

ESSA Playbook: Implementing School Interventions in Georgia

February 2017

Under Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Georgia is required to identify low-performing schools for intervention. However, unlike past federal school improvement efforts, ESSA provides states with significant flexibility and authority to design interventions.

Georgia policymakers pursued a comprehensive intervention strategy in 2016, seeking voter approval for a constitutional amendment necessary to establish a statewide Opportunity School District (OSD). The OSD would have taken over the governance of up to 20 persistently low-performing schools each year; however, it was unsuccessful on the November ballot.

Nonetheless, if state policymakers leverage ESSA effectively, the federal education law will provide numerous opportunities for the state to intervene in persistently low-performing schools. Four strategies may hold the key to quickly turning around a state's lowest-performing schools—labeled **comprehensive support schools** under ESSA:

1. **Ensure that districts' school improvement plans include evidence-based interventions, compact timelines, outcomes-based measures of success and real consequences from the state if schools fail to improve.**
2. **Consider using 7 percent of Title I funds to host a competitive grant targeting districts that are willing to implement rigorous, evidence-based interventions.** Policymakers may also consider distributing such funds through non-competitive grants with strategic conditions for receipt of those funds. These grants should also be constrained to proposals that are evidence-based; rigorous; and have compact timelines, outcomes-based measures of success and real consequences for failure to improve.
3. **Use school choice to provide alternatives to persistently low-performing schools.** This strategy includes encouraging charter school expansion, attracting high-quality charter operators and promoting community engagement.
4. **However Georgia moves forward with school interventions, several policies can enable school improvement across the board.** Policymakers should implement weighted student funding, foster high-quality teacher and leader pipelines, and promote integrated student services.

SUMMARY OF ESSA INTERVENTION PROVISIONS

In the transition to ESSA, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) must develop first an accountability plan, which they must submit to the U.S. Department of Education in the spring to early fall of 2017. (See ExcelinEd's [ESSA Playbook for A-F School Accountability](#) for details and recommendations regarding state accountability systems.)

Based on its accountability plan, GaDOE will identify schools for **targeted** and **comprehensive** support during the 2017-18 school year. Interventions will begin in the 2018-19 school year.

ESSA REQUIREMENTS FOR TARGETED SUPPORT AND COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SCHOOLS

Targeted Support

Identification: Schools that have at least one subgroup of students that are “consistently underperforming,” as defined by the state.

Requirements for Intervention: Targeted-support schools must develop and implement plans to improve student outcomes in the identified subgroup. The district (not the state) approves and monitors the plans. In addition, if any school identified for targeted support has a subgroup performing as poorly as the bottom 5 percent of Title I schools in the state, GaDOE must assess the allocation of resources and address inequities.

Exit Criteria: GaDOE must set exit criteria for schools in targeted support. If a school does not meet those criteria within a state-determined number of years, the school transitions to comprehensive support.

Key Role of the GaDOE: Assess allocation of resources, set exit criteria and shift persistently underperforming targeted-support schools to comprehensive-support status.

