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UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

Partnership for Leaders in Education
Darden School of Business
Curry School of Education

RECRUIT, SELECT, AND SUPPORT Turnaround Leader Competencies

PART 1: Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies

Facilitator's Guide

OCTOBER 2015

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MODULE

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Recruit, Select, and Support: Turnaround Leader Competencies

Part 1: Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies

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Partnership and Authorship

The *Recruit, Select, and Support: Turnaround Leader Competencies* Professional Learning Module was developed through a partnership among four organizations: Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at American Institutes for Research (AIR), Center on School Turnaround at WestEd, Public Impact, and University of Virginia (UVA) Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education. Writers and developers of the materials were Dallas Hambrick Hitt, UVA Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education; Jeanette P. Cornier, Public Impact; and Catherine Barbour, Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at AIR.

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Module Overview

The professional learning module on using turnaround leader competencies was developed collaboratively by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center), the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd, Public Impact, and the University of Virginia Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education. This module contains the materials designed to implement a work session that builds the knowledge and capacity of leaders and staff members from regional comprehensive centers (RCCs), state education agencies (SEAs), and within-state regional centers on understanding turnaround leader competencies. The purpose and goal of the module is to develop stakeholder awareness and understanding of competencies for turnaround leaders.

Staff members from these agencies may wish to modify and turnkey the work session based on this module for use with district leadership teams, principals, teacher leaders, or other roles. The duration, scope, and sequence of the work session may be customized to accommodate local needs and conditions. The entire work session is designed to take place during a two-hour period but can easily be broken into smaller portions and accomplished during multiple sessions to accommodate participant time and availability.

Professional Learning Module

This work session is Part 1 of the module, *Recruit, Select, and Support: Turnaround Leader Competencies.*

Part 1: Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies

Part 2: Recruiting and Selecting Turnaround Leaders

Part 3: Developing and Supporting Turnaround Leaders

Materials

The following materials are part of this module:

- *Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies Facilitator's Guide*
- *Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies* facilitator's handouts
- *Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies* facilitator's slide presentation

All materials are available on the GTL Center's *Professional Learning Modules* website at http://www.gtlcenter.org/technical-assistance/professional-learning-modules. These materials may be used and adapted to fit the needs of the state context. To cite the content, please use the following statement: *These materials have been adapted in whole or in part with permission from the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd, Public Impact, and the University of Virginia Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education.*

Work Session Goals

This work session, based on the *Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies* part of the professional learning module, has the following goals for participants:

- Acknowledge the unique challenges of leading school turnaround.
- Identify leader competencies and actions associated with turnaround success.
- Understand the importance of competencies in turnaround leader selection and development.
- Analyze school leader behaviors to identify evidence of competencies.

Intended Audiences

Participants: Stakeholders who would benefit from participating in a work session using this module may include leaders and staff members from RCCs, SEAs, and local education agencies. All stakeholders supporting school turnaround leaders and district and school teams (e.g., superintendents, central office staff, district school board members, principals, teacher leaders, teacher association representatives, and other decision makers) will likely benefit and develop strategic action plans as a result of participation in a work session based on this module.

Facilitators: Facilitators for a work session based on this module may include GTL Center staff, New Teacher Center staff, RCC staff, SEA staff, regional service agency staff, or other technical assistance providers.

Using This Facilitator's Guide

This facilitator's guide provides suggestions for structuring the work session, notes on how to implement the suggested activities, and talking points to be used with the slide presentation. It also includes additional in-depth content information for facilitators to use within their presentations or to offer to participants interested in deeper learning.

Materials

The following materials are recommended for the work session and associated activities:

- Computer for the *Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies* slide presentation
- Internet access for participants for the following activities: viewing videos
- Projector and screen
- Name table tents (optional)
- Poster paper (preferably the kind with adhesive backing; if these are not available, bring masking tape to post the papers on the wall)
- Colored markers
- Sticky notes
- Adequate reserved space, time, and materials
- Tables arranged to support small-group discussions
- Necessary materials printed

Preparation for Work Session Activities

Prior to the start of the work session, prepare the following materials:

- Print copies for participants of:
  - Presentation Handout
  - PLM Overview Handout
  - *The Big U-Turn* Article (http://educationnext.org/the-big-uturn/)
  - Turnaround Leader Competencies Handout
  - Turnaround Leader Actions Handout
  - Turnaround Leader Case Study Handout
  - Talent Development Framework Handout

Also, become familiar with the facilitator's guide and the handouts.

