



# RURAL SCHOOL TURNAROUNDS

DECEMBER 6, 2011



# Dr. Sam Redding

- Director of the Center on Innovation and Improvement
- Executive Director of the Academic Development Institute
- Co-Author of IES Practice Guide
- Works with 16 Comprehensive Centers and SEAs across the United States

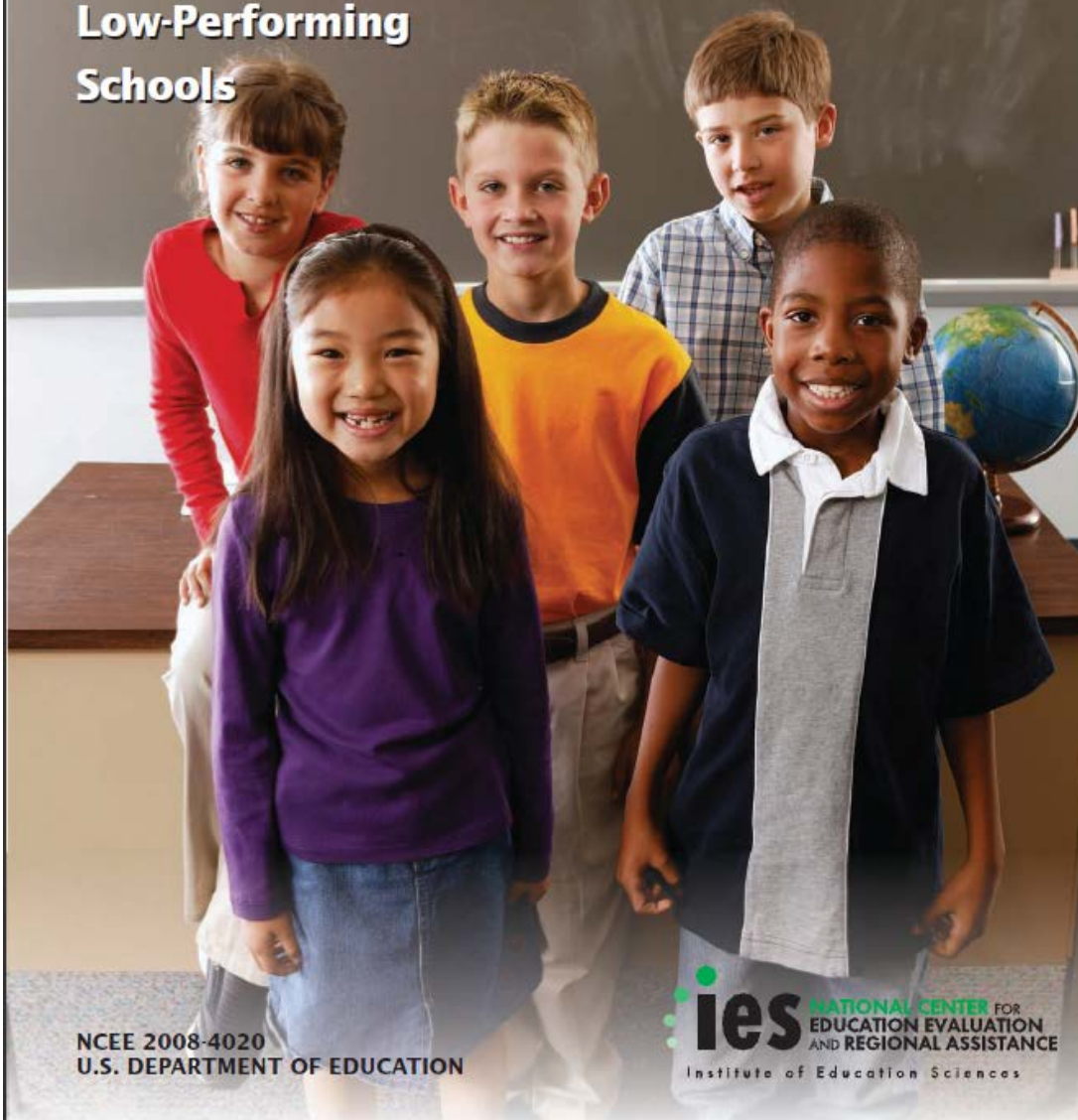


# What Does Rural Look Like?

5



# Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools



NCEE 2008-4020  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**ies** NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION EVALUATION  
AND REGIONAL ASSISTANCE  
Institute of Education Sciences

# Four Recommended Practices

7

- Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership
- **Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction**
- Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process (quick wins)
- Build a committed staff



# Recommended Practice #1:

9

**Signal the need for dramatic change  
with strong leadership.**



# Recommended Practice #1:

10

*Signal the need for dramatic change with strong leadership.*

- Schools make a clear commitment to dramatic changes from the status quo
- The leader signals the magnitude and urgency of that change
- A low-performing school must improve student achievement within a short timeframe—it does not have the luxury of years to implement incremental reforms

# Leadership Practices

11

- ❑ Sharing responsibility (leadership team, lead teachers)
- ❑ Principal as instructional leader
- ❑ Strong leadership



# Signaling Change

12

- Communicate clear purpose to staff and community
- Monitor teacher and student performance
- Become more accessible to staff and students
- Deal directly and immediately with problems
- Campaign in the community/district

# Communicating About Dramatic Change

13

1. Brutal Facts—life prospects for students
2. Vision of What Could Be—results in similar schools
3. Pathway to Achieve Vision
  - ⇒ plan
  - ⇒ procedures
  - ⇒ practices
  - ⇒ expectations
  - ⇒ metrics
4. Culture of Candor

# Polling questions #1

14

## Signal Change with Strong Leadership

*Select your response for each question in the polling area on the right and click “Submit”*



# Recommended Practice #2

16

**Maintain a consistent focus on  
improving instruction.**

# Recommended Practice #2:

17

*Maintain a consistent focus on improving instruction.*

Maintain a sharp focus on improving instruction at every step of the reform process.