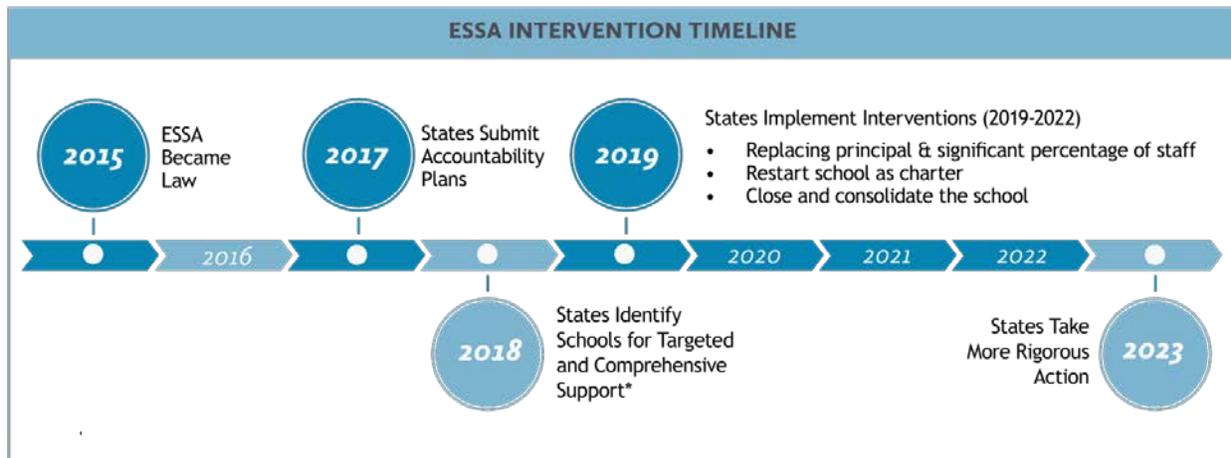
Comprehensive Support

Identification: Schools performing in the lowest 5 percent statewide, have a four-year graduation rate of less than 67 percent, or have a subgroup that is performing as poorly as the lowest 5 percent of schools in the state and has not improved with targeted support.

Requirements for Intervention: Districts must develop and implement improvement plans for schools identified for comprehensive support. The plans must include evidence-based interventions; identify resource inequities; be informed by all indicators in the state’s accountability system; and be approved by the school, district and GaDOE. GaDOE must monitor and periodically review district improvement plans, and set the criteria for schools to exit comprehensive support.

Exit Criteria: The GaDOE must set exit criteria for schools in comprehensive support. If the exit criteria are not satisfied within a state-determined number of years—not exceeding more than four years—the GaDOE must take more rigorous actions.

Key Role of the GaDOE: Encourage the adoption of evidence-based intervention strategies; review district plans for school improvement and monitor implementation; and design and implement more rigorous actions for schools that do not improve over time.



GEORGIA’S ROLE IN SCHOOL TURNAROUND UNDER ESSA

Under ESSA, states have a limited role in schools in targeted support, but they can significantly influence interventions for schools in comprehensive support and for persistently low-performing schools. This state influence is possible because, under ESSA, states are freed from the federally prescribed intervention models that were required under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the previous version of the law.

ESSA gives Georgia the opportunity to exercise this influence through the following key state actions:

KEY STATE ACTION #1: Encourage Districts to Adopt Rigorous Intervention Strategies.

ESSA requires GaDOE to recommend evidence-based practices to districts and to review, approve and monitor the implementation of districts’ school improvement plans. This authority provides the state with significant leverage to encourage aggressive interventions across all schools in comprehensive support. One strategy is for the GaDOE to issue a list of approved school interventions and apply high standards for approving districts’ school improvement plans. In particular, GaDOE (or the legislature, if necessary) could make a strong commitment to eliminating options for school improvement plans that are vague, protracted or do not fundamentally alter the operation of the school. GaDOE could also ensure that district plans have compact and strict timelines and measures of success based on student outcomes rather than system inputs.

Evidence for Successful School Interventions

Despite decades of efforts to improve persistently low-performing schools, there is a limited body of rigorous research on their success.ⁱ The existing research has drawn mixed conclusions.ⁱⁱ Yet several studies find that the least intrusive interventions—such as developing teacher effectiveness or redesigning instructional programs—have had little to no impact on student achievement when implemented in isolation.ⁱⁱⁱ On the other hand, some research suggests that student outcomes have improved under more transformative interventions—such as replacing school staff, restarting the school as a charter school or closing the school and enrolling students in higher-performing schools.^{iv} As a result, it may be

beneficial for GaDOE to use its authority to provide a list of school intervention strategies and review district school improvement plans to encourage the adoption of more transformative interventions.

Several of these interventions bear a close resemblance to several of the options provided under the Obama administration’s School Improvement Grant (SIG) program. The SIG program has not produced the hoped-for results, but it is important to note that nearly three-quarters of grantees chose to implement less aggressive reforms under SIG’s “school transformation” model. The 26 percent of SIG grantees using the more aggressive interventions (e.g., replacing staff, charter takeover and closure) showed more promising improvements in student outcomes. GaDOE could use its review process to push districts past less intrusive “transformation” approaches and ensure they adopt more aggressive approaches.

