



Study of School Turnaround: Year 3 Data Collection Instruments

March 2016

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District Administrator Interview Protocol

Spring 2013

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0878. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per interview. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20208.



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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School(s):	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Interview: District

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

As you probably know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are under contract with the U.S. Department of Education to study how School Improvement Grant (SIG) implementation unfolds, and more specifically, the decisions and strategies schools, districts and states undertake, and the constraints they face as they work to implement intervention models intended to improve student outcomes. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24 districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on SIG implementation experiences from a diverse array of SIG grantees

Privacy

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It outlines some of the issues I've just mentioned with regard to privacy. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions.

Recording

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Do you have any questions before we begin?

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Note to interviewer: As you tailor the protocols for your schools, pay attention to the questions marked as “[For new respondents only].” If a particular respondent did not provide adequate data on the topic in past interviews, ask the question to fill in the missing information. Also, refer to the site visit companion document for other key topics that should have been addressed in previous visits.

Today I’d like to talk to you about *[SIG spring 2013 study sample school(s) in the district]*, mainly about their key successes challenges, the efforts they have undertaken to improve performance this year, then I’ll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions looking forward to after the end of SIG.

BACKGROUND

[For new respondents only] I’d like to start by asking a bit about your role in the district.

1. *[For new respondents only]* **What are your responsibilities as *[position title]*? Do you have any particular role with regard to the SIG schools? If so, can you tell me about your role now and about what you did previously?**
2. *[For new respondents only]* **The sample for this study includes *[SIG spring 2013 study sample school(s) in the district]*. We have a few specific questions about these schools but would first like to ask you to describe each of them more generally in your own words and from your perspective and current role in the district.**

Listen for:

- The level of crime, drug use, and gang activity?
- The local economy (unemployment, businesses)?
- Relations within the community?
- The level of home ownership?
- Family situations?
- The level of civic pride?

[Start here for respondents interviewed previously]

3. *[For respondents interviewed previously]* **Have there been any significant changes in the district or at *[the SIG schools]* since we spoke in the fall? Please describe.**

PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

4. We have talked with *[you or someone else in the district]* previously about some of the historical issues at *[SIG school(s) in the district]*. Thinking about these schools at this point in time (spring 2013), what would you say are the **key strengths** *[at each of the SIG schools]* and what are the **key challenges** they are currently facing in their efforts to improve student performance?

On what do you base your assessment?

Check if mentioned:	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	the School as a Whole or the Community	Other
District respondent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What do you see as the role of the district in either directly supporting the school(s) or creating the conditions for this/these school(s) to improve?

Listen for district role with respect to:

- Ensuring high quality staff through recruitment and retention support, etc.
- Providing direct services for schools (e.g., professional development or coaching for teachers and/or school leaders)
- Assisting schools with strategic planning (e.g., developing a vision, establishing improvement priorities, making connections across initiatives to promote coherence)
- Providing tools, systems, or structures that facilitate schools' improvement work (e.g., data systems)
- Ensuring compliance with regulations/grant requirements and monitoring their implementation
- Acquiring, allocating, and managing resources (e.g., funding)
- Engaging stakeholders (e.g., parents, institutes of higher education, community partners)

6. Are there particular activities or strategies the district has prioritized in 2012-13 to carry out this role?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Are these activities a priority for individual SIG schools, for all SIG schools, for low performing schools in general, or for all schools in the district?
- Why has the district been focusing on these priorities?

Listen for strategies related to:

- Recruitment, retention, distribution and evaluation of qualified/effective staff
- Curriculum/instructional practices
- Professional development for principals and/or teachers
- Parent/community engagement
- Supports for at-risk students

7. Are there any district-wide policies or initiatives that affect the school-level initiatives or conditions for improvement?

Listen for:

- Teacher evaluations
- Principal evaluations
- Curriculum/instructional practices (such as Common Core)
- Budgetary issues
- Data use

8. Are there supports that the [SIG school(s) in district] need(s) that the district cannot provide? What are they? Why can't the district provide those supports?

REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME

We would now like to get a sense of the progress you feel each of these schools has made starting with the progress they have made this year.

9. Thinking back to where the [SIG schools in study] started three years ago, to what extent have/has the school(s) made progress since the beginning of SIG? In what areas [be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1]? Why? On what do you base this assessment?

Probe if not mentioned:

- For each area of progress mentioned: What key factors led to this improvement? Were improvements driven by specific actions or strategies?
- [If little or no progress mentioned:] What has held back the school's progress?
- How much progress has been made in the following areas:
 - Leadership
 - Staff capacity
 - Use of data

10. If you were to tell the improvement story for each of these schools, what would be the story line for each over the past three years?

11. If you were to tell the story line for the district's role and support of these schools during that same period, what would that story line be?

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

12. *[Skip if no areas of improvement were mentioned]* You mentioned **[X]** areas in which you've seen improvement at the school.

a. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post SIG? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[If respondent indicates that prospects vary for different areas of improvement]:*
Please explain.

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

b. How will the recent years' progress be maintained and built upon? What steps are you taking at the district level to ensure that improvements will be sustained?

13. *[If not addressed above]* Do you foresee any changes in leadership at these schools after SIG? If so, why? What do you think will be the implications for the school's future?

14. *[Only ask if no areas of improvement were mentioned in Q9]* I understand that improvement takes time.

a. Do you believe *[SIG schools in the study]* have/has the procedures in place that should lead to improvements within the next few years? Why or why not?

b. What steps are you taking at the district level to ensure future improvements?

15. What are the main challenges you face in supporting these schools moving forward?

Probe if not mentioned:

- What resources will be used to support these action(s)?
- Will you exhaust your SIG funds this school year? If not, when do you expect to?

LESSONS LEARNED

16. Thinking back on the district's efforts to guide and support the *[SIG schools in district]* in their efforts to improve, what have you learned about supporting the low-performing schools? Are there things the district could or would have done differently? Why?

CLOSE

17. Now that you've reached the end of the three-year grant (and this is our last visit to your district), what is your overall assessment of SIG?
18. Is there anything I haven't asked you about SIG and/or *[SIG schools in the study]* that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this important study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Principal Interview Protocol

Spring 2013

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Interview: Principal

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

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Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note to interviewer: Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold)** it is likely that the respondents will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable.

Note to interviewer: As you tailor the protocols for your schools, pay attention to the questions marked as “[For new respondents only].” If a particular respondent did not provide adequate data on the topic in past interviews, ask the question to fill in the missing information. Also, refer to the site visit companion document for other key topics that should have been addressed in previous visits. **Questions and probes highlighted in italics are theory of action questions that you should make sure to ask in order for us to have rich data for the theory of action analyses.**

Today I’d like to begin by talking to you about your school’s challenges and improvements this year, then I’ll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions looking forward to after the end of SIG.

CONTEXT AND PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

1. Have there been any significant changes in the school since we spoke in the fall? Please describe.
2. *What are the key challenges your school is currently facing in your efforts to improve student performance?*

	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	The School as a Whole or the Community	Other
Check if mentioned in this interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IMPROVEMENT PROCESS AND PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENTS THIS YEAR

As we’re nearing the end of this school year, I’d like to understand more about what has been happening this year in terms of your school’s improvement strategies and any progress that has been made.

