

School Restructuring

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| Date | January 7, 2008 |
| Number | 00054 |
| Request | One of the state departments of education in the Southeast Comprehensive Center's region has started the process of working on a takeover plan and would like to compile research from other states in the area of school and district takeover. The requestor is interested in the development of a white paper on this process thus far in other states, to provide possible direction for its state. |
| Summary | <p>The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) provides districts with several options for improving schools and districts that fail to improve student achievement sufficiently in reading and mathematics. However, the only option for those that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for 5 consecutive years is to engage in school or district restructuring.</p> <p>The NCLB restructuring consists of five options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartering • Staff replacement • Contracting • State takeovers • Other <p>Districts that are experiencing satisfactory performance but want to be proactive also may benefit from some of the strategies used in restructuring. In this response, the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) provides several published reports and Web sites that may be of use in addressing the restructuring/turnaround issue for districts at various stages of AYP.</p> |

RESOURCES

1) Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. (2006). *School restructuring under No Child Left Behind: What works when? A guide for education leaders*. Washington, DC: Learning Point Associates.

This guide was developed to help education leaders choose from among the restructuring options available for schools or districts that have repeatedly failed to make AYP. It is useful both for those that must undergo mandatory restructuring as prescribed by NCLB and for those that wish to take preemptive measures to improve schools.

The guide is based on education and cross-industry research on restructuring and provides decision-making tools supported by that research. These tools include process steps and guides for reflective thinking, in addition to considerations of strengths and weaknesses of plans for a wide variety of school districts.

This guide is available at the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement's (CCSRI) Web site: http://www.centerforsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=88.

Also, there are four documents available that provide the research framework for the guide (see below).

2) Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. *What Works When?* series:

- Reopening as a Charter School
- Turnarounds With New Leaders and Staff
- Contracting With External Education Management Providers
- State Takeovers of Individual Schools

These papers each focus on one of the options available for schools and districts restructuring under NCLB. Collectively, they provide the research that was used as the framework for *School Restructuring Under No Child Left Behind: What Works When? A Guide for Education Leaders*.

The four reports are all structured in a similar manner:

- Methodology
- Description of the option under NCLB
- What the experience is with the option
- What is known from these experiences—success factors and challenges
- What further research is needed to understand the option

These reports are available at the CCSRI's Web site: http://www.centerforcsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=88.

3) Hassel, B.C. (Atlanta, GA, 2006). *Restructuring: What we know about the NCLB options*. PowerPoint presentation presented at the CCSRI annual conference.

This PowerPoint presentation by Bryan Hassel, of Public Impact, is based on the research that informed the above-mentioned *School Restructuring Under No Child Left Behind: What Works When?* report. It can be downloaded at http://www.centerforcsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=88.

4) Walberg, H.J. (ed.). (2007). *Handbook on restructuring and substantial school improvement*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

This book was published by the Center on Innovation & Improvement, one of the five content centers in the U.S. Department of Education's network of comprehensive centers. It contains modules prepared by experts in the field of restructuring to help states, districts, and schools develop policies, procedures, and support for school improvement. Also, there is a section of checklists to aid in developing, implementing, and monitoring improvement efforts.

5) Neuman-Sheldon, B. (2007). *Making mid-course corrections: School restructuring in Maryland*. Washington, DC: Center on Education Policy.

This paper describes findings from case studies of 10 Maryland schools undergoing restructuring, during the 2006–07 school year, as required by NCLB. Case studies sought to learn more about how schools dealt with restructuring, what kinds of assistance they received from their school district and the state, and what impact restructuring had.

WEB SITES

The **Center for Innovation and Improvement (CII)** is one of the content centers that form the U.S. Department of Education’s comprehensive center network. These centers work with the regional comprehensive centers to aid state departments of education in the implementation of NCLB.

The CII Web site may be accessed using the following link: <http://www.centerii.org/techassist/restructuring/>

One of the projects supported at CII is restructuring. CII’s Web site provides a link to the Walberg handbook mentioned above and to several PowerPoint presentations from the organization’s New York/Texas restructuring retreat:

- What Works When (Hassel)
- Change and Including Stakeholders (Perlman)
- Sustaining Change (Redding)
- Statewide Systems of Support (Rhim)
- Restructuring Tools (Rhim-Hassel)

<http://www.centerii.org/restructuring/spotlights/>

A second of CII’s Web sites spotlights tools and documents from various state departments of education Web sites.

The **Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CCSRI)** also is supported by the U.S. Department of Education. Hosted by Learning Point Associates, its mission is to “assist schools and districts engaged in comprehensive school reform and improvement by providing reliable information about research-based strategies and assistance.”

http://www.centerforsri.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=88

Among the topics for which the center provides information is restructuring schools. Resources include “practical advice and templates, as well as data collection instruments, surveys, and other program evaluation tools.”

Rapid Responses are customized reports that are prepared to fulfill requests for information by the departments of education of the states served by the Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL. The responses address topics on current education issues related to the requirements and implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. For additional information, visit the SECC Web site at <http://secc.sedl.org>.

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