SCHOOL INTERVENTION	
Models	Resources
<p>#1 – <i>Replacing principal and significant percentage of staff.</i>^v</p> <p>Evidence: A study of SIG-funded school reforms in California found that schools that implemented reconstitution (which SIG calls “turnaround”) showed significant improvement in student achievement relative to counterparts using more moderate school improvement models.^{vi}</p> <p>#2 – <i>Restart as a charter:</i> Close the school and restart it under the management of a charter school operator, a charter management organization (CMO) or an educational management organization (EMO).</p> <p>Evidence: As part of the School District of Philadelphia’s Renaissance Schools Initiative the CMO Mastery Charter Schools closed and reopened six low-performing schools—three elementary and three middle/high. The CMO enrolled the same students, but with different leadership and staff. Since the restart in 2010, Mastery’s takeover schools have seen progress in student achievement results and increased college-going rates; the schools now</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Dot Public Schools is a charter management organization (CMO) that operates schools in California, Tennessee and Washington State. It has also served as a turnaround partner and provider to multiple schools. Examples of its success and an independent evaluation from UCLA’s Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing are on the CMO’s website. • Mass Insight Education partners with school districts and state education agencies (SEAs) “to redesign the way they support their lowest-performing schools ... by fixing policies, structures and incentives surrounding state and local systems.” Read about its approaches and what SEAs can do to help. • Mastery Public Schools is a CMO that operates schools in Philadelphia and Camden. Key outcomes of its turnaround efforts are online. • Communities in Schools is a nonprofit organization that partners with schools and communities to provide integrated student supports (or wraparound services) to a state’s neediest students. • Julie Corbett, “Chartering Turnaround: Leveraging Public Charter School Autonomy”

<p>draw more demand from the local community.^{vii}</p> <p>#3 – Close and consolidate: Close the school and enroll its students in higher-performing schools in the district.</p> <p>Evidence: A study of 18 school closings in Chicago found that students who transferred to the strongest receiving schools experienced an achievement gain of nearly one month in reading and more than two months in math. Research in Ohio and New York also show positive results.^{viii}</p>	<p>to Address Failure,” 2015, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Dee, “School Turnarounds: Evidence from the 2009 Stimulus,” 2012, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 17990. • Public Impact and EdPlex, “School Restart Authorization Process Guide,” 2016. • Katharine Strunk, et al. “The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District,” 2016, Education Finance and Policy.
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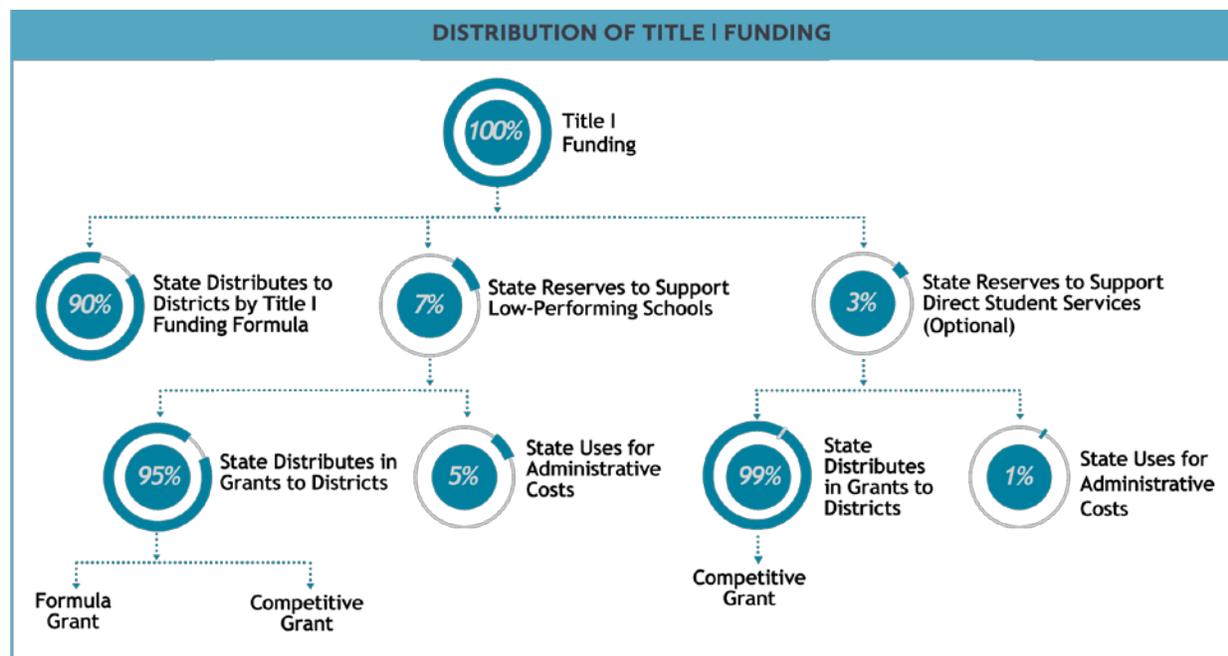
**KEY STATE ACTION #2:
Use Its Authority to Distribute Federal Funds to Push Districts
Toward Rigorous Interventions.**