3. We want to ask about your approach to making improvements in your school. On previous visits, we’ve talked about a variety of activities your school has implemented to address performance challenges. Today, I want to hear about the **key** improvement actions or strategies for moving the school forward that you have prioritized **this year. What are they? Why have you been focusing on these?**

Probe:

- *How do the activities relate to the challenges we just discussed?*

Listen for:

- What are your goals for these activities?
- Are any of the activities a district priority? *[If so,]* a district priority for SIG schools, low performing schools, or all schools?

4. To what extent has this school made progress since last year? In what areas? Why? How do you know?

Probe:

- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* **What has held back your progress?**
- *For each area of progress mentioned:* **What key factors led to this improvement?**

Listen for:

- Were improvements driven by specific actions or strategies?

5. Details on data use:

a. *[If not mentioned at all in response to earlier questions:]* You didn't mention data use as a priority or area of improvement. Is this something your school did not focus on this year? *[If not,]* why not?

b. *[If yes to (a), or if it was mentioned but details were not provided:]* How do staff at your school use data for instructional decision-making? Who uses it? How often?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Who, or what group, at the school takes the lead for use and analysis? *(e.g., instructional coaches, data teams, etc.)* Is there a school-wide process for reviewing data?**
- **How often do teachers and other staff at your school review student data?**

6. Details on collaboration:

a. *[If not mentioned at all in response to earlier questions:]* You didn't mention teacher collaboration as a priority or area of improvement. Is this something your school did not focus on this year? *[If not,]* why not?

b. *[If yes to (a), or if it was mentioned but details were not provided:]* To what extent do teachers at this school have the opportunity to collaborate and work together?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Do teachers meet in professional learning communities? How often and for how long?**
- **What happens in these communities?**
- **Are there opportunities, such as shared planning time, for teachers to collaborate? Please describe.**

REFLECTIONS OVER TIME

My next set of questions asks you to think back **over past the three years**, since you first received the SIG award *[or, if newer principal, since you came to the school]*.

7. a. Have the challenges faced by the school in improving student performance changed over past the three years? *[if so:] How? Why?*

Probe if not mentioned:

- Were the changes a result of actions taken by the school? If so, please describe.

Listen for:

- Perception of problem changed due to perceived improvement or changes internal to the school
- Perception of the problem changed due to perceived change in external environment
- Perception of problem changed, but this change may be due to change in respondents (e.g., principal)
- Little to no change in perception of problem

b. *[Be familiar with what was identified by this respondent as the perceived performance problem at the school in previous years. If those were not mentioned in this interview, probe:]* **On previous visits to your school, we heard about performance challenges related to _____.** **Is this still a challenge?** *[If not:] How was that challenge overcome?*

8. **Over the three years of SIG implementation** *[or your time at this school, if newer principal]*, have the school's **key** improvement actions or strategies changed? *[if so:] How? Why?*

Probe:

- **How do your priorities this year compare to those in past years?** *[Be familiar with what the respondent reported in previous interviews:]*
- **Why did they change?**

Listen for: reasons for changes in priorities:

- Changes in challenges or school needs?
- Lessons learned from implementation of early strategies?
- Progress or lack of progress toward goals?
- Changes in leadership?
- Changes in funding?
- Changes at the district or state level? (for example, adoption of Common Core or impending assessments)

9. **Thinking back to where your school started three years ago, to what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG?** **In what areas** *[be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1]?* **Why? How do you know?**

Probe:

- For each area of progress mentioned: **What key factors led to this improvement?** Were improvements driven by specific actions or strategies?
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* **What has held back your progress?**
- **How much progress has been made in the following areas:**
 - School culture
 - Staff capacity
 - Collaboration
 - Leadership
 - Use of data

10. Looking back over the past three years [or, if newer principal, your time at the school], can you describe your leadership approach at this school?

How would you describe your role in the change process, and how you approached the turnaround process at this school?

Probe:

- *[If there have been changes in the approach,]* **why were these changes made?**
- *[If there haven't been changes in the approach,]* **why haven't there been changes?**
- *[If the principal was replaced at any point during the three years of SIG,]* To the best of your knowledge, did your approach differ from the previous principal's approach? Please explain.

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

11. [Skip if no areas of improvement were mentioned] You mentioned [X] areas in which you've seen improvement at the school.

a. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post SIG? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[If respondent indicates that prospects vary for different areas of improvement]:* **Please explain.**

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership

- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

b. ***How will the recent years' progress be maintained and built upon? What steps are you taking now to ensure that improvements will be sustained?***

12. ***[Only ask if no areas of improvement were mentioned in Q10] I understand that improvement takes time.***

a. **Do you believe the school has the procedures in place that should lead to improvements within the next few years? Why or why not?**

b. **What steps are you taking now to ensure future improvements?**

13. **Beyond these steps you're already taking, *what do you think the school needs to [improve / continue to improve] student performance and why?***

14. **Thinking about all of the improvement actions and strategies that your school has implemented during the three years of SIG, which do you expect the school will *not* continue after this school year? *[Be familiar with the activities and prepared to probe about specific ones that aren't mentioned—particularly resource-intensive ones such as staff positions and extended day.] Why?***

Listen for:

- No district support
- No available funding
- SIG requirement; not part of plan
- Not part of theory of action/improvement plan
- Accomplished goal for action; no longer necessary

15. **Which improvement actions do you expect will continue next year? *Why?***

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Do you expect to make any notable modifications to these continuing actions next year? *[If so:] Why?***

Listen for:

- Part of principal's theory of action/school improvement plan
- Part of district's plan

16. **What resources or supports will be used to sustain these action(s)?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- Does continuing any of these actions require new funding to replace the SIG funds that are ending? *If so, what funding sources will support their continuation?*
- Will you exhaust your SIG funds this school year? If not, when do you expect to?

CLOSE

17. Thinking back over the three years of the grant, what has SIG enabled your school to accomplish that you would otherwise not have been able to do? Is there anything that SIG required you to do that you think was not productive for your school?

18. Now that you've reached the end of the three-year grant, what is your overall assessment of SIG?

19. *If you were to tell the improvement story of this school over the past three years, what would the story line be?*

20. *How do you see this story developing over the next five years?*

Probe if not mentioned:

- *What is the long-term vision for this school?*

21. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the changes going on in your school or the SIG initiative that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this important study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

External Support Provider Protocol

Spring 2013

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Interview: External Support Provider(s)

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me. As you probably know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Education on the implementation of the School Improvement Grants (called SIG) under ARRA. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24, districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on implementation of the SIG from a diverse array of SIG grantees. More specifically, we want to learn about the change process that schools go through as they are working to turn around a history of low performance. Because external support providers play an important role in this process, we want to gain your perspective on the SIG program.

