
SCHOOL REDESIGN

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FORM

Please tell us about your organization and its accomplishments, and how your organization can help the students of Colorado reach their potential by completing the following form.

Instructions

- Please submit your organization's response electronically to: **PartnerRFI@cde.state.co.us** by **Friday, February 23, 2018 at 5:00 PM MST**. Late responses may be accepted or rejected by CDE at its sole discretion.
- Please address all of the questions in this application for your organization type. You may exceed the length of the boxes in the form – the PDF form will automatically add a scroll button within the box. However, please strive to keep answers concise.
- You may submit additional attachments that are directly relevant and provide additional support or evidence for the responses in the RFI form.
- If there are any questions about the RFI process or the PDF form, please address those to Brenda Bautsch at Bautsch_b@cde.state.co.us.

Public Posting and Release of Information

- CDE will publicly post the responses that sufficiently address all of the questions listed in the RFI and provide concrete evidence of improving student outcomes in low-performing schools on CDE's public website for schools and other interested parties to access the information: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performance>
- This information will be posted no later than March 23, 2018.
- Further, all information submitted in response to this RFI (inclusive of submissions that are not posted on CDE's website) are subject to public release through the Colorado Open Records Act, CRS § 24-72-200.1, et seq.

Additional Information on the RFI Process

- In the event that a response is incomplete, missing information or needs additional evidence, CDE at its sole discretion may reach out to the respondent for more information or a resubmission, or CDE may elect not to include the response on its publicly posted list.
- This Request for Information will be re-opened annually to allow for additions to the public list of providers.
- If a provider is added to CDE's public list through this RFI process and needs to make changes to the posted information, please contact Brenda Bautsch at Bautsch_b@cde.state.co.us.

Background

1) Organization name: _____

2) Organization contact person and contact email and phone number:

3) How would you classify your organization? You may check more than one category:

- ☐ Charter network, charter management organization or charter school
- ☐ Turnaround leader development provider
- ☐ Management organization or non-profit network.

4) Describe what geographical regions in Colorado you would prefer to work in:

5) Please complete the following online form to select which school districts your organization is willing and able to engage with: <https://goo.gl/forms/8gceFV5PVEVnQZ0e2>

If applying as a *management partner or non-profit network* please complete the following questions:

1) Please list which of the following roles your organization can serve (check all that apply).

See Table 1 above for a description of the roles listed below.

- ☐ Whole system
- ☐ Instructional transformation
- ☐ Talent development
- ☐ Culture shift
- ☐ Turnaround leadership
- ☐ Other: _____

2) How will you differentiate your services to meet the unique needs of schools and districts in Colorado, especially those with historically underserved students?

- 3) When considering partnering with a school or district that you have not partnered with before, what would be the key aspects or conditions of an agreement you would need to have in place with the district (or authorizer) in order to make your school successful?

- 4) Describe your experience working with other third party providers to support coherent school and district improvement.

Evidence of Track Record of Improved Student and School Outcomes (ALL respondents)

- 1) Please illustrate your organization's track record in dramatically improving schools or districts and radically increasing outcomes for targeted groups of students. Include a description of the criteria and the data that you use to determine the impact of your work. Please highlight the context and location of where this work has occurred. Formal research studies are preferred, if available.

References

For management partners and turnaround leader development providers, please include the name and contact information for the last three schools or districts your organization contracted with. These schools or districts will be contacted by CDE staff for references.

For charter school networks, CMOs and individual charter schools who are submitting information, please list three references that could speak to your capacity to support successful student outcomes in a turnaround environment, including a current authorizer of one of your schools.

Reference # 1:

Reference # 2:

Reference # 3:

Attachment 1: Mass Insight Education & Research Theory of Action and School and District Supports

In 2007, Mass Insight Education & Research (MI) published The Turnaround Challenge¹, a research report and call to action that highlighted the need for intervention in America's lowest-performing schools – former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called the report, “the Bible of school turnaround.” The report also established the framework for our school turnaround theory of action.

Since 2009, MI has worked with schools, districts, and state education agencies in Massachusetts and across the country to redesign the systems that support chronically underperforming schools and to drive gains in student achievement. We recently revisited MI's theory of action based on our ten years of experience in turnaround. Our new theory of action puts increasing focus on the instructional core and collective responsibility for student success:

We believe that if we work with state education agencies, districts, and schools to ensure schools have:

Conditions: Sufficient school-level control over people, time, money, and program to address the root causes of low performance;

Planning: Evidence-based, actionable improvement plans that address the root causes of low performance informed by a review of existing conditions and input from school, district, and community stakeholders;

Leadership: A principal who can manage and communicate complexity while maintaining focus on the school's vision and key priorities;