Agenda Outline

Table 1 provides a detailed outline of the agenda for the work session. It includes timing, slide numbers, activities, and materials. This outline provides facilitators with a big-picture view of this workshop and the corresponding activities.

Table 1. Detailed Outline of the Agenda

Agenda Item	Time	Slides	Activities	Materials Needed
Section 1. Overview	15 minutes	1–7	▪ Whip-around introductions ▪ Brainstorm characteristics of effective leaders	▪ Large sticky notes, markers ▪ Agenda ▪ Presentation handout ▪ PLM overview handout
Section 2. Leading Turnaround	20 minutes	8–13	▪ Activity: Video Response to The Principal Story ▪ Activity: What Sets Turnaround Leaders Apart?	▪ Large sticky notes, markers ▪ Wall Labels: *Effective Leader* and *Effective Turnaround Leaders*
Section 3. Turnaround Leader Actions	40 minutes	14–17	▪ Activity: Text Review and Jigsaw ▪ Debrief: Turnaround Leader Actions	▪ *The Big U-Turn* article ▪ Turnaround Leader Actions handout
Section 4. Turnaround Leader Competencies	30 minutes	18–24	▪ Response to Video of Michael McCormack ▪ Activity: Analyze Case Study for Turnaround Leader Competencies ▪ Debrief: Turnaround Leader Competencies	▪ Internet connection for video ▪ Case Study handout ▪ Turnaround Leader Competencies handout
Section 5. Talent Development Framework	10 minutes	25–27	▪ Activity: Turn and Talk for Talent Development Framework	▪ Talent Development Framework handout
Section 6. Closing and Next Steps	5 minutes	28–34	▪ Wrap-Up: Reflection	

Script

The following section is a slide-by-slide script that provides guidance to facilitators as they present the content and learning activities included in this work session based on this module. Reviewing the entire guide prior to facilitating the work session is highly recommended.

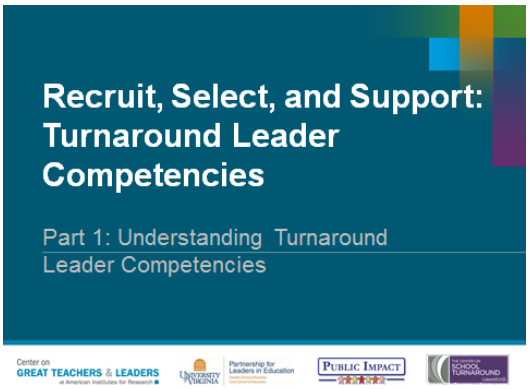
Understanding Turnaround Leader Competencies Work Session

Section 1—Overview (15 minutes)

Purpose: This section provides an overview of the work session, including the introduction of the presenters, introduction to the four partners, review of the agenda, and review of the program outcomes.

The left column provides information for the facilitator for each slide during the presentation:

- The words in italics that follow ***"Facilitation Note"*** provide details for guiding the discussion.
- The words in quotation marks that follow **"Explain"** are meant to be spoken aloud by the facilitator during the work session.

Facilitation Note: *Officially welcome the participants. Introduce yourself and fellow facilitators. Discuss your relevant background experiences to build participant confidence in your skills as facilitators.*	 Slide 1
Facilitation Note: *Let participants know that the first section will be introductions and a review of the agenda and outcomes for the work session. After we know a little about each other and where we are headed with this work, we will then begin our overview of competencies.*	 Slide 2

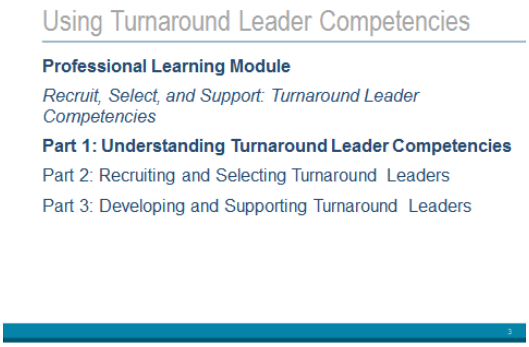
Explain: "This handout provides an overview of the entire series of the module on using turnaround leader competencies. Today, we will focus on understanding competencies, then in later sessions, we will explore uses of competencies.