The second potential strategy to encourage districts toward proven rigorous interventions includes using the GaDOE’s distribution of federal funds.

ESSA provides states with significant resources to support school interventions. Georgia will receive an estimated \$532 million in Title I dollars in fiscal year 2017. GaDOE holds the purse strings on this funding (see Figure 2) and can use this authority to influence school interventions in two ways.

First, GADOE must reserve 7 percent of Title I funds (over \$37 million) for school interventions; GaDOE can distribute these funds by formula to all districts serving the lowest-performing schools or use a competitive grant program to fund districts that are able and willing to implement rigorous reforms. If GaDOE pursues a competitive grant—or if the Georgia legislature requires that the department employ a competitive grant—GaDOE (or the legislature) can set criteria in the grant application to encourage or discourage particular approaches.

Second, GaDOE may reserve another 3 percent of Title I funds (nearly \$16 million) to support a competitive grant for direct student services, such as personalized learning, transportation or other student supports.^{ix}



In lieu of the Opportunity School District (OSD), these provisions in ESSA may be the state’s strongest levers to encourage meaningful interventions in persistently low-performing schools. One way to ensure that these efforts have the greatest possible impact on students is for the GaDOE and/or the Georgia legislature to ensure that grants are designed with similar elements of accountability embodied in the OSD proposal. In particular, competitive grants should require applicants to implement comprehensive, evidence-based interventions and disqualify those who propose anything less. Competitive grants should require a strict timeline for the implementation of the proposed intervention and ask applicants to develop measures of success that demonstrate the project’s effects on student outcomes.

A few additional design principles will help ensure the competitive grant has its intended effect:

Leave Room for Local Ownership and Innovation: Applications for both federal and state competitive grants often include an extensive list of detailed requirements. As a result, winning a grant can become a competition more about checking all the boxes than about the potential of an applicant’s plan. If GaDOE limits grant options to the three school intervention models described above, it can be more confident that the reforms will be sufficiently transformative while still leaving room for local ownership and innovation. For example, GaDOE could require districts to restart a school as a charter but leave it to the district to select the CMO and the other supports that school would receive.

Create a Bright Line Between Oversight and Operation: GaDOE is responsible for designing and administering the grant competition, evaluating proposals and funding the transformative models. It must also hold schools accountable if they fail to implement the reforms promised in their applications. Unfortunately, it is difficult for GaDOE to hold a grantee accountable while simultaneously offering technical assistance to that grantee. GaDOE can enable schools

to access high-quality implementation support from qualified providers by providing directly for the support *or* by creating firewalls between state department offices charged with implementation support and oversight.

Require Rigorous Evaluations: Too often, school improvement efforts are deemed a success or a failure without a methodologically sound evaluation or consideration of other outcomes. ESSA requires states to identify schools for comprehensive support if they are in the bottom 5 percent of performance or have graduation rates below 67 percent. At least 100 schools will fall into this category in Georgia. GaDOE should ensure that grants and school improvement plans require a high-quality evaluation through partnership with external providers such as institutions of higher education.

Set and Enforce Strong Accountability: Strong accountability is the linchpin of a competitive grant; without it, applicants may shy away from the most disruptive reforms, have unrealistic timelines for implementation or set unattainable goals for improvement. However, applicants who anticipate consequences for falling short will be more likely to temper their promises accordingly. Accordingly, it may be beneficial for GaDOE to be willing to withhold grant funds if a school fails to meet key milestones and to implement more rigorous interventions when reforms do not succeed.