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183). **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

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If you don't mind, I would like to record this interview simply for note-taking purposes. No one outside of our research team will hear the recording; it is only for my own reference to improve the accuracy of my notes. If you would like me to turn off the recorder at any point, just let me know. Would that be OK?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

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Notes to interviewer:

As you tailor the protocols for your schools, pay attention to the questions marked as “[For new respondents only].” If a particular respondent did not provide adequate data on the topic in past interviews, ask the question to fill in the missing information. Also, refer to the site visit companion document for other key topics that should have been addressed in previous visits.

BACKGROUND AND ROLE

1. *[For new respondents only]* **Since this is the first time we’ve interviewed you, I’d like to start by asking a bit about your background. What is your expertise? What kind of training have you had?**
 - *[For new respondents who are affiliated with organizations not interviewed before]* **What is the background or expertise of [the organization]? How many low-performing schools does your organization work with?**
2. *[For new respondents only]* **How and when did you come to be the support provider for this school? What are your main responsibilities/roles within this school?**
3. *[For respondents interviewed previously]* **Has your work with this school changed at all since we last spoke [or, since you were last interviewed]? If so, in what ways? Why?**

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Now that *[school]* is at the end of the final year of the SIG program, we are interested in understanding more about what has been happening this year in terms of the school’s improvement strategies and any progress that has been made.

4. **On previous visits, we’ve talked about a variety of activities this school has implemented. Today, I want to hear about the key improvement activities or strategies that the school has prioritized for moving forward this year? Why has the school been focusing on these?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- What are the goals for these activities?

5. **To what extent has this school made progress since last year? In what areas? How do you know?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[For each area in which progress is reported:]* What key factors led to this improvement?
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* What has held back progress?

REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME

My next set of questions asks you to think back over past the three years, since this school first received its SIG award. *[Skip this section if respondent is new to the school this year.]*

6. **Over the three years of SIG implementation, have the school's key improvement actions or strategies changed? *[if so:]* How? Why?**

Probe:

- How do the priorities this year compare to those in past years? *[Be familiar with what the respondent reported in previous interviews:]*
- Why did they change?

Listen for: reasons for changes in priorities:

- Changes in challenges or school needs?
- Lessons learned from implementation of early strategies?
- Progress or lack of progress toward goals?
- Changes in leadership?
- Changes in funding?
- Changes at the district or state level? (for example, adoption of Common Core or impending assessments)

7. **To what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG (including progress this year that we already discussed)? In what areas? *[Be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1.]***

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[For each area in which progress is reported:]* What key factors led to this improvement?
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* What has held back progress?

8. ***[For respondents who have been involved with the school since the beginning of SIG:]* If you were to tell the improvement story of this school over the past three years, what would the story line be?**

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the potential continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

9. With the end of the SIG grant, do you expect that your involvement with this school will change in any way? How? Why or why not?
10. *[Skip if no areas of improvement mentioned]* Earlier in our conversation, you mentioned seeing improvement in *[areas]* at the school. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post-SIG? Why or why not?

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
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- Expect change in school staff

CLOSE

11. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the improvement strategies or this school that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

School Improvement Team Focus Group Protocol

Spring 2013

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0878. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per interview. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20208.



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Policy Research, Inc.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Focus Group: School Improvement Team

Team member name	Role(s) at the school

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me. As you probably know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Education on the implementation of the School Improvement Grants (called SIG) under ARRA. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24, districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on implementation of the SIG from a diverse array of SIG grantees. To help us better understand how [SCHOOL NAME] is using its school improvement resources, we would like to ask you some questions about the school's improvement efforts and the role of the school improvement team in these efforts.

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183). **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It outlines some of the issues I just mentioned with regard to privacy. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions. There are two copies, one is for your records, and the other, to be signed by you, is for me to keep in my files.

I'm recording the discussion so I don't have to take detailed notes and can listen carefully to what you are saying. No one outside of the research team will have access to the tape. We will not share this recording or notes from this session with the school or district administration. In addition, our reports will never identify you by name. Instead, we will combine information from this discussion with information from discussions our team is holding in other schools. Participants' comments will be reported as, "One person felt that. . ." or "About half of the participants did not agree with..." The recording is just to help me remember what you say.

I hope you will feel free to be open and frank in our discussion. I ask that none of you share what you hear with others outside the group. It will also help me if you speak clearly and if you will speak one at a time. The discussion should last about one hour.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Let's get started. [HIT THE RECORD BUTTON].

I have hit the record button. Everyone in the room has consented to being recorded.

Note to interviewer: *Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold)** it is likely that the respondents will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable.*

Today I'd like to talk to you about a few topics, primarily about your school's challenges and improvements. I'll ask about this year first, then I'll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions about the sustainability of changes after the end of SIG funds.

INTRODUCTIONS

1. *[Even though I talked with some of you last time I was here]* **Let's start by introducing ourselves. Please tell me:**
 - **your name,**
 - **your position at the school,**
 - **how long you have been at the school,**
 - **and how long you have been on the school improvement team.**

Today I'd like to talk to you about a few topics, primarily about your school's key challenges and improvement strategies. I'll ask about this school year first, then I'll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions about the sustainability of changes after the end of SIG funds.

PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

2. **What are the key challenges your school is currently facing in improving student performance?**

	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	the School as a Whole or the Community	Other
Check if mentioned in this interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IMPROVEMENT PROCESS THIS YEAR

Now that you are at the end of the final year of the SIG program, we'd like to learn more about what has been happening this school year.

3. On previous visits, we've talked about a variety of activities your school has implemented. Today, I want to hear about the **key** improvement activities or strategies that your school has prioritized for moving forward **this year**? Why have you been focusing on these?

Probe if not mentioned:

- What are your goals for these activities?
- How do the activities relate to the performance challenges we just discussed?
- How have these improvement activities affected your work?

4. To what extent has this school made progress since **last year**? In what areas?

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[For each area in which progress is reported:]* What key factors led to this improvement?
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?

- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* What has held back your progress?

REFLECTIONS OVER TIME

My next set of questions asks you to think back over past the three years, since your school first received the SIG award.

5. a. Have the challenges faced by the school in improving student performance changed over past the three years? *[if so:]* How? Why?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Were the changes a result of actions taken by the school? If so, please describe.

Listen for:

- Perception of problem changed due to perceived improvement or changes internal to the school
- Perception of the problem changed due to perceived change in external environment
- Perception of problem changed, but this change may be due to change in respondents (e.g., principal)
- Little to no change in perception of problem

b. *[Be familiar with what was identified by this group as the perceived performance problem at the school in previous years. If those were not mentioned in this interview, probe:]* **On previous visits to your school, we heard about performance challenges related to _____ . Is this still a challenge? *[If not:]* How was that challenge overcome?**

6. Over the three years of SIG implementation, have the school's key improvement actions or strategies changed? *[if so:]* How? Why?

Probe:

- **How do the priorities this year compare to those in past years?** *[Be familiar with what the group reported in previous interviews:]*
- **Why did they change?**

Listen for: *reasons for changes in priorities:*

- Changes in challenges or school needs?
- Lessons learned from implementation of early strategies?
- Progress or lack of progress toward goals?
- Changes in leadership?
- Changes in funding?
- Changes at the district or state level? (for example, adoption of Common Core or impending assessments)

7. *[If the principal was replaced at any point during the three years of SIG:]* How does the current principal's approach to the school improvement process relate to that of the previous principal?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **To what extent did the school's goals and strategies change with the principal?**

Listen for:

- i. Was there any intentional continuity?
- ii. Was there an intentional break in practice?