PLMs developed for the GTL Center are funded by U.S. Department of Education.

This series of modules was developed in response to practitioners' questions concerning:

- What competencies are important for teachers and principals working in turnaround schools?
- How do competency-based approaches inform turnaround principal selection and development?"

Facilitation Note: *Review the PLM Overview Handout.*



Slide 3

Explain: "The materials for this work session were developed collaboratively by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at the American Institutes for Research, the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd, Public Impact, and the University of Virginia Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education. All four organizations are dedicated to promoting positive outcomes for underperforming schools and collectively have deep expertise in school turnarounds, great teaching, and school leadership.

The GTL Center is a federally funded technical assistance center created to support state-led initiatives to grow, respect, and retain great teachers and leaders for all learners. This professional learning module and others can be found on the GTL Center and Center on School Turnaround websites."

Slide 4

Facilitation Note: *Ask participants to prepare to introduce themselves by sharing the following:*

1) *Their name*
2) *Their role*
3) *One notable characteristic of an effective turnaround school leader that they know*

Explain: "For the purposes of this series of modules, we define turnaround as dramatic improvements in student achievement in persistently low performing schools (for example, an increase of 10 percent in student proficiency per year for two or more years).

Slide 5

If you don't know a turnaround principal, think of someone who has been able to facilitate similarly dramatic improvement for a classroom, group, or organization."

Facilitation Note: *Allow a moment for participants to determine what they will share.*

Then, have the participants in the room do a quick whip-around. Record the characteristics on a chart. [These will be referenced again later.]

After whip around, pose the question:

"What are the themes we see in our answers?"

Some look-fors might include (but facilitator should be ready to identify other emergent themes, or ask participants to help group):

- *Possessing a strong vision and mission*
- *Setting ambitious goals*
- *Bringing out the best in people*
- *Persisting in the face of initial lack of results*
- *Achievement oriented*
- *Committed to students and public education*
- *Out of the box thinker*
- *Positive mindset*

Review any in the above list that participants did not generate.

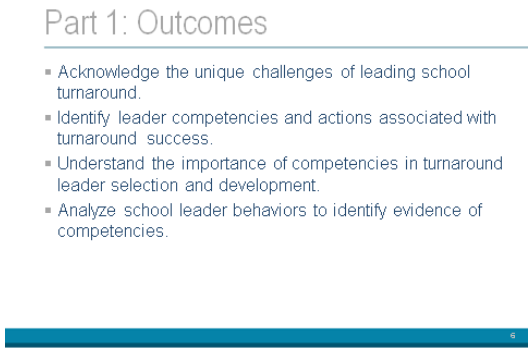
Explain: "Now that we've learned more about each other and have an idea of how we might describe what turnaround leaders do, let's look at what we will learn today."

Facilitation Note: *Review participant outcomes on slide.*

Explain: "Upon completion of Module 1, participants will:

- Acknowledge the unique challenges of leading school turnaround.
- Identify leader competencies and actions associated with turnaround success.
- Understand the importance of competencies in turnaround leader selection and development.
- Analyze school leader behaviors to identify evidence of competencies.

We will engage in several activities and review relevant material to help us achieve these goals."