Whichever strategies GaDOE emphasizes in its reviews of districts' improvement plans, and regardless of whether it decides to implement a competitive grant, it would be beneficial that it not allow inputs and process to substitute for strong accountability for outcomes. Georgia already has some promising structures that exchange autonomy for flexibility—including a charter district system and strategic waiver districts—and GaDOE can and should align these structures to the ESSA school intervention processes. Ultimately, however, GaDOE should have additional options available to address schools that continue to struggle despite district interventions. In particular, despite the defeat of the OSD, Georgia can nonetheless pursue school choice as a school-improvement strategy.

**KEY STATE ACTION #3:
Increase School Choice to Address
Persistently Low-Performing Schools.**

For schools that do not improve after four years in continuous improvement, ESSA requires states to take more rigorous actions. The expectation is that interventions will start in the 2018-19 school year and that a school's four years will conclude at the end of the 2021-22 school year. However, nothing in ESSA prevents states from intervening before then. Many of the same schools that lingered in "restructuring" under NCLB were in "priority status" under the ESEA waivers and are now likely to enter "comprehensive support" under ESSA. Therefore, it may be in Georgia's best interest to not wait another four years to act.

Georgia's constitution prevents the state from directly intervening in the operation of schools. However, policymakers can and should support immediate options for students who have been languishing in low-performing schools for far too many years.

School choice gives families the freedom to leave persistently low-performing schools. Moreover, research shows that school choice, in combination with strong accountability, can have a positive effect on low-performing schools.^x

Promote the Expansion and Replication of High-Quality Charter Schools: It would be beneficial for Georgia policymakers to look for ways to enable and accelerate the growth of high-performing charters. One example would be improving charters' access to unused district facilities by providing a definition of what unused facilities must include and creating an appeals process that charter schools can use when districts do not comply. Charter school authorizers could also create expedited processes for charter schools with proven records of success, and the state should reward authorizers who proactively expand high-performing charters.

Attract High-Quality Charter Management Organizations: The nation's best CMOs have enormous potential to drive the expansion of high-quality charter schools, but very few have expanded into Georgia. **To attract the best CMOs**, one set of strategies that Georgia policymakers could take include the following.^{xi} First, more could be done to ensure charter schools receive equitable per-pupil funding. New charter schools need equitable and reliable per-pupil funding to ensure success during a new school's early years. Second, GaDOE could pursue start-up funding for charter schools through the federal Charter Schools Program grant. Finally, Georgia's charter school authorizers should partner with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools to ensure that district authorizers and Georgia's State Charter Schools Commission develop practices that effectively balance rigorous authorizing standards with the potential benefits of new entrants and school models.

Leverage Direct Student Services to Facilitate Access to Choice: GaDOE can reserve 3 percent of Title I funds and direct them toward state-determined student services in districts with significant proportions of schools in comprehensive support.^{xii} GaDOE could use the competitive grant to target funds to expand enrollment in educational options, such as course access programs or schools of choice. GaDOE can award grants to districts to begin creating or to supplement an existing course access program. Or, because low-performing schools are often concentrated in specific neighborhoods or regions, GaDOE can use these funds to encourage more districts to participate in Georgia's existing inter-district choice program, perhaps by transporting students in comprehensive support schools to higher-quality alternatives or reserving direct student service funding for districts that make room to enroll additional inter-district choice students.

Build on the Success of Georgia's Private School Choice Programs: In addition to expanding school choice among charter and district schools, the Georgia legislature can also do more to support and improve its existing private school choice programs: the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program and the Georgia Qualified Education Expense Tax Credit program. In particular, the annual cap on the tax credit scholarship program could be revised by calculating the cap in terms of donations *received* rather than *pledged* and by annually readjusting the cap to allow for the program's incremental growth. In addition, it may be beneficial for the Georgia legislature to ensure that students otherwise assigned to low-

performing schools are eligible to participate in the tax credit scholarship program immediately.