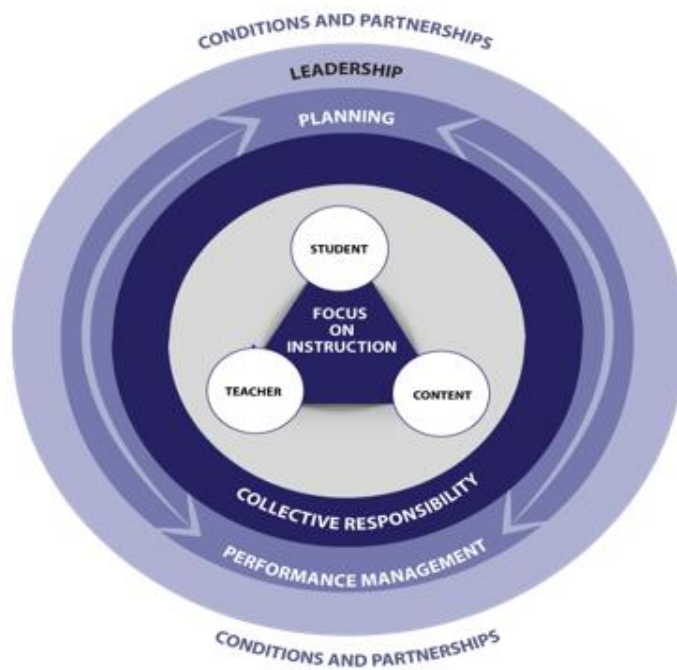
Focus on Instruction: Processes and supports that help teachers work together to constantly improve and refine standards-based instructional practice so that students can engage in deep learning tasks;

Collective Responsibility: The school faculty and staff ensure there is collective responsibility for both the quality of instruction and student learning and success;

Performance Management: Consistent processes for using data to measure both implementation and outcomes to determine what's working and inform efforts to improve; and,

Partnerships: Partnerships that help the school meet the multiple needs of teachers and students,

THEN schools will dramatically improve and student learning will increase.



¹ Mass Insight Education and Research. Mass Insight Education and Research Institute, Inc., 2007, *Mass Insight Education*, www.massinsight.org/resources/the-turnaround-challenge/

School and District Supports

Mass Insight Education & Research works with schools and districts to advance elements of our theory of action by providing support in three areas: whole system, culture shift, and turnaround leadership.

Whole System

We believe that the school is the unit of change and improvement and therefore, “one size fits all” support from district offices is unlikely to reverse a history of low performance. Our systems-level support involves working closely with districts and schools to create the conditions and differentiated supports necessary for individual schools to meet their unique student needs, often through the creation of transformation zones.

In our 2007 report, *The Turnaround Challenge*, Mass Insight proposed a new strategy for school improvement through the creation of zones. The zone structure is intended to achieve sustainable and dramatic improvement in a cluster of persistently low performing schools and establish a model for broader district and system transformation. Zones are carved out spaces that allow a strategically selected group of schools (ideally 4-7) with some common interests, such as K-12 attendance patterns or similar identified challenges, to operate under different operating conditions and receive different supports than other schools in the district. Zones are managed and supported by an internal or external zone office that carves out the middle ground between the top-down control of the central office and the inefficiencies of school-level control.

We support zone design, development, and implementation. Our work includes strategic school selection based on needs, creation of zone office structures, securing conditions in the areas of people, time, budget and program necessary to address school needs, and engaging community members. By creating a space within the district that adopts model organizational practices to provide schools with more flexible operating conditions that address the root causes of low performance, zones help districts implement sustainable strategies that can turn around low-performing schools and be scaled district-wide. The model transforms governance and management structures within districts to create streamlined, adaptable organizations that manage, support, and lead schools based on identified needs.

The zone model also provides greater accountability for increased performance. Zone directors report to the Superintendent and are held accountable for managing school performance and achieving determined performance outcomes. To support zone performance management, MI facilitates improvement planning, goal setting, and ongoing processes for assessing zone effectiveness and impact. In some districts, we have established performance contracts between zone directors and district leadership to codify expected outcomes and accountability measures.

Culture Shift

We believe that by strategically organizing the ways that adults work together, school leaders can help build a culture in which there is collective responsibility for student learning and success. Mass Insight’s work on structures and processes to support a culture shift towards collective responsibility, with individual schools and clusters of schools, includes:

- School improvement planning processes and performance management; and
- Distributive leadership structures and effective professional learning communities (PLCs).

School Improvement Planning Processes and Performance Management

We believe that schools need evidence-based, actionable plans that address the root causes of low performance informed by a review of existing conditions and input from school, district, and community stakeholders. We also believe that school leaders need to own the plan and lead its implementation. Consequently, much of our work focuses on work with principals, instructional leadership teams, and district leaders to build, implement, and monitor robust improvement plans.