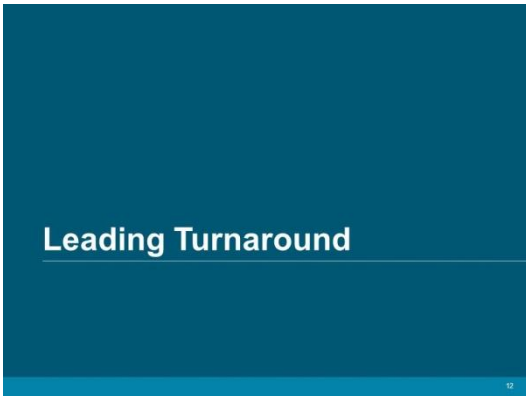
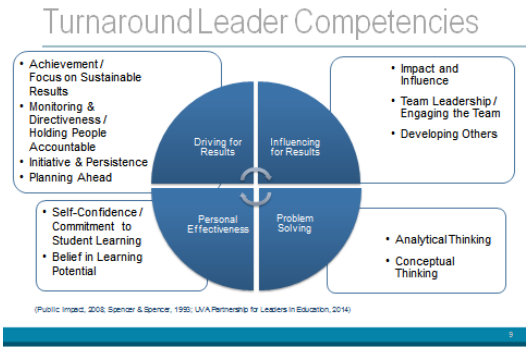


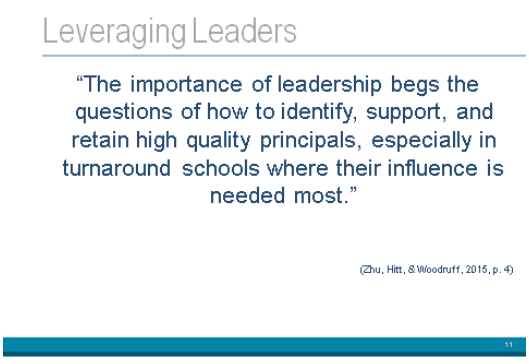
Slide 6

Explain: "The agenda for this work session is as follows." ***Facilitation Note:*** *Review agenda on slide.*	 Slide 7

Section 2—Leading Turnaround (20 minutes)

Purpose: This activity is designed to help participants begin to think about the unique challenge of leading in a turnaround school. We will use this initial exercise as a way to connect with the challenges and opportunities that turnaround leaders face.

Explain: "Let's begin with a discussion about leading turnaround in schools."	 Slide 8
Explain: "Studies on turnarounds indicate: 1) that there are specific competencies that are necessary to be successful in leading turnaround efforts, 2) that these competencies can be used to attract and select leaders for turnaround schools, and 3) that these competencies can be developed and refined over time. The enclosed Turnaround Leader Competencies handout includes a list of competencies that are identified by both Public Impact and UVA Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education. Research is underway, by UVA, Public Impact and others, to validate and refine the turnaround leader competencies and actions associated with successful school turnaround efforts.	 Slide 9

Original sources can be found in the references at the end of this module." ***Facilitation Note:*** *Refer participants to the Turnaround Leader Competencies handout.*	
Explain: "Let's take a few minutes now to better understand the challenges that turnaround principals face. This is a video clip from "The Principal Story." It is a one-hour PBS documentary and portrays the challenges principals face in turning around low-performing public schools and raising student achievement. Today, we are going to take just few minutes to hear about two principals: Dr. Tresa D. Dunbar, who is in her second year in the Chicago Public School System, and Kerry Purcell, a seven-year veteran in Springfield, Illinois. While you're watching, think about and be prepared to share your responses to the question: What are some of the unique challenges that turnaround principals face?" ***Facilitation Note:*** *Show clip from 0:52-3:36 minute mark. Then ask participants to pair up with person next to them. Each pair should take 2 minutes to answer the prompt. Debrief by asking for a couple of people to share what they came up with.*	 Slide 10
Facilitation Note: *Read the quote.*	 Slide 11

Explain: "So, what is different about leading in a turnaround school and leading in a consistently higher performing school? Let's take a minute to unpack what we know about the two.

In this activity, we will do the following:

In pairs, brainstorm differences and similarities between leading in turnaround schools and leading in higher performing schools. You'll have three minutes in pairs, and then we will come back together to share."

