



Performance Management Framework

School Turnaround Programs

July 2014

Performance management is a systemic approach to ensuring quality and progress toward organizational goals by methodically and routinely monitoring the connection between strategies and the outcomes sought. The Reform Support Network has developed a common set of variables and elements for performance management that forms the basis of the Performance Management Framework, which will be used for supporting State education agency (SEA) school turnaround teams. Performance Management, as defined in our framework, includes the following key variables:



1. Clarity of Outcomes and Theory of Action: Establishing and widely communicating priorities and setting ambitious, clear and measurable goals and outcomes with aligned strategies and activities.



2. Alignment of Resources: Directing or redirecting resources (time, money, people) to priority efforts that produce results and establishing clear roles and responsibilities.



3. Collection and Use of Data: Establishing and implementing routines and processes for collecting, analyzing and monitoring data, including leading and lagging indicators, to inform continuous improvement, provide feedback and make decisions.



4. Accountability for Results: Making decisions to continue improvement or end practices based on data; implementing incentives tied to performance; and engaging and communicating results with internal and external stakeholders.

In addition to the general variables and elements for performance management, the Performance Management Framework: School Turnaround Programs includes indicators of effective performance management practices that are specific to SEA and local educational agency (LEA) school turnaround efforts. These indicators are the focus of the self-assessment for SEA school turnaround teams.

The Performance Management Framework: School Turnaround Programs was adapted from the Reform Support Network Sustainability Rubric, available at <https://rtt.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/4665>.

The Reform Support Network, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, supports the Race to the Top grantees as they implement reforms in education policy and practice, learn from each other, and build their capacity to sustain these reforms, while sharing these promising practices and lessons learned with other States attempting to implement similarly bold education reform initiatives.

Definition: Performance management is a systemic approach to ensuring quality and progress toward organizational goals by methodically and routinely monitoring the connection between strategies and the outcomes sought.

| Performance Management Variables | Elements | Indicators of Effective Performance Management Practices |
|---|---|---|
| Clarity of Outcomes and Theory of Action | Set priority goals for student outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA establishes annual and multiyear goals that define success in low-performing schools. • The SEA has engaged State staff, local community leaders, educators and external partners in order to develop clarity and consensus on its priority goals. • Once developed, goals are clearly communicated to these audiences, for example, on the State’s Website and through informational materials distributed to school boards, educators, parents and other key stakeholders. • The SEA models goal setting and provides resources to help LEAs set goals, supports LEAs in setting goals with their schools and plays a role in reviewing or approving those goals. • LEAs and low-performing schools can articulate the SEA’s priority goals for low-performing schools. |
| | Establish a theory of action for priority goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA has established a clear theory of action that defines what strategies the SEA believes will lead to the priority goals. • The theory of action is specific enough to convey a discrete “testable hypothesis” of strategies whose effectiveness can be tested against the priority goals. • The State’s theory of action for low-performing schools is widely shared and communicated, for example, appearing on the State’s Website, informational materials and in public speeches and interactions. • Stakeholders at the SEA, in LEAs and in schools understand the theory of action under which the State is operating. |
| | Develop plan(s) that align strategies with priority goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies to improve low-performing schools at the SEA, LEA and school levels are clearly defined, research based and connected to the particular challenges observed in those schools. • The SEA documents the strategies and implementation plans to improve low-performing schools and make the plans available to relevant stakeholders. • Schools and LEAs report that SEA strategies are valuable and aligned with their implementation of strategies for low-performing schools. |
| Alignment of Resources (People, Time, Technology and Money) | Direct resources to strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA directs sufficient resources, including people, time, technology and money, to the highest-priority strategies relating to the theory of action. • State-directed resources and strategies are aligned and coordinated across Federal funding sources for low-performing schools (School Improvement Grants/Race to the Top/Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility). • The SEA implements strategies and practices that encourage and support LEAs in aligning resources with priorities and promoting sustainability. • The SEA allows flexibility for LEAs to direct resources to fit student needs in local contexts. • LEAs agree they have sufficient resources and time to implement and sustain their low-performing schools strategies. |
| | Establish clear leadership of strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roles and responsibilities among the SEA, LEAs, schools and stakeholders are aligned, clear and transparent. • The SEA, LEAs, schools and external partners demonstrate shared accountability for improving student outcomes. • The SEA, LEAs, schools and stakeholders have explicit management processes to ensure collaboration and communication among their interdependent strategies. • Schools understand their roles and responsibilities as well as those of the LEA and SEA to help them improve. |

| Performance Management Variables | Elements | Indicators of Effective Performance Management Practices |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Collection and Use of Data | Collect accurate and timely data for performance metrics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEA collects data against metrics with the appropriate frequency to measure meaningful progress (and therefore test the theory of action). • Data collection is efficient and does not excessively burden the SEA, LEAs or schools. • The process for data collection aligns with the SEA’s routines for monitoring progress. • For automated data collections, the State uses data validation procedures to ensure data quality. • LEAs and schools state that the State’s data collection procedure is not overly burdensome. |
| | Set performance metrics that articulate progress toward goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance metrics are specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic and time bound. • Metrics describe both long- and short-term progress; short-term goals are measured by leading indicators assessing resource use and quality of implementation, while long-term goals are measured by student outcomes. • The data collected are manageable and actionable; they focus on a concise number of goals and indicators in order to give the SEA a clear view of progress. • LEAs and low-performing schools can articulate the key performance metrics that describe their progress and performance. |
| | Establish routines to monitor practices and to adapt strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A routine and methodical process is in place to: (1) facilitate a discussion on the progress of strategies against goals as evidenced by leading indicators and to (2) monitor progress against outcome goals. • During the monitoring routines, SEA, LEA and school leaders reflect on the quality of implementation and outcomes and they problem solve as necessary to identify clear next steps and adaptations in the strategies to strengthen future implementation. • The performance management conversations in the routines balance problem solving and accountability. • The SEA actively supports LEAs in the improvement of their own performance management routines. • LEAs and schools report that they feel the SEA’s implementation of the performance management routine demonstrates that the SEA wants them to succeed. |
| Accountability for Results | Link internal accountability (SEA) to results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEA turnaround leaders are accountable for implementing the strategies of their theory of action. • The SEA uses readily accessible performance data to determine the quality and impact of State programs and investments with low-performing schools. • The SEA discontinues programs or investments if the data indicate they are not effective. • The SEA uses a knowledge management process to scale internal practices and lessons learned on strategies shown to be effective. • Schools and LEAs agree that the State implemented its priority strategies with fidelity. |
| | Link external accountability (LEAs, schools and stakeholders) to results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEA leaders clearly articulate and implement consequences for LEAs and low-performing schools that do not show improvement (for example, poor performers lose grant funding, are put on public notice or are put on State receivership) and rewards for low-performing schools that do (for example, earned autonomy and/or public recognition). • As part of the performance management process, LEAs evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and supports. • The performance management process provides flexibility and promotes adaptation to enable LEAs to continue promising practices that make progress toward the priority goals and discontinue those that do not. |
| | Engage stakeholders on progress and results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress toward published goals is transparent to internal and external stakeholders (for example, data are regularly published on the SEA’s Website and communicated with LEAs, schools and the public through regular reports). • The SEA collects feedback from stakeholders and shares the results with those who provided it. • Stakeholders report feeling engaged in the turnaround process and know how to determine progress made in a school, district or the State. |

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