To improve instruction, schools should

- Use data to set goals for instructional improvement,
- Make changes to immediately and directly affect instruction,
- Continually reassess student learning **and instructional practices** to refocus the goals and refine the practices.

# Using Data to Improve Instruction

18

- **School level:** identify instructional focus—target subjects, subgroups
- **Class level:** identify teachers' professional development needs; topics for re-teaching
- **Student level:** identify skills and knowledge each student needs to master

Continually assess progress towards goals

# Changing Instruction

- **Teacher collaboration:** common planning time, **disciplined** instructional planning
- **Targeted professional development:** embedded professional development, targeted to need based on classroom observations and student outcomes
- **Curriculum review and alignment:** determine if there are gaps between standards that are taught and those that are assessed

# Instructional Core

20

- Maintain a sharp focus on improving instruction
- Use effective practices for ELLs and SWDs within core instruction
- Provide aligned and differentiated instruction in multiple modes
- Use formative data to:
  - set goals for instructional improvement
  - make changes to immediately and directly affect instruction
  - continually reassess student learning **and instructional practices** to refocus the goals and refine the practices

# Polling questions #2

21

## Relentless Focus on Improving Instruction

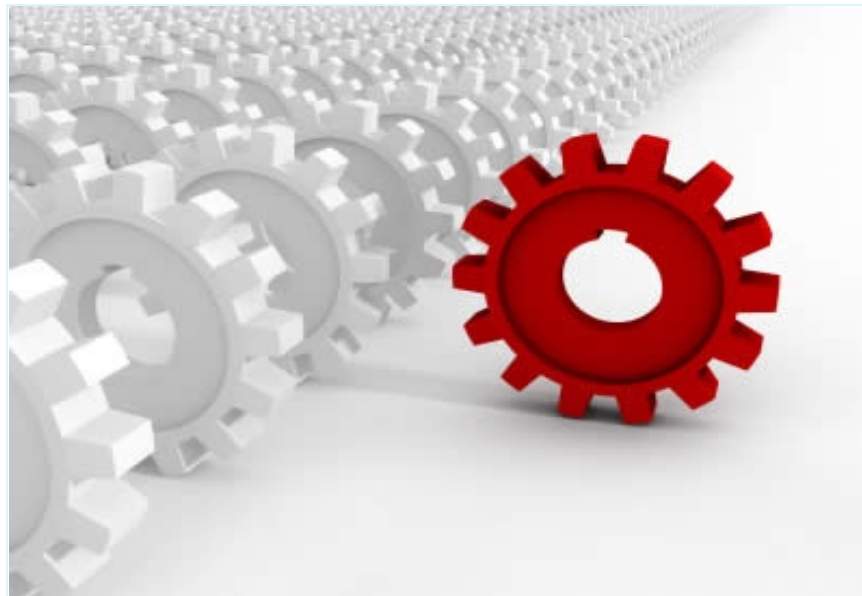
*Select your response for each question in the polling area on the right and click “Submit”*



# Recommended Practice #3

23

**Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process.**



# Recommended Practice #3:

24

*Make visible improvements early in the school turnaround process.*

Quick wins can rally staff around the effort and overcome resistance and inertia

# Strategies

25

## Goals

- One or two, narrow goals, can be achieved quickly
- Must be important to stakeholders and make visible improvement
- Must be do-able without additional resources or authority
- Should contribute to long-term goals

## Implementation

- Do it quick
- Plow through protests
- Follow up

# Examples

26

- **Use of time:** more collaborative planning, more uninterrupted instructional time
- **Resources:** dedicated teacher work space, texts and materials available on time
- **Physical plant:** clean, paint school; displays
- **Discipline:** teachers, administrators visible; reduce transitions between classes; hands-down rules

# Polling questions #3

27

## Make Visible Improvements Early— Quick Wins

*Select your response for each question in the polling area on the right and click “Submit”*



# Recommended Practice #4

29

**Build a committed staff.**



# Recommended Practice #4:

30

*Build a committed staff.*

The school leader must build a staff that is

- ⇒ Committed to the school's improvement goal
- ⇒ Qualified to carry out school improvement

This may require changes in staff, such as

- ⇒ Releasing staff
- ⇒ Replacing staff
- ⇒ Redeploying staff
- ⇒ Bringing in new staff who are committed

# Assess, Redeploy, Replace, Recruit Staff

31

- Assess skills, knowledge, and will
- Redeploy if staff fit another necessary role
- Replace if necessary
- Recruit to fit needs

Competence

Fit

Willingness

# Polling Questions # 4

32

## Build a Committed Staff

*Select your response for each question in the polling area on the right and click “Submit”*

# Questions and Answer Session

---



# Upcoming Webinars

- **January 11, 2012**

An Overview of a School-wide Adolescent Literacy Framework

Featuring Dr. Debby Houston-Miller and Vicki LaRock from the Center on Instruction

- **February 21, 2012**

Common Core State Standards in Mathematics: What is new? What are the implications?

Featuring Dr. Russell Gersten and John Woodward from the Center on Instruction

# Thank you

- Webinar recording may be found at <http://nwrcc.educationnorthwest.org/event/1142>
- IES Practice Guide: Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools  
<http://educationnorthwest.org/resource/1820>

# Contact Information

- Dr Sam Redding, Director  
Center on Innovation and Improvement

<http://www.centerii.org>

- Northwest Regional Comprehensive Center

<http://nwrcc.educationnorthwest.org>

- Alaska Comprehensive Center

<http://www.alaskacc.org>