Beginning with a needs assessment and the identification of the root causes of low performance, MI works with the school leader to organize a school planning process and assemble a representative school improvement planning team, which usually includes the school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), as well as parent and sometimes student representatives. We facilitate collaborative planning sessions with the school leadership teams to identify the root causes of low performance, establish priorities and SMART goals, identify improvement strategies, build action plans, and agree to processes for managing plan implementation.

Our approach to performance management is rooted in the belief that sustainable change requires the school leader and a representative team (e.g. ILT) to take ownership for the success of the school improvement plan. We work with the school leader and ILT to establish a regular process that focuses on three questions: Are we doing what we said we would do in our plan? Is it making a difference? If not, what do we need to change? Our work includes creating data trackers and systems, as well as establishing protected time and processes for teams to examine data for continuous improvement.

Distributive Leadership Structures and Effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Rick DuFour said, "The professional learning community model flows from the assumption that the core mission of formal education is not simply to ensure that students are taught but to ensure that they learn."² MI works with principals and ILTs to help build and sustain PLCs that ensure student learning. MI's PLC work varies widely depending on school level, the current state of PLCs in the school, and the willingness and capacity of teachers to engage in collaborative planning. MI's goal is for every teacher to engage with colleagues in the ongoing exploration of DuFour's three crucial questions: *(1) What do we want each student to learn?, (2) How will we know when each student has learned it?, and (3) How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?* MI's PLC work ranges from establishing new PLC structures to fine-tuning the work of existing PLCs.

By involving multiple stakeholders in school improvement efforts and distributing leadership, schools build ownership and accountability for student and school success.

Turnaround Leadership

We believe that strong school leadership is a necessary element of school improvement. School leaders need to manage and communicate complexity while maintaining focus on the school's vision and key priorities. Mass Insight has nearly a decade of experience building school leaders' capacity and helping

² DuFour, Richard. "What Is a Professional Learning Community?" *Educational Leadership*, vol. 61, May 2004, pp. 6–11., www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may04/vol61/num08/What-Is-a-Professional-Learning-Community%2%A2.aspx.

to create organizational structures that support a culture of shared ownership, collaboration, inclusiveness, and decision-making. We support capacity building for turnaround leadership for:

- Principal supervisors;
- Instructional leaders (principal, assistant principals, department chairs/teacher leaders); and
- School instructional leadership teams (ILTs).

Principal Supervisor Capacity to Coach and Mentor Principals

We believe that a principal's knowledge and skills are not fixed but can be developed and strengthened with coaching and support. Every principal reports to a superintendent or other district administrator who could help the principal reflect on his/her practice and develop his/her skills and knowledge. Too often, in both small and large districts, supervision is focused on compliance rather than building principals' capacity as instructional leaders.

We work with districts to build the capacity of principal supervisors to coach and mentor principals on the skills and knowledge required to lead school improvement. Our work involves building a coherent and effective structure for managing schools and developing principals based on evidence about how schools improve. We help identify, train, and support principal supervisors who have the capacity to coach, mentor, and manage principals and oversee schools. We also provide principal supervisors with ongoing coaching and support. MI also works with the district superintendent and other district leaders to build and/or strengthen school management structures to ensure that principal supervisors have the time and authority needed to effectively supervise and develop principals.

Instructional Leaders (assistant principals, coaches, and teacher leader/department chairs)

At the school level, MI works with schools to develop the capacity of instructional leaders (principals and assistant principals, coaches, and teacher leaders/department chairs) to implement and monitor school-wide instructional change. Our work at the school level focuses on coaching and building principal capacity to design, implement, and effectively manage school-wide instructional change including the systemic implementation of a vision for high quality instruction that targets the instructional core. We also train and coach teacher leaders to set success criteria, plan, design, and deliver professional development to their teams, monitor and analyze implementation results, and create actions plans for support based on results.

Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs)

We believe that ILTs can play a critical role in implementing the school improvement plan (SIP), building consistent, aligned, and rigorous instructional practices, and building collective responsibility for the quality of instruction and student learning. ILTs can also be a barrier to progress if they are not carefully structured and led. Therefore, MI works with school leaders on constructing the ILT, facilitating development of ILT protocols and norms, and coaching principals on ILT leadership.

MI begins by assessing the existing leadership structure. Based on the assessment, we work with the principal to create an ILT or strengthen the existing ILT. MI's work on ILTs may include help with determining ILT membership to ensure representation of grade and subject PLCs. MI also can help principals plan and facilitate an ILT retreat prior to the start of the school year. The retreat can strengthen the ILT's work as a team and prepare the principal and ILT to drive implementation of SIP priorities by setting success criteria, building plans to support teachers with the implementation of SIP initiatives, and establishing monitoring systems for continuous improvement. Once the school year is underway, we can help principals plan ILT meetings and coach principals on ILT leadership.