

Transforming Education in Rhode Island



The Race to the Top Opportunity

Race to the Top Steering Committee Quarterly Meeting Year Four, Quarter One

Monday, November 18, 2013, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
The Rhode Island Foundation

NOTES

- I. Remarks 4:30 – 4:45
- a. Neil Steinberg (Co-Chair)
 - b. Colleen Jermain (Co-Chair)
 - c. Commissioner Gist
- Reviewed highlights from the [Implementation Update](#).
- II. Turning Around the Lowest Performing Schools 4:45 - 5:45
- a. Turnaround in Rhode Island
(See [presentation](#))
Q: What does 're-start' mean?
A: When a school becomes identified as turnaround, you completely restructure and open as essentially a 'new school', even though it is the same building and the same students.
 - b. The Everyday Feel of Turnaround
Alexandra Belteton (student)
 - Student/Teacher communication: in order for a student to have good grades and success in school, students need good feedback. This is different from a few years ago, in that the turnaround teachers now are more equipped to handle the environment.Andrew Milligan (former PPSD science teacher in a transformation school; current RIDE staff)
 - We struggle with the disadvantages that students wake up to every morning; we need to recognize and address them. Every school has great students in it.
 - Committed teachers need to have support from their leadership. Creating an environment that is not crisis-management, but where teachers can be successful.Kerry Tuttlebee (Aspiring Turnaround Leader)
 - Struggling schools need to emphasize the positives, and get past negative connotations.
 - Just had a successful high school dance; and a first student-run festival. These seem superficial but are essential to life of a high school student.Tamara Sterling (Turnaround Leader)

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- Having the ability to create the environment, and having a small group of teachers who believe in turnaround.
- Team building provided by RIDE this summer was irreplaceable. They built them back up as focused leaders.

Q: Comment on the role of parents in turnaround schools, as compared to other schools.

A: The performance of any child starts with the home. You need to identify with them culturally, emotionally, and personally.

Q: Could you talk about the role of the business community?

A: Currently exploring new and existing partnerships; need to think about how we can learn from them, and gain their support. We need to have a plan, in order to outline how you would utilize them. Private sector can provide the stern reality check, and insight into 'real world curriculum'.

Q: When the students came to you with significant deficiencies, how do you work with the middle and elementary schools?

A: Looking to create a better bridge from the M.S. to the H.S., and a Saturday School specifically aimed at M.S. students to earn some H.S. credits early.

Q: Is there best practices to get parents into the school?

A: It is more than just the parents coming into the school, but also us going into the community and finding out what we can about our families. Need to prioritize and be strategic, and have more opportunities to celebrate the child; and utilize the libraries and Boys and Girls club. Having parents engaged in the school community is important.

Q: What is the student's job to support turnaround?

A: Student council has one student representing each class. Student Government looks at the overall school as one, and what can they do to reach out to the community. Get your school out there, get involved.

- c. Turnaround: What's Behind and Us and What's Before Us?

(See [presentation](#)).

- d. Discussion

III. Wrap-Up

5:45 - 6:00

- a. Next Meeting: March 17, 2014
- b. Preparing for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)
- c. Implementation of Interim and Formative Assessments