8. To what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG? In what areas *[be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1].*

Probe if not mentioned:

- **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* **What has held back your progress?**

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

9. You mentioned *[X]* areas in which you've seen improvement at the school. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post-SIG? Why or why not?

Probe:

- *[If respondent indicates that prospects vary for different areas of improvement]:* Please explain.

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

10. How will the recent years' progress be maintained and built upon? What steps or actions is your school's *[or the district]* leadership taking now to ensure that improvements will be sustained?

11. Beyond these steps you're already taking, what do you think the school needs to *[improve/ continue to improve]* student performance? Where do you see this school in five years?

Probe if not mentioned:

- What is the long-term vision for this school?

CLOSE

12. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the changes going on in your school or the SIG initiative that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Instructional Coach Interview Protocol

Spring 2013

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0878. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per interview. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20208.



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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Interview: Instructional Coach

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me. As you probably know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Education on the implementation of the School Improvement Grants (called SIG) under ARRA.

The study is taking place in 6 states, 24, districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on implementation of the SIG from a diverse array of SIG grantees. More specifically, we want to learn about the change process that schools go through as they are working to turn around a history of low performance. Because instructional coaches play an important role in this process, we want to gain your perspective on the SIG program.

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183). **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It outlines some of the issues I just mentioned with regard to privacy. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions. There are two copies, one is for your records, and the other, to be signed by you, is for me to keep in my files.

If you don't mind, I would like to record this interview simply for note-taking purposes. No one outside of our research team will hear the recording; it is only for my own reference to improve the accuracy of my notes. If you would like me to turn off the recorder at any point, just let me know. Would that be OK?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note to interviewer: Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold)** it is likely that the respondents will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable. ***Questions and probes highlighted in italics are theory of action questions that you should make sure to ask in order for us to have rich data for the theory of action analyses.***

Notes to interviewer:

As you tailor the protocols for your schools, pay attention to the questions marked as “[For new respondents only].” If a particular respondent did not provide adequate data on the topic in past interviews, ask the question to fill in the missing information. Also, refer to the site visit companion document for other key topics that should have been addressed in previous visits.

Today I’d like to talk to you about a few topics, primarily about your school’s challenges and improvements. I’ll ask about this year first, then I’ll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions about the sustainability of changes after the end of SIG funds.

COACH BACKGROUND

1. [For new respondents only] Since this is our first meeting with you, I’d like to start by talking about your background and your role as an instructional coach. How long have you been a coach? What was your position before your current one?

CONTEXT AND PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

2. [For new respondents only] Please **briefly** describe the school, including the community in which it is located.

Listen for:

- The level of crime, drug use, and gang activity?
- The local economy (unemployment, businesses)?
- Relations within the community?
- The level of home ownership?
- Family situations?
- The level of civic pride?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Is this school a safe place to work and learn?

3. [For respondents interviewed previously] Have there been any significant changes in the school since we spoke in the fall? Please describe.
4. What are the key challenges your school is currently facing in improving student performance?

	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	the School as a Whole or the Community	Other
Check if mentioned in this interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Probe:

- What are the key challenges you face in your work with teachers and/or the students in their classroom?
- *How are you addressing these challenges?*
- *[If not addressed above] Is this school a safe place to work and learn? Is it an orderly place?*

IMPROVEMENT PROCESS THIS YEAR

Now that you are at the end of the final year of the SIG program, we'd like to learn more about what has been happening this year in terms of your school's improvement strategies and any progress that has been made.

5. On previous visits, we've talked about a variety of activities your school has implemented. Today, I want to hear about the **key** improvement actions or strategies that your school has prioritized for moving forward **this year**. *Why have you been focusing on these?*

Probe if not mentioned:

- *What are your goals for these activities?*
- *How do the activities relate to the challenges we just discussed?*
- *How have these improvement activities affected your work with teachers?*

6. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What kinds of information do staff at your school use to make instructional decisions?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Who at the school is responsible for data use? What is your role? Is there a school-wide process for reviewing data?**
- **How often do teachers and other staff at your school review student data? How do staff use the data?**

7. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What opportunities do teachers at this school have to collaborate and work together?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Do teachers meet in professional learning communities? How often and for how long?**
- **What happens in these communities?**
- **Are there opportunities, such as shared planning time, for teachers to collaborate? Please describe.**

8. **To what extent has this school made progress since last year? In what areas?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- [For each area in which progress is reported:] **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?
- [If little or no progress mentioned:] What has held back your progress?

LEADERSHIP

I'd like to ask about leadership at this school.

9. How would you characterize the principal of this school?

Listen for:

- Accessible/Welcomes Input
- Supportive of Staff
- Visible/Known to School Community
- Visionary
- Enthusiastic
- Communicative
- Develops Leaders
- High Expectations
- Instructional Leader
- Poor Communicator
- Unsupportive of Staff/Bad Rapport
- Authoritarian
- Other

10. [If the principal was replaced at any point during the three years of SIG:] How does the current principal's approach to the school improvement process relate to that of the previous principal?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **To what extent did the school's goals and strategies change with the principal?**

Listen for:

- Was there any intentional continuity?
- Was there an intentional break in practice?

REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OVER TIME

My next set of questions ask you to think back over past the three years, since your school first received the SIG award. [*Skip this section if coach is new to the school this year.*]

11. Have the challenges faced by the school in improving student performance changed over past the three years? [*if so:*] **How? Why?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- i. *Were the changes a result of actions taken by the school? If so, please describe.*

12. Over the three years of SIG implementation, have the school's **key** improvement actions or strategies changed? [*if so:*] **How? Why?**

Probe:

- *How have these changes affected your work as a coach at the school?*

Listen for: *reasons for changes in priorities:*

- Changes in challenges or school needs?
- Lessons learned from implementation of early strategies?
- Progress or lack of progress toward goals?
- Changes in leadership?
- Changes in funding?
- Changes at the district or state level? (for example, adoption of Common Core or impending assessments)

13. To what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG? In what areas [*be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1*]?

Probe if not mentioned:

- [*For each area in which progress is reported:*] **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?

How much progress has been made in the following areas:

- School culture
- Staff capacity
- Instruction
- Leadership

- [*If little or no progress mentioned:*] What has held back your progress?

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

14. How, if at all, do you expect your work as a coach here to change next year? Why?

Probe if not mentioned:

- How, if at all, will the end of SIG affect your role at the school?

15. *[Skip if no areas of improvement mentioned]* Earlier in our conversation, you mentioned seeing improvement in *[areas]* at the school. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post-SIG? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[If respondent indicates that prospects vary for different areas of improvement]:*
Please explain.

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

16. *[Only ask if no areas of improvement mentioned]* I understand that improvement takes time. Do you believe the school has the procedures in place that should lead to improvements within the next few years? Please explain.