Ensure Authentic Community Engagement When Schools Open and Close: School choice can create tension in neighborhoods with struggling schools. New schools may find themselves at odds with existing district schools, especially when new schools of choice have non-local partners. In addition, schools of choice are typically subject to much stronger accountability and are more apt to face closure if they fail to improve student outcomes. Strong community engagement will promote the long-term success of new school options and ensure that any school closures minimize the cost to communities' unique cultures and social capital. To encourage authentic community engagement, authorizers should amend charter application processes to evaluate operators' plans, activities and demonstrated success in community engagement. In addition, authorizers (or GaDOE) should disseminate successful strategies for authentic community engagement, such as building community awareness, building the capacity of community leaders and fostering collaboration to find solutions to shared problems.^{xiii}

SCHOOL CHOICE AND CHARTERS: RESOURCES

- [The Foundation for Excellence in Education](#) has developed policy tool kits to help policymakers advance all kinds of school choice, including [education savings accounts](#) and [course access](#).
- [The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools](#) has analyzed each state's charter school law against [its model](#).
- [The National Association of Charter School Authorizers](#) has established [principles and standards for quality authorizing](#). It has also completed [state-by-state analyses](#) of authorizer policies and practices.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: RESOURCES

Partners

- [Democracy Builders](#) helps engage parents in the school choice movement. In addition to helping schools engage with their parent communities, Democracy Builders provides parents with [advocacy training](#) and helps [bridge the gap between parents and policymakers](#).
- [Families Empowered](#) was founded specifically to support families in systems of school choice by providing resources and information throughout the school application process for families stuck on waitlists.
- [Stand for Children](#) is a national advocacy organization that includes [family engagement and organizing](#) as one of its key strategies for supporting school improvement. It has created [Stand University for Parents](#) (Stand UP) to help parents get involved in their children's education.

Research and Analysis

- Andrew P. Kelly, "[Turning Light into Electricity: Organizing Parents for Education Reform](#)," 2014, American Enterprise Institute.

ENABLING POLICY CONDITIONS FOR ALL STATES

Beyond competitive grants and leveraging the power of school choice, advancing the following policies may help to create the statewide conditions necessary for school improvement:

Teacher and Leader Pipelines: Schools' ability to recruit and retain effective teachers has a significant impact on school quality. Strong instructional leadership from the principal and district support can also produce positive results.^{xiv} Improving existing teacher and leader preparation programs would improve school quality.

For teacher preparation programs, for instance, GaDOE could require or incentivize these programs to increase their emphasis on clinical experience. For principal preparation programs, this means setting clear standards for program approval, including minimum standards for admission, course requirements, and clinical experience. Requiring or incentivizing these programs to improve the training principal candidates receive on budget management, human resources, community engagement and using data to drive instructional improvement would also be beneficial.

Integrated Student Services: Struggling schools, students and families often have additional health, emotional and behavioral needs but have trouble effectively accessing the maze of public and private services in the community. Organizations like Communities in Schools can work in conjunction with other transformative reforms to ensure state and local resources are getting to where they are needed most. GaDOE should encourage low-performing districts to partner with organizations that can help ensure their students receive the wraparound services that they need to succeed.

School Funding and Teacher Compensation: Georgia is one of a handful of states that continues to distribute school funding based on staff rather than students. In short, Georgia funds districts based on the staff employed at their schools, adjusted for years of experience and degrees earned, rather than on the instructional needs of the students they serve. Because less experienced teachers have lower salaries and tend to teach in more disadvantaged schools, staff-based funding models often exacerbate inequities in funding between districts. Moreover, the tight relationship between staffing and funding combined with the step-and-lane salary structure in Georgia limits districts' capacity to use financial incentives to attract and retain high-quality teachers. The Education Reform Commission recommends that the Georgia legislature, "develop a student-based funding formula consisting of three components: student-based funding, weighted student characteristics and categorical grants."^{xv} A 2012 report by Public Impact for the Georgia Chamber of Commerce similarly recommended that the Georgia legislature revise its formula so that as much funding as possible is allocated based on students and their characteristics.^{xvi} State legislators consider this advice and revise the state's funding formula to align with students' instructional needs, enable funding to follow students, and allow districts more flexibility in how they use those funds.

TEACHER AND LEADER PIPELINES: RESOURCES

Partners

- [TNTP](#) is a nonprofit organization that supports districts and charters in effective talent management—from classroom support to district-level functions. TNTP also operates [alternative teacher preparation programs](#) for career switchers.
- In addition to traditional school leader preparation, a number of nonprofits, including [Building Excellent Schools](#), [New Leaders](#), [Fisher and Miles Family Fellowship](#) and the [Ryan Fellowship](#), train school leaders

Research and Analysis

- The [National Council on Teacher Quality](#) has developed recommended [state policies](#) for teacher preparation; its sister organization, Teacher Prep Inspection-US, helps teacher prep programs identify and address their challenges.
- TNTP has authored a number of influential reports on teacher policies, including [teacher evaluation](#), [compensation](#), [retention](#) and [professional development](#).