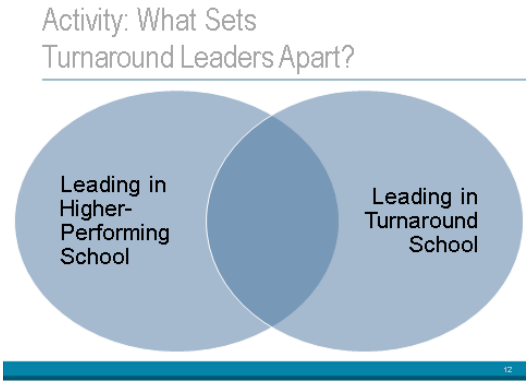
Facilitation Note: *Ask to pair up. Start timer and announce when one minute is left. After time is up, reconvene group. In whole group: Whip around and collect ideas. Keep adding until all ideas are charted (or until you fill the chart). Paraphrase the idea and then write in on the chart (paper or electronic). Review chart to conclude activity.*

Look for participant responses for <u>Effective Higher Performing Schools</u> such as:

- *Aim for smaller, incremental improvements—continuously over many years.*
- *Establish and convey the existing mission and vision.*
- *Facilitate a high-quality learning environment for students.*
- *Build professional capacity of teachers over time.*
- *Create a supportive organization for student learning.*
- *Connect with external partners.*

Look for participant responses for Effective <u>Turnaround</u> Leaders such as:

- *Aim for dramatic improvements—fast.*
- *Collect and analyze data; make action plans that include detail about dramatic changes in classrooms that teachers need to make; measure and report progress frequently.*
- *Focus on a few high priority goals with visible payoffs in the first year.*
- *Communicate a positive vision of change and enlist support of key influencers.*
- *Hold self and others accountable for actions and results.*
- *Make necessary staff and leader replacements.*



Slide 12

▪ *Make major changes to get results.* ▪ *Do what works; stop doing the rest.* ▪ *Continually raise the bar; maintain a sense of urgency.*	
Explain: "When we know the difficult and unique nature of leading a school turnaround, it is critical that we get better at identifying, supporting, and retaining turnaround principals. That is why we feel that understanding turnaround leader competencies is so important."	 Slide 13

Section 3—Turnaround Leader Actions (40 minutes)

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to facilitate participant understanding of the unique actions turnaround leaders utilize to transform their schools.

	 Slide 14

Explain: "Now that we've established that in many ways turnaround leaders are different, let's take a look at the practices turnaround leaders utilize to transform schools."

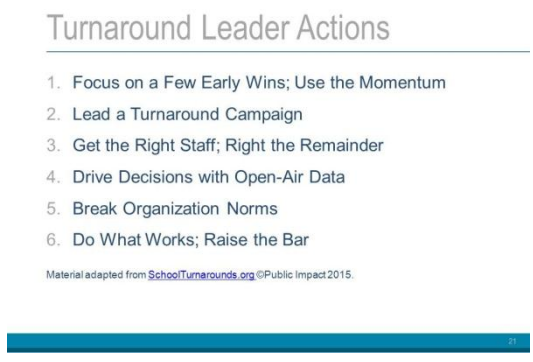
Facilitation Note: *Call participants' attention to the slide with directions for text review activity and review the slide, explaining the activity's directions. Check for understanding of directions.*

Handout: The Big U-Turn *article*

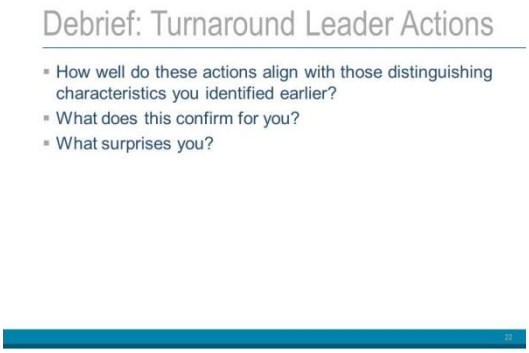
1. *Individually: Read The Big U-Turn article and highlight words and phrases that resonate with you. (10 min.)*
2. *Table groups discuss: What stands out to you about the cross-sector research and actions of turnaround leaders? (10 min.)*
   - *Focus on a Few Early Wins; Use the Momentum*
   - *Lead a Turnaround Campaign*
   - *Get the Right Staff, Right the Remainder*
   - *Drive Decisions with Open-Air Data*
   - *Break Organizational Norms*
   - *Do What Works; Raise the Bar*
3. *Whole group debrief: What did your groups discuss?*

Slide 15

Facilitation Note: *Refer participants to the Turnaround Leader Actions handout.*