17. What do you think the school needs to move forward in improving student performance?

18. Where do you see this school in five years?

Probe if not mentioned:

- What is the long-term vision for this school?

CLOSE

19. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the changes going on in your school or the SIG initiative that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this study

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Teacher Interview Protocol

Spring 2013

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewee:	

Interview: Teacher

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

As you probably know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are under contract with the U.S. Department of Education to study how School Improvement Grant (SIG) implementation unfolds, and more specifically, the decisions and strategies schools, districts and states undertake, and the constraints they face as they work to implement intervention models intended to improve student outcomes. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24 districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on SIG implementation experiences from a diverse array of SIG grantees

Privacy

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It outlines some of the issues I've just mentioned with regard to privacy. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions.

Recording

If you don't mind, I would like to record this interview simply for note-taking purposes. No one outside of our research team would hear the tape, it would just be for my own reference. If you would like me to turn off the recorder at any point, just let me know. Would that be OK?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note to interviewer: Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold); it is likely that the respondents will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable. Questions and probes highlighted in italics are theory of action questions that you should make sure to ask in order for us to have rich data for the theory of action analyses.**

Note to interviewer: As you tailor the protocols for your schools, pay attention to the questions marked as “[For new respondents only].” If a particular respondent did not provide adequate data on the topic in past interviews, ask the question to fill in the missing information. Also, refer to the site visit companion document for other key topics that should have been addressed in previous visits.

Today I’d like to talk to you about a few topics, primarily about your school’s challenges and improvements. I’ll ask about this year first, then I’ll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions about the sustainability of changes after the end of SIG funds.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

1. *[For new respondents only]* **Since this is our first meeting with you, I’d like to start by asking how long you’ve been a teacher and what your roles are at this school.**

Probe if not mentioned:

- How many years have you worked at this school? in this district?
- What do you currently teach (grade/subject area)?
- Do you have any additional roles or responsibilities?

2. *[For respondents interviewed previously]* **What do you currently teach at this school? What subject and grade(s)? Is that different from last year?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- Do you have any additional roles or responsibilities? How has that changed?

CONTEXT AND PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

3. *[For new respondents only]* **Please briefly describe the school, including the community in which it is located.**

Listen for:

- The level of crime, drug use, and gang activity?
- The local economy (unemployment, businesses)?
- Relations within the community?
- The level of home ownership?
- Family situations?
- The level of civic pride?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Is this school a safe place to work and learn? Is it an orderly place?**

4. *[For respondents interviewed previously]* **Have there been any significant changes in the school since we spoke last year? Please describe.**
5. **What are the key challenges your school is currently facing in improving student performance?**

	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	the School as a Whole or the Community	Other
Check if mentioned in this interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Probe:

- What are the key challenges you face in your work with the students in your classroom?
- *How are you and the school addressing these challenges?*
- *[If not addressed above]* **Is this school a safe place to work and learn? Is it an orderly place?**

IMPROVEMENT PROCESS THIS YEAR

Now that you are at the end of the final year of the SIG program, we'd like to learn more about what has been happening this year in terms of your school's improvement strategies and any progress that has been made.

6. On previous visits, we've talked about a variety of activities your school has implemented. Today, I want to hear about the **key** improvement actions or strategies that your school has prioritized for moving forward **this year**. *Why have you been focusing on these?*

Probe if not mentioned:

- *What are your goals for these activities?*
- *How do the activities relate to the challenges we just discussed?*
- *How have these improvement activities affected your work?*

7. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What kinds of information do you use to make instructional decisions?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- **What type(s) of information do you use for instructional decision-making? How do you use it?**
- **How often do you and other staff at your school review student data?**

- Is there a school-wide process for reviewing data? Who at the school supports you in using data? (e.g., instructional coaches, data teams, etc.)

8. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What opportunities do you have to collaborate and work together with other teachers at this school?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- Do all teachers at the school have similar opportunities for collaboration?
- Do teachers meet in professional learning communities? How often and for how long?
- What happens in these communities?
- Are there opportunities, such as shared planning time, for teachers to collaborate? Please describe.

9. **To what extent has this school made progress since last year? In what areas?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[For each area in which progress is reported:]* **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* What has held back your progress?

LEADERSHIP

I'd like to ask about leadership at this school.

10. How would you characterize the principal of this school?

Listen for:

- Accessible/Welcomes Input
- Supportive of Staff
- Visible/Known to School Community
- Visionary
- Enthusiastic
- Communicative
- Develops Leaders
- High Expectations
- Instructional Leader
- Poor Communicator
- Unsupportive of Staff/Bad Rapport
- Authoritarian
- Other

REFLECTIONS OVER TIME

My next set of questions ask you to think back over past the three years, since your school first received the SIG award. [*Skip this section if teacher is new to the school this year.*]

11. How has your work as a teacher at this school changed over the past three years? What caused these changes?

Probe if not mentioned:

- How has the way you make decisions about instruction changed, if at all, since the beginning of SIG? Is use of data more/less a focus?
- How have your relationships with others changed, if at all, since the beginning of SIG? Is collaboration more/less a focus? How has that affected your work?
- How have your routines changed, if at all, since the beginning of SIG?
- [*If the principal was replaced during the past three years:*] **How has the change in principal affected your work?**
- [*If school has adopted the Common Core:*] How has the adoption of the Common Core affected your work?
- Have other teachers in your grade/subject experienced similar changes in their work? How about teachers in other grades and subjects?

12. Have the challenges faced by the school in improving student performance changed over past the three years? [if so:] How? Why?

13. To what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG? In what areas [be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1]?

Probe if not mentioned:

- [*For each area in which progress is reported:*] **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- How do you know the school made progress in this area?

How much progress has been made in the following areas:

- School culture
- Staff capacity
- Instruction
- Leadership

- [*If little or no progress mentioned:*] What has held back your progress?

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

14. How, if at all, do you expect your work at this school to change next year? Why?

Probe if not mentioned:

- How, if at all, will the end of SIG affect your job?

15. [Skip if no areas of improvement mentioned] Earlier in our conversation, you mentioned seeing improvement in [areas] at the school. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post-SIG? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- [If respondent indicates that prospects vary for different areas of improvement]: Please explain.

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

16. [Only ask if no areas of improvement mentioned] I understand that improvement takes time. Do you believe the school has the procedures in place that should lead to improvements within the next few years? Please explain.

17. What do you think the school needs to move forward in improving student performance?

18. Where do you see this school in five years?

Probe if not mentioned:

- What is the long-term vision for this school?

CLOSE

19. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the changes going on in your school or the SIG initiative that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this important study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Teacher Focus Group Protocol

Spring 2013

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:

Focus Group: Teacher

Teacher Name	Grade	Subject Area

Introduction

Thanks again for taking the time to speak with me this morning/afternoon. Before we start, I'd like to provide a little background on our work, and answer any questions you might have for me.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

As you may know, I work for an independent non-profit research organization called the American Institutes for Research [nonpartisan research organization called Mathematica Policy Research], and we are under contract with the U.S. Department of Education to study how School Improvement Grant (SIG) implementation unfolds, and more specifically, the decisions and strategies schools, districts and states undertake, and the constraints they face as they work to implement intervention models intended to improve student outcomes. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24 districts, and 60 schools throughout the country; they were selected so that the study could collect information on SIG implementation experiences from a diverse array of SIG grantees

Privacy

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

I'd like to ask you to sign a consent form before we begin. It outlines some of the issues I've just mentioned with regard to privacy. Please take a minute to read it and let me know if you have any questions.