WHAT'S NEXT?

ESSA gives states substantially more flexibility in how they intervene in persistently low-performing schools, and many are concerned that the devolution of authority from the federal government will lead to complacency at the state level. Georgia can help lead the way in demonstrating what thoughtful and committed policymakers can achieve when they put children first. They must not revert to anemic school intervention plans with few real consequences. Instead, as states prepare their plans this spring and summer, they must learn hard lessons from past school intervention efforts, implement strict outcomes-based regimens for districts and continue to support high-quality options through the growth of school choice across the district-, charter- and private-school sectors.

ⁱ Since the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2001 (No Child Left Behind), there has been concentrated focus on turning around low-performing schools. However, amid the policy attention, research on the implementation and effects of school turnaround efforts remains limited. Nonetheless, the existing research informs ExcelinEd's recommendations on intervention options.

ⁱⁱ O'Brien, Eileen, and Charles Dervarics. "Which Way Up? What Research Says about School Turnaround Strategies." Center for Public Education, May 2013. Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Policies/Which-Way-Up-At-a-glance/Which-Way-Up-Full-Report.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Strunk, Katherine, Julie Marsh, Ayesha Hashim, Susan Bush-Mecenas and Tracey Weinstein. "The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes: Evidence and Insights from the Los Angeles Unified School District." *Education Finance and Policy*, March 2, 2015; Dee, Thomas. "School Turnarounds: Evidence from the 2009 Stimulus" (NBER Working Paper No. 17990). National Bureau of Economic Research, April 2012. Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990>.

^{iv} Strunk et al., "The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes"; Dee, "School Turnarounds," <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990>.

^v The School Improvement Grant (SIG) required that 50 percent of teachers be replaced. There is no evidence that replacing one-half of the staff is the right amount needed for successful turnaround efforts. What is important is that districts have aligned incentives so that they are sufficiently aggressive with an appropriate proportion of teacher replacement and that the state enforces consequences if districts fail to improve.

^{vi} Dee, "School Turnarounds," <http://www.nber.org/papers/w17990>. An examination of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Public School Choice Initiative (PSCI), which sought to turn around the district's lowest-performing schools, found that the cohort of schools that implemented reconstitution and restarted turnaround efforts saw significant gains in student achievement. Other cohorts using moderate school turnaround efforts saw no change or a decrease in student achievement; Strunk et al., "The Impact of Turnaround Reform on Student Outcomes."

^{vii} "Turnaround Case Studies: Elevating Turnaround to a Systemic Level; Mastery Charter Case Study." Educational Resources Strategies, March 14, 2013. Accessed January 26, 2017. https://www.erstrategies.org/library/turnaround_case_studies; Broussard, Sharon. "Philadelphia Charters Get Results." *Cleveland.com*, May 23, 2012. Accessed January 26, 2017.

http://www.cleveland.com/opinion/index.ssf/2012/05/philadelphia_charters_get_resu.html. A restart of public schools in Los Angeles by Green Dot Public Schools, a charter management organization (CMO), has produced similar results. One study found that students attending high schools restarted by Green Dot Public Schools scored higher on California's high school exit exam on their first attempt and had higher rates of passing the English language and mathematics sections of the test than their peers at Los Angeles Unified School District high schools. In addition, students at Green Dot schools had a 25 percent higher graduation rate and scored 35 percent higher on college readiness requirements; Herman, Joan, Jia Wang, Jordan Rickles, Vivian Hsu, Scott Monroe, Seth Leon, and Rolf Straubhaar. "Evaluation of Green Dot's Locke Transformation Project: Findings for Cohort 1 and 2 Students." UCLA's National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, May 2012. Accessed January 26, 2017. http://cresst.org/publications/cresst-publication-3184/?_sf_s=Locke.

^{viii} de la Torre, Marisa, and Julia Gwynne. "When Schools Close: Effects on Displaced Students in Chicago Public Schools." UChicago Consortium on School Research, October 2009. Accessed January 26, 2017.