Slide 16

Facilitation Note: 1. *Now transition participants' attention back to the chart they developed earlier and compare. Ask participants to note similarities and differences to those actions from the previous slide.* 2. *Read the charts of characteristics of turnaround leaders back to the group.* 3. *Ask participants to work again in pairs to discuss with their partner: "How well do the turnaround leader actions align with the characteristics of turnaround leaders that you identified earlier? What does this confirm for you? What surprises you?" Allow three minutes and use the timer for discussion in pairs.* 4. *Call group back together and do a whip around with one partner sharing a thought from their conversation. (If you have a large group, ask for a few people to share instead of doing a whip around.)* 5. *Conclude the activity by noting a few key commonalities or big points.*	 Slide 17

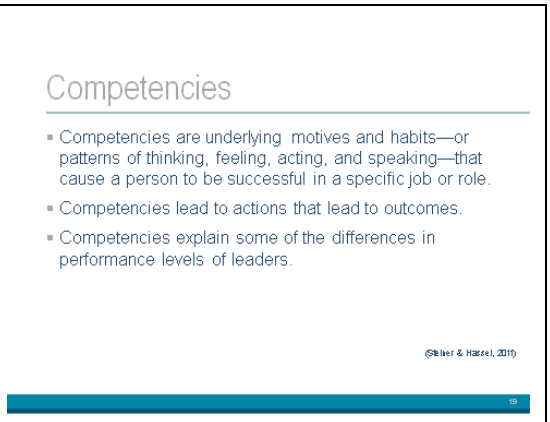
Section 4—Turnaround Leader Competencies (30 minutes)

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to facilitate participant understanding of the importance of competencies in turnaround leader selection and development and to introduce participants to the process of analyzing behaviors to identify evidence of competencies.

Explain: "In this section, we will take a closer look at the competencies of turnaround leaders."	 Slide 18

Facilitation Note: *Review contents of slide on competencies.*

- *Competencies are underlying motives and habits—or patterns of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking—that cause a person to be successful in a specific job or role.*
- *Competencies lead to actions that lead to outcomes.*
- *Competencies explain some of the differences in performance levels of leaders.*



Slide 19

Facilitation Note: *Read the quote.*

Explain: "Competency research suggests that outstanding performance in complex jobs—ones in which most candidates have a similar educational history and significant autonomy over daily work tasks—is driven more by underlying competencies than by readily observed skills and knowledge."

Slide 20

Facilitation Note:

1. *Prime participants by telling them that we will be watching a video clip of a turnaround principal, and while doing so, they should think about what turnaround leaders do and what those actions say about their competencies.*
2. *Show video clip. http://schoolturnaroundsupport.org/resources/turnaround-principal*

   Choose segment 1 (7 minutes, 45 seconds in length).
3. *Ask participants to turn and talk, and discuss what the video shows (4 min.):*
   - *What actions and competencies stand out to you?*

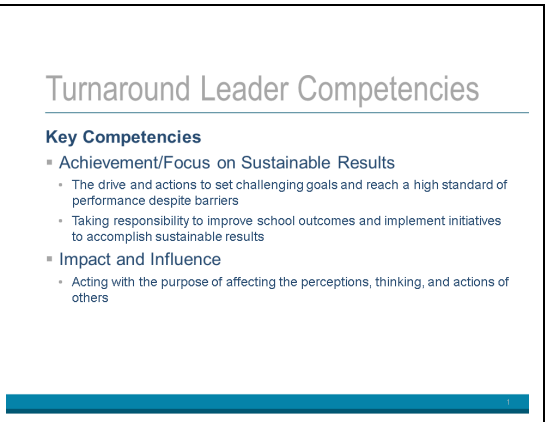
Slide 21

Facilitation Note: *Refer participants to Turnaround Leader Competencies handout and review contents of slide.*

Explain: "Although different frameworks exist, there is consensus among the contributing organizations' experts that the following key competencies that are critical underpinnings to turnaround leader success:

- Achievement/Focus on Sustainable Results
- Impact and Influence

[Cont'd on next slide]



Slide 22

[Cont'd from previous slide]

- Team Leadership /Engaging the Team
- Conceptual Thinking
- Analytical Thinking"