Recording

If you don't mind, I would like to record this interview simply for note-taking purposes. No one outside of our research team would hear the tape, it would just be for my own reference. If you would like me to turn off the recorder at any point, just let me know. Would that be OK?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note to interviewer: Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold)**; it is likely that the respondents will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable. Questions and probes highlighted in italics are theory of action questions that you should make sure to ask in order for us to have rich data for the theory of action analyses.

Today I'd like to talk to you about a few topics, primarily about your school's challenges and improvements. I'll ask about this year first, then I'll ask you to reflect on progress over the past three years. Lastly, I would like to ask you a few questions about the sustainability of changes after the end of SIG funds.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

1. I'd like to start by talking a bit about your background, including how long you've been a teacher and your role at the school.

Probe if not mentioned:

- How many years have you worked at this school? in this district?
- What do you currently teach at this school (grade/subject area)?
- Do you have any additional roles or responsibilities?

PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

2. *What are the key challenges your school is currently facing in improving student performance?*

	Explanations Related to:				
	Students	Teachers	Leadership	The School as a Whole or the Community	Other
Check if mentioned in this interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Probe:

- What key challenges are you facing in your work with the students in your classrooms?
- *How are you and the school addressing these challenges?*
- Is this school a safe place to work and learn? Is it an orderly place?

IMPROVEMENT PROCESS THIS YEAR

Now that you are at the end of the final year of the SIG program, we'd like to learn more about what has been happening this year in terms of your school's improvement strategies and any progress that has been made.

3. On previous visits, we've talked about a variety of activities your school has implemented. Today, I want to hear about the **key** improvement actions or strategies that your school has prioritized for moving forward **this year**. *Why have you been focusing on these?*

Probe if not mentioned:

- *What are your goals for these activities?*
 - *How do the activities relate to the challenges we just discussed?*
 - *How have these improvement activities affected your work as teachers?*
4. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What kinds of information do you use as teachers to make instructional decisions?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Is there a school-wide process for reviewing data? Who at the school supports you in using data?** (*e.g., instructional coaches, data teams, etc.*)
 - **What type(s) of information do you use for instructional decision-making? How do you use it?**
 - **How often do you review student data?**
5. *[If not fully addressed in response to earlier questions]* **What opportunities do you have to collaborate and work together with other teachers at this school?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- **Do teachers meet in professional learning communities? How often and for how long?**
 - **What happens in these communities?**
 - **Are there opportunities, such as shared planning time, for teachers to collaborate? Please describe.**
6. **To what extent has this school made progress since last year? In what areas?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[For each area in which progress is reported:]* **What key factors led to this improvement?**
- **How do you know the school made progress in this area?**
- *[If little or no progress mentioned:]* **What has held back your progress?**

REFLECTIONS OVER TIME

My next set of questions asks you to think back over past the three years, since your school first received the SIG award.

7. **How has your work as teachers at this school changed over the past three years? *Why?***

Probe if not mentioned:

- *[If the principal was replaced during the past three years:]* **How has the change in principal affected your work?**

Listen for:

- Changes in use of data?
- Changes in collaboration?

8. To what extent has this school made progress since the beginning of SIG? In what areas *[be familiar with areas of perceived Improvement reported in Year 1]*?

Probe if not mentioned:

- **What key factors led to this improvement?**
[If little or no progress mentioned:] What has held back your progress?

SUSTAINABILITY

I'd like to turn to a few questions on the continuation of the school improvement process after the end of SIG.

9. How, if at all, do you expect your work as teachers at this school to change next year? Why?

Probe if not mentioned:

- How, if at all, will the end of SIG affect your job?

10. Earlier in our conversation, you mentioned seeing improvement in *[areas]* at the school. Do you expect that the school will be able to sustain and build upon these improvements post-SIG? Why or why not?

Listen for:

- Changes have [have not] been institutionalized
- Funding is [is not] available to continue to support schools/particular improvements
- District committed [not committed] to supporting school
- Have [do not have] capacity within school
- Expect change in district leadership
- Expect change in school leadership
- Expect change in school staff

11. *What do you think the school needs to move forward in improving student performance?*

CLOSE

12. Is there anything I haven't asked you about the changes going on in your school or the SIG initiative that you'd like to comment on?

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this important study.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Parent/Community Focus Group Protocol

Spring 2013

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0878. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per focus group. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestion for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:
Interviewees:	

Focus Group: Parent/Community

Note to interviewer: *It is important that the group be comfortable and that they be fully aware of the purpose of the discussion and how the focus group will proceed. Time is limited, so be sure to allocate time accordingly. Strive for an informal atmosphere, and encourage broad participation to the extent possible. Pass out paper and markers to make name tag tents. Then go around the room so everyone can say their first name.*

Introduction

Thank you for speaking with us today. My name is [your name] and I am here with [other site visitor]. We are part of an independent research team contracted by the U.S. Department of Education to study school improvement. The study is taking place in 6 states, 24 districts, and 60 schools throughout the country. The purpose of the study is to collect information related to the implementation, impact, costs, and benefits of the School Improvement Grant (SIG), which is part of the federal stimulus act. We are trying to understand whether and how these grants are helping schools improve education for their students.

We are not evaluating your school or your children but are trying to learn lessons that help make the program better. To do this, it is important that we hear not only from teachers and administrators but also from parents and community members. We see this as an opportunity for you to voice your opinions to the federal department of education.

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

Would it be all right if we record our discussion for note-taking purposes? No one outside the research team will hear the recording. If at any point anyone would like me to turn the recorder off, just let me know.

We would really like to hear from each of you. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in all of your opinions and feelings. We ask only that one person speak at a time during the discussion. If at any time you would like clarification about any of the questions, please feel free to interrupt. Do any of you have any questions before we begin?

Note to interviewer: *Throughout the interview, possible probes are set aside following each general question. Asking these questions may help to move the interview pace or may prompt a less talkative respondent. However, **do not feel you need to ask each of these probes (except those in bold); it is likely that the respondent will cover many of these issues when responding to your initial inquiry. Keep the tone conversational and comfortable.***

BACKGROUND

Let's start by introducing ourselves.

1. *[If parent]* Please tell me your name, the grade(s) of your child(ren), and how many years your child(ren) has/have been at this school.
2. How are you involved in the school? Are you part of a parent organization or leadership team at this school? If so, could you tell me a little bit about your role?

SCHOOL CONTEXT

3. Can you tell me a little bit about this school? How would you describe this school to someone who has never been here before? What are the major strengths (what makes this a good school) and challenges?

Probe if not mentioned:

- How about safety? Is the school a safe place?
- Do you think the school environment is conducive to learning? Why or why not?
- What do you think about the school leadership? How about the teachers?

