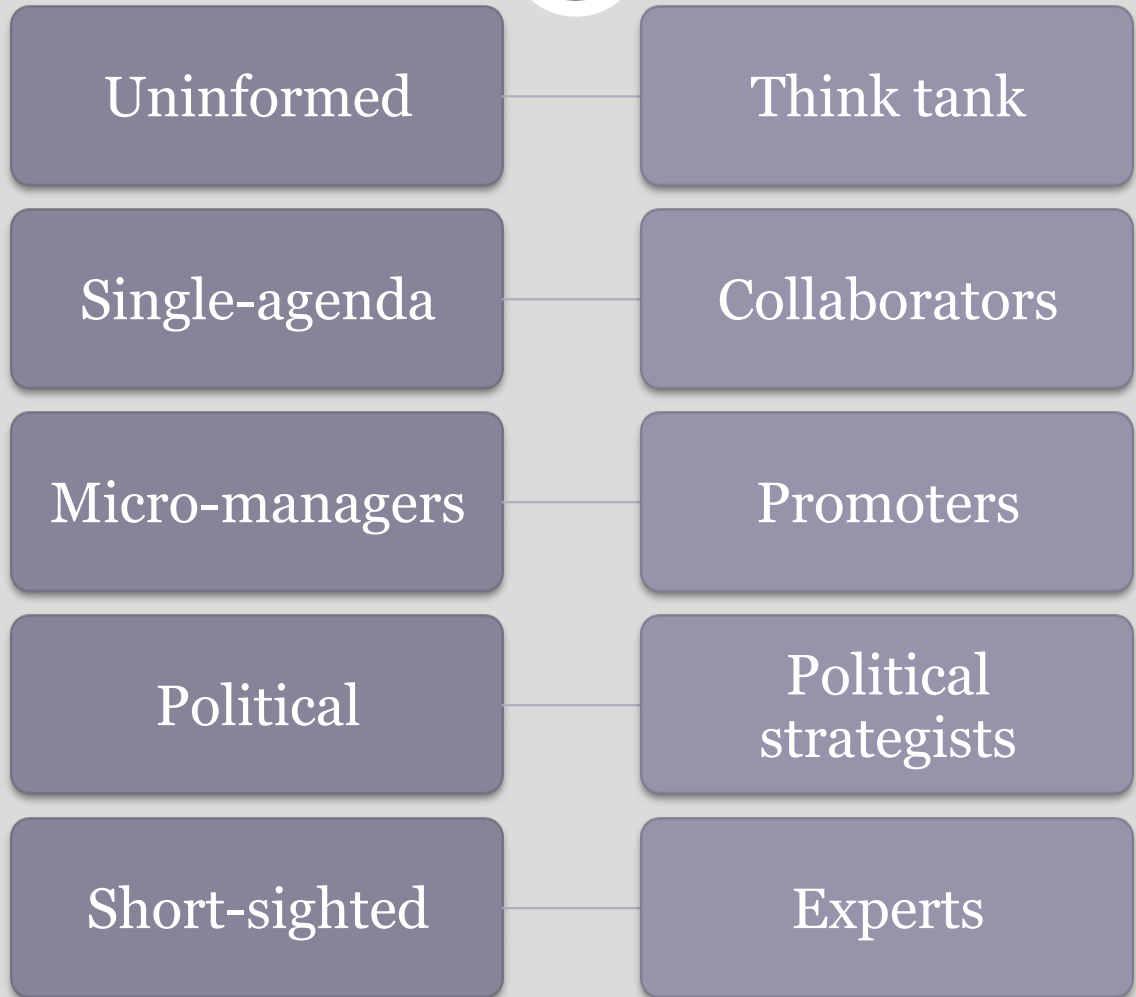
- Address policies that undermine turnaround
- Streamline planning, reporting and compliance

Allocate resources in line with priorities

Engage School Boards



School Board Word Association...



Boards play a role in establishing...



Strong instructional infrastructure and robust assessments

- Identify academic outcome goals
- Invest in improving instruction
- Invest in assessments and application of data

Intention human capital strategy

- Support talent pipeline
- Address CBA barriers
- Provide political cover

Rigorous accountability system

- Acknowledge outcomes
- Hold personnel accountable for performance

Prioritization of lowest performing schools

- Differentiate support
- Allocate resources according to need



School Board Tools



DEVELOP POLICIES

**DIRECT AND MANAGE
BUDGET**

**RECRUIT, HIRE,
AND EVALUATE
SUPERINTENDENT**

DISTRICT

SCHOOLS



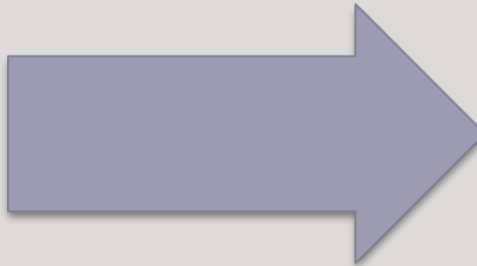
Implications for Turnaround



- Craft the conditions in which districts operate
- Historically focused on the “killer b’s,” (e.g., books, budgets, buildings, and buses), not academic achievement
- Crisis of low-performance in districts/schools requires more intentional focus on academics



What do we know?



Implications for School Turnaround



...Largely missing from the dialogue about school transformation is a robust discussion of the role or potential of local school boards to advance school reform goals.

Opportunities to be leveraged...



- School boards are evolving—more focused on **educational outcomes**
- Significant opportunities to better optimize school boards as **positive agents of change** that can influence student outcomes



How can local school boards be effectively engaged to initiate or support dramatic change





School Board Coaches

- **Montana**



Capacity Building

- Mandated training (n=23)
- Memphis-Broad Training





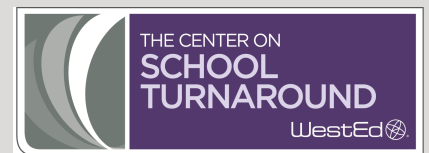
Leverage Data

- NSBA training



Accountability measures

- Pittsburgh “Board Watch”



Initiate systemic district change that drives improved instruction



District role



- Identify schools for differentiated support
- Extend focused operational autonomy
- Develop intentional human capital pipeline
- Leverage the bully pulpit
- Prioritize student learning (i.e., strong curriculum, instruction, and assessments)
- Integrate data into decision making
- Inspect what you expect (i.e., hold leaders accountable for growth on a timetable)



Turnaround Leader Performance Assessments: No Time to Lose



Urgency required given impact of leadership on students

Need to initiate bold change to catalyze turnarounds

Detrimental impact of tolerating poor performance

Emerging research about how to effectively assess leading indicators of school turnaround

Optimize Resources



Identify and Optimize Key Resources



Most valuable resources:

People

Time

Money



Reflecting on your support and improvement efforts, are you driving and supporting district efforts to allocate people, time, and money to create positive changes for students?

Key aspect of resource allocation...



Subtracting is as
important as
adding

Discussion



Wrap-up



Reflections

Next steps



Sources



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- Additional Resources:
 - The Center on School Turnaround
 - ✦ <http://centeronschoolturnaround.org/>
 - Education Resource Strategies
 - ✦ <http://www.erstrategies.org/>
 - *Moving Beyond the Killer B's: The Role of School Boards in School Accountability and Transformation*
 - ✦ <http://www.adi.org/about/downloads/KillerBs2.pdf>
 - *The State Role in School Turnaround: Emerging Best Practices*
 - ✦ <http://centeronschoolturnaround.org/staterole/>