Slide 23

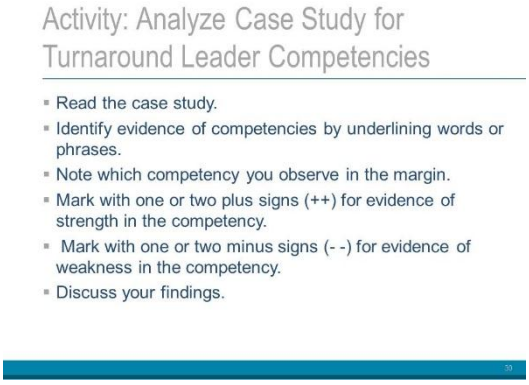
Facilitators Note*: Handout—Case Study. After reviewing directions, post slide 24 for reference during the activity.*

Explain: "Our next activity will help us better understand how these key competencies 'come to life' in turnaround leadership. We are going to read a case study, and then look for evidence of the competencies we just presented.

Here are the basic directions with times for each of the three phases. I'll keep time and tell you when one minute is left, and when to start the next phase."

Facilitators Note*: Review the following structure to prime participants for the activity.*

1. *Read the case study.*
2. *Independently identify competencies. (10 min.)*
   - *Identify evidence of competencies by underlining words or phrases.*
   - *Note which competency you observe in the margin.*

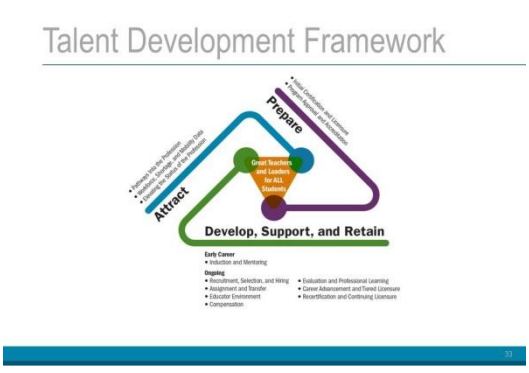


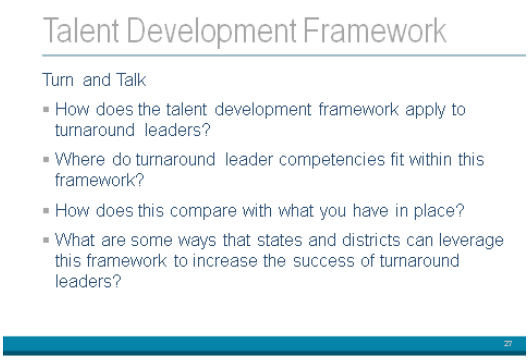
Slide 24

• *Mark with one or two plus signs for evidence of strength in the competency (++).* • *Mark with one or two minus signs for evidence of weakness in the competency (– –).* 3. *Discuss your findings with table group. (5 min.)* 4. *Debrief findings with the whole group. (2 min.)*	

Section 5—Talent Development Framework (10 minutes)

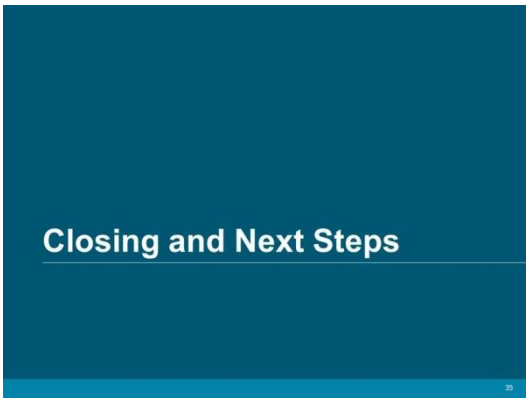
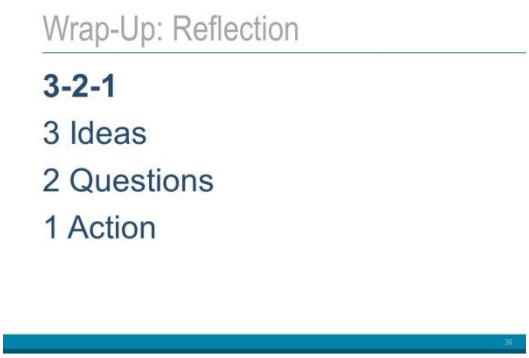
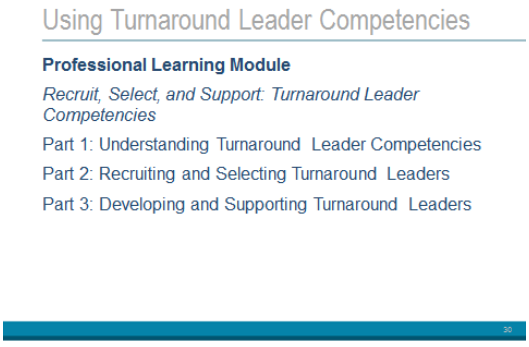
Purpose: This section explains how competencies for turnaround leaders are part of the larger framework for talent development.