4. How would you describe the community in which the school is located?

Listen for:

- The level of crime, drug use, and gang activity?
- The local economy (unemployment, businesses)?
- Relations within the community?
- The level of home ownership?
- Family situations?
- The level of civic pride?

5. Have there been any major changes in the school or the community since last year? *[If so:]* How have things changed? Do you know why these changes came about?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Have these been positive or negative changes? Please describe.
- What do you think have been the causes of these changes?

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

6. Is the school doing anything to address the challenges that you mentioned earlier? *[If so:]* What? Please describe.
7. Are there other activities in place to improve things for students at this school that you have observed or heard about?

8. **What are your impressions of these activities / changes? Do you think they've helped improve some of the school's challenges that we've talked about? [If so:] How?**

9. *[If any parents in the group have had students in the school that long]* **Thinking back over the past three years, how has the school changed over time?**

Probe if not mentioned:

- Have the changes been positive or negative?
- What do you think have been the causes of these changes?

10. **What are your expectations for the school's future? [If improvements were described above:] Do you think the improvements you described will continue?**

11. **Are there other things you would like to see happen that would make this school better? Please describe.**

CLOSE

12. *[If parent]* **Are you satisfied with the education your child(ren) is/are getting at this school? Why or why not?**

13. **Is there anything you'd like to tell me about this school, the community, and/or your child(ren)'s learning that I haven't asked you?**

Thanks again for your time. We very much appreciate your participation in this important study

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Student Focus Group Protocol

Spring 2013

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Study of School Turnaround (SST)

District:	Interviewer:
School:	Date/Time:

Focus Group: High School Students

Student Name	Grade	Gender

Note to interviewer: *It is important that the group be comfortable and that they be fully aware of the purpose of the discussion and how the focus group will proceed. Time is limited, so be sure to allocate time accordingly. Strive for an informal atmosphere, and encourage broad participation to the extent possible. Pass out paper and markers to make name tag tents. Then go around the room so everyone can say their first name and their grade level.*

Introduction

Thank you for speaking with us today. My name is [your name] and I am here with [other site visitor]. We are part of an independent research team contracted by the U.S. Department of Education to study how schools are improving education for their students. We are visiting 25 schools across the country, including yours, to learn more about how the initiative is working. We are not evaluating your school or you, but are trying to learn lessons that can help make the program better. To do this, it is important that we hear not only from teachers and administrators but also from students. We see this as an opportunity for you to voice your opinions to your school system and to the federal department of education.

I want to assure you that all research staff on this study adhere to the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002). **The data we collect will be used for research purposes only. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.** We will NOT report results in any way that would permit them to be identified with you or any other specific individual. We also will not share what you and I discuss with other people in this district. Our study will identify the states that we visit, but will not disclose the names of the districts or schools in each state. Also, you should know that your participation is voluntary, and you do not have to respond to any questions you do not want to. Please let us know at any time if you would prefer not to participate.

During our session today, we will record the discussion in case we miss something in our notes, but no one outside of the research team will have access to the tape. This session will give you a chance to express your opinions about your school. We want you to feel comfortable in saying what you really think and what you really feel. We hope all of you will give us your ideas since each of your opinions is important to us. There are no right or wrong answers. You might disagree with each other and that's okay since different people often have different experiences and different opinions. It's really okay to disagree with someone but please do it respectfully.

Also, it will also help me if you speak clearly and if you will speak one at a time. The discussion should last about one hour.

Finally, I ask that none of you share what you hear with others outside the group, so everyone can feel safe being honest.

Are there any questions before we get started?

[*Press record button.*] I have hit the record button. Let's begin by going around the room and having each person introduce him or herself by first name.

BACKGROUND

1. Please tell me what grade you're in and how long you have been at this school.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

2. How would you describe your school's neighborhood to a friend who goes to a different school? Has it changed during this school year? If so, how?

Probe if not mentioned: How would you describe:

- The level of crime, drug use, and gang activity?
- Local jobs and stores?
- Relations within the community?
- Family situations?
- Sense of pride in the community?

3. Do you feel your school is a safe and comfortable place to learn? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Are there many disruptions in your classes?
- Are there any problems associated with drugs in your school?
- Are there any problems associated with crime, violence or gang activities in your school?
- How would you describe the local jobs and stores?
- How would you describe the relations within the community?
- How would you describe the family situations?
- Is there a sense of pride in the community?

4. Have you noticed any changes in the safety of your school in the past year? In the past few years? Has anything been done to make it a safer and more comfortable place to learn? Please describe.

Probe if not mentioned:

- Have there been changes to school security?
- Have there been changes to disciplinary procedures (i.e., zero tolerance, positive behavior support)?
- Do you know when the changes were made?

SCHOOL CAPACITY

5. Do you like coming to school? Why or why not?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Do you like learning?
- Do you find your class work interesting?
- Do you pay attention in class?
- Do you complete your homework and assignments?

- Do you like spending time with your friends?
- DO you participate in school activities?

6. How do you know if you're doing well in school, or what you still need to work on?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Does your teacher or other school staff talk to you about how you are doing?
- How are you tested? How often?
 - Do you think your tests are fair? Why or why not?

7. Do you think your teachers have high expectations for you? If yes, why? If no, Why?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Does it differ depending on the teacher?
- Do they expect you to get certain grades? Attend classes?

8. How would you describe the principal and administrative team?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Does the principal visit your classroom(s) often?
- Is the principal in the hallways often?
- Do you feel like you can talk to the principal? The assistant principals or other administrative staff?

CHANGE AND PROGRESS

9. Besides the safety changes we discussed, have there been other big changes in your school over the last few years? Do you know why these changes came about?

Probe if not mentioned:

- Have there been changes to the leadership (principal, assistance principal(s), etc.)
- Have the teachers at the school changed? If so, how?
- Have the students changed in any way? If so, how?
- Have your classes changed? If so, how?
- Have these been positive or negative changes? Please describe.

10. Do you think the students in your school are learning more and/or doing better academically this year than before? Please explain.

11. Do you know about any other changes at your school that are happening or planned for the school? What do you think about them?

CLOSE

12. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about being a student here?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and your time today. You have each been extremely valuable in helping us understand more about your classes, your teachers, and your school.

Study of School Turnaround (SST)

Teacher Survey

Spring 2013

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Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20208.



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Study of School Turnaround

Dear Teacher,

We are asking you to complete this survey as part of the Study of School Turnaround. You are receiving this survey because your school has received funds through the School Improvement Grants (SIG) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

We greatly value the opinion of teachers and hope you will answer this questionnaire. By responding to this survey, you can help policy makers, educators, and researchers better understand how SIG schools are working to improve outcomes for all students.

This survey is voluntary. You can decide not to participate, or you can discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to, but we encourage you to answer as many as you can. There are no known risks to participating in this survey. This survey is confidential. Your answers will be combined with those of other teachers, and your individual responses will never be linked to you. We will not provide any information that identifies you or your school to anyone outside of the study team, except as required by law.

This study is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), a nonprofit research organization, in cooperation with Mathematica Policy Research. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. For more information about the study, please contact the evaluation team at sbrown@air.org. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact IRBChair@air.org or call toll-free 1.800.634.0797.