<https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/when-schools-close-effects-displaced-students-chicago-public-schools>. A study of 200 school closings in Michigan found that students who transferred to higher-performing schools experienced academic gains; Brummet, Quentin. "The Effect of School Closings on Student Achievement." *econ.msu.edu*, September 23, 2012. Accessed January 26, 2017. http://econ.msu.edu/seminars/docs/SC_Draft9232012.pdf. A study of 44 high school closures in New York City found that closures improved graduation rates for displaced students by 15.1 percentage points—with all of that improvement coming through a 17.4-percentage-point increase in the share of students earning more rigorous Regents diplomas; Kemple, James. "School Closures in New York City." *EducationNext* 16 (2016): accessed January 26, 2017.

<http://educationnext.org/school-closures-in-new-york-city-did-students-do-better/>. A study of school closures in Ohio found that closure generally had positive effects on the reading and math achievement of displaced students; Carlson, Deven, and Stéphane Lavertu. "School Closures and Student Achievement." Thomas B. Fordham Institute, April 2015. Accessed January 26, 2017. <https://edex.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/publication/pdfs/School%20Closures%20and%20Student%20Achievement%20Report%20website%20final.pdf>.

^{ix} "Expanding Equity: Leveraging the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to provide Direct Student Services." Chiefs for Change, April 2016. Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://chiefsforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Chiefs-for-Change-Direct-Student-Services-April-2016.pdf>.

^x Rouse, Cecilia Elena, Jane Hannaway, Dan Goldhaber, and David Figlio. "Feeling the Florida Heat? How Low-Performing Schools Respond to Voucher and Accountability Pressure." *American Economic Journal* (2013): accessed January 26, 2017.

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/aea/aejep/2013/00000005/00000002/art00009>. Greene, Jay. "An Evaluation of the Florida A-Plus Accountability and School Choice Program." Harvard University Program on Education Policy and Governance, February 2001. Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/Florida%20A+.pdf>.

^{xi} "How to Recruit High-Performing Charter Management Organizations to a New Region: Results from the 2015 CMO Survey." ExcelinEd, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Ampersand Education, 2016. <http://www.excelined.org/downloads/how-to-recruit-high-performing-charter-management-organizations-to-a-new-region/>.

^{xii} "Expanding Equity: Leveraging the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to Provide Direct Student Services," Chiefs for Change, April 2016, <http://chiefsforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Chiefs-for-Change-Direct-Student-Services-April-2016.pdf>.

^{xiii} "Organizing for Change: Family Engagement & Organizing." Stand for Children University for Parents (STAND UP). Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://stand.org/indiana/about/what-we-do/family-engagement-organizing>.

^{xiv} "School Improvement Grants: Progress Report from America's Great City Schools." Council of the Great City Schools, February 2015. Accessed January 26, 2017. <http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/87/SIG%20Report%202015.pdf>. King Rice, Jennifer, and Betty Malen. "School Reconstitution as an Education Reform Strategy: A Synopsis of the Evidence."

National Education Association, 2010. Accessed January 26, 2017.

http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/School_Reconstruction_and_an_Education_Reform_Strategy.pdf. de la Torre, Marisa, Elaine Allensworth, Sanja Jagesic, James Sebastian, Michael Salmonowicz, Coby Meyers, and R. Dean Gerdeman. "Turning around Low-Performing Schools in Chicago." University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, February 2013. Accessed January 26, 2017. <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Turnaround%20Report%20-%20Long%20Version%20FINAL.pdf>.

"A Decade of Whole-School Reform: The New American Schools Experience." Rand Corporation, 2002. Accessed January 26, 2017. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB8019/index1.html.

^{xv} "Final Recommendations to Governor Nathan Deal." Education Reform Commission, December 15, 2015. Accessed January 26, 2017. https://gov.georgia.gov/sites/gov.georgia.gov/files/related_files/document/FinalGovERCReport_121415.pdf.

^{xvi} Hassel, Bryan, Daniela Doyle, and Gillian Locke. "Smarter Funding, Better Outcomes: Georgia's Roadmap for K-12 Finance Reform." Public Impact, 2012. http://publicimpact.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Smarter_Funding_Better_Outcomes_Georgias_Roadmap_for_K12_Finance_Reform.pdf.