	 Slide 25
Facilitators Note: *Refer participants to the Talent Development Framework handout; go over each of the 13 components. Note that it was developed by American Institutes for Research as part of a larger project to help state education agencies (SEAs) think about how to facilitate district use of talent development practices. Identify the "Develop, Support, and Retain" cluster as our focus for the three modules.* **Explain:** "Each of the policy and practice clusters in the Talent Development Framework includes several components. Components that attract educators to the profession include the following: 1. Pathways Into the Profession 2. Workforce, Shortage, and Mobility Data 3. Elevating the Status of the Profession	 Slide 26

Components that prepare future educators include the following: 4. Initial Certification and Licensure 5. Program Approval and Accreditation Components to develop, support, and retain educators include the following: 6. Induction and Mentoring 7. Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring 8. Assignment and Transfer 9. Evaluation and Professional Learning 10. Recertification and Continuing Licensure 11. Compensation 12. Career Advancement and Tiered Licensure 13. Educator Environment The Talent Development Framework is widely applicable, but we are asking you to think through this lens about how the framework applies to turnaround leaders. Note that turnaround principals are especially implicated in: ▪ Recruitment, selection, and hiring, and ▪ Evaluation and professional learning"	
Facilitator's Note: *Review the directions on slide.* *Turn and talk in pairs:* *Divide participants into partners. Explain that each pair will have three minutes to discuss the questions on the slide.* *Bring the groups back together. Whip around the room and have each pair share their most salient ideas. (If you have a large group, ask for a few people to share instead of doing a whip around.)* *Facilitator should try to summarize what the group shared about competencies and note that investigation of competencies and how they work in practice will continue to unfold in the following modules.* *End by suggesting that the big idea that we want them to walk away with is that we encourage states and districts to have conversations about their larger efforts toward talent development as well as the specific practices they develop for turnaround leaders. The larger resource, while originally aimed at an SEA audience, can be helpful for districts interested in exploring how to improve talent development.*	 Slide 27

Section 6—Closing and Next Steps (5 minutes)

Purpose: This section provides participants with a sense making activity for Part 1 and previews Parts 2 and 3.

Explain: "In this last section, we will take some time to make sense of all we've learned in Part 1 and also preview our learning in Parts 2 and 3 of this module."	 Slide 28
Explain: "In terms of all the work we've done today to explore turnaround leader competencies, let's take a minute to reflect on our learning. Please write down the following and be prepared to turn them in as your exit slip: Three ideas you have. Two questions you have. One action you commit to take." ***Facilitation Note:*** *Participants will do a 3-2-1 reflection. Provide participants with two or three minutes to write down reflections. Ask for some participants to share with the whole group. Collect the exit slips.*	 Slide 29
Explain: "Today we've completed our overview of competencies through the materials, readings, and activities in Part 1. The next two parts will allow us to build on this conceptual understanding of competencies and apply it to examine how competencies inform recruitment and selection, which is Part 2, and development and support, which is Part 3."	 Slide 30

Explain: "As previously discussed, we've included references for this module and encourage you to do further reading on turnaround leader competencies."

Facilitation Note: *Show and review slides.*

Slide 31

Slide 32

Explain: "For more information on the partner organizations that developed the content of this module and for related turnaround resources, please visit their websites."

Slide 33

Explain: "This concludes our work together today. Thank you for your time and attention."	 Slide 34

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