Thank you for your participation in this very important effort!

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0878. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per survey, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimates(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to:

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Professional Background and Current Teaching Assignment

Please be sure to answer questions only for the school where you received the survey. We will refer to the school where you received this survey as “this school.”

1. How do you classify your main teaching assignment at this school during the current school year (2012–13)?

(Select only one response.)

- Full-time teacher working at this school in a full time teaching capacity
- Full-time teacher working at this school with release time for other duties (e.g., administrative, coaching, etc.)
- Part-time teacher working at this school
- Itinerant teacher (e.g., your assignment requires that you provide instruction at more than one school)
- Long-term substitute (e.g., your assignment requires that you fill the role of a regular teacher on a long-term basis, but you are still considered a substitute)
- Other (please specify): _____

2. How many years of teaching experience do you have?

Note: For each row, write the number of years. Use whole numbers only. Count the current school year (2012-2013) as one full year.

		Number of years
a.	Teaching in total	<input style="width: 80px;" type="text"/> years
b.	Teaching at <u>this</u> school	<input style="width: 80px;" type="text"/> years

3. Before teaching in your current school, where was your previous teaching location?

(Select only one response.)

- I taught at another school within this district
- I taught at another school in a different district
- This is my first teaching assignment

4. In the current school year (2012–13), in what grades are the students that you teach in this school?

(Check all that apply.)

Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Ungraded
1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>	11 <input type="checkbox"/>	12 <input type="checkbox"/>	13 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>

5. In the current school year (2012–13), what is your main teaching assignment at this school, that is, the field in which you teach the most classes?

(Select only one response. If your teaching time is equally divided among 2 or more fields, choose one.)

- Self-Contained/All Subjects
- English/Language Arts/Reading
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Sciences (History/Government/Civics/Geography)
- Foreign Language
- Arts/Music
- Special Education
- English as a Second Language (ESL/Bilingual Education)
- Other (please specify): _____

Your School Climate and Culture

6. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your school environment.

(Check one response in each row.)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. At this school, we have a common understanding of the objectives we're trying to achieve with students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Goals and priorities for this school are clear.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Most teachers at this school have values and philosophies of education that are similar to my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Most of my colleagues share a focused vision for student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Once we start a new program, we follow up to make sure that it's working.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I worry that we are adopting too many different programs and practices in this school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. This school generally chooses only those school improvement opportunities that fit with our improvement goals and strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. If teachers in this school work hard, we can meet our school's goals for student achievement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Teachers in this school are comfortable discussing beliefs about teaching and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Teachers in this school are willing to question one another's views on issues of teaching and learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Teachers in this school trust each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your principal.

(Check one response in each row.)

The principal in my school...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Carefully tracks students' academic progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Understands how children learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Makes clear to the staff his or her expectations for meeting instructional goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Sets high expectations for student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Actively monitors the quality of teaching in this school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Presses teachers to implement what they have learned in professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Knows what is going on in my classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your principal.

(Check one response in each row.)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The principal has confidence in the expertise of the teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I trust the principal at his or her word.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The principal takes a personal interest in the professional development of teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of the teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The principal places the needs of children ahead of personal and political interests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The principal at this school is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

School Improvement

9. How often do you engage in the following activities?

(Check one number in each row.)

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
a. Review student achievement data to guide my instructional planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Read about educational research findings or best practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Consult with other teachers about challenges I am facing in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Share the content of my lesson plans with other teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. How much of a challenge is each of the following to your efforts to improve student performance?

(Check one response in each row.)

Type of Challenge	Not a challenge	Minor challenge	Moderate challenge	Major challenge
a. Large class size and/or case load	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Lack of safety in or around the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Inadequate or substandard facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Inadequate supports for the lowest-achieving students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Too few textbooks and other instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

f.	Textbooks and instructional materials that are not aligned with state standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	Poor student discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h.	Insufficient parent involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i.	Large number of student transfers into this school or your class at various points during the year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j.	Low student motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k.	Low staff morale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l.	Low teacher expectations for student achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m.	Low and/or erratic student attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n.	Insufficient access to technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o.	Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. From your perspective, to what extent has your school improved in any of the following ways during the 2012-13 school year?

(Check one response in each row.)

	Became worse	Stayed about the same	Moderate improvement	Substantial improvement
a. Student attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Student discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. School safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The morale among teachers at our school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Collaboration among teachers at our school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Teachers' focus on student learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Teachers' instructional practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Teachers' use of data to guide instructional decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Teachers' expectations for student achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Assistance and supports for the lowest-achieving students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Principal outreach for input from teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Clarity of school improvement goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Do you believe that your school has undergone changes over the past three years?

(Select only one response.)

- Overall, our school has changed in positive ways → Go to Question 13
- Our school has changed in both positive and negative ways → Go to Question 13
- Overall, our school has changed in negative ways → Skip to Question 14
- Our school has not changed much over the past three years → Skip to Question 14
- I don't know how the school has changed over the past three years → Skip to Question 14

13. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(Check one response in each row.)

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a.	I believe that our school will continue to change in positive ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	School leaders (e.g., principal, department chairs) are committed to continue the efforts to change this school for the better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Teachers in this school are committed to continue the efforts to change this school for the better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Our school has the systems in place to sustain the changes we've made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	School leaders (e.g., principal, department chairs) will have the resources (e.g., capacity, support) to continue the efforts to change this school for the better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e.	Teachers in this school will have the resources (e.g., capacity, support) to continue the efforts to change this school for the better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f.	It would be difficult for the school to sustain improvements if a few key staff left.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g.	It will be difficult to sustain the school's progress without SIG funds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. We would welcome more information about whether you expect your school to continue some of the efforts that were started over the past three years. Please provide information on why you think these efforts will continue, or why you think these efforts may *not* continue, in the upcoming school years.

Your Background

15. Did you participate, or are you currently participating in an alternate route to certification/licensure (fast-track) program?

1 **No**

2 **Yes**

16. Please describe the certification(s)/ license(s)/ credential(s)/endorsement(s) you hold.

A. Certification/ licensure/ credential/endorsement for teaching special populations	B. Type(s) of certification/ licensure/ credential/ endorsement
1 <input type="checkbox"/> ESL or bilingual 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Special education	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced (e.g., National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification) 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Regular or standard 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary (e.g., Probationary, Preliminary, Provisional, Emergency, Waiver, etc.) 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):

17. Do you have a graduate degree?

Note: Please answer "Yes" if you have a master's degree, doctorate or professional degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., J.D., etc.).

1 **No** → **If no, please continue to question 18.**

2 **Yes** → **If yes, write in graduate field of study.**

What was your graduate degree field of study?

(Write in graduate field of study)

Wrap-Up

18. Is there is anything else you would like to tell us about improvement strategies and the School Improvement Grant (SIG) in your school?

Thank you very much for responding to this important survey!

PLEASE follow the directions on the next page to return this survey by mail, or (if applicable) just give the survey to the researcher visiting your school.

