



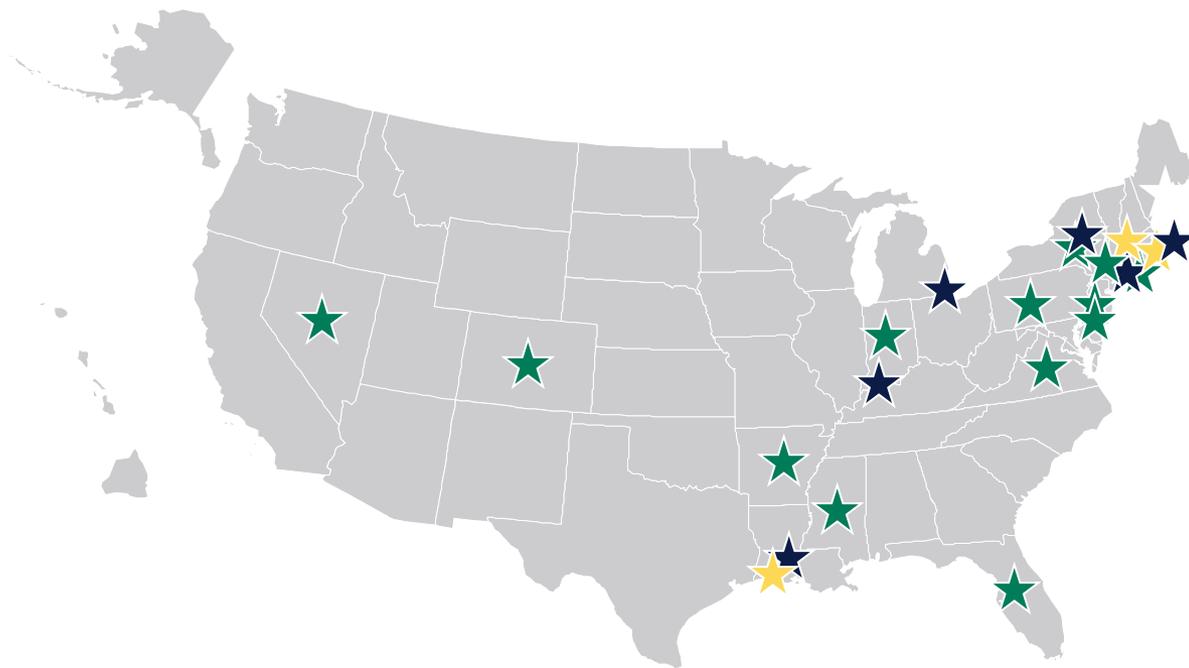
Mass Insight
EDUCATION

Colorado Department of Education Turnaround Diagnostic

April 29, 2015

Mass Insight Education: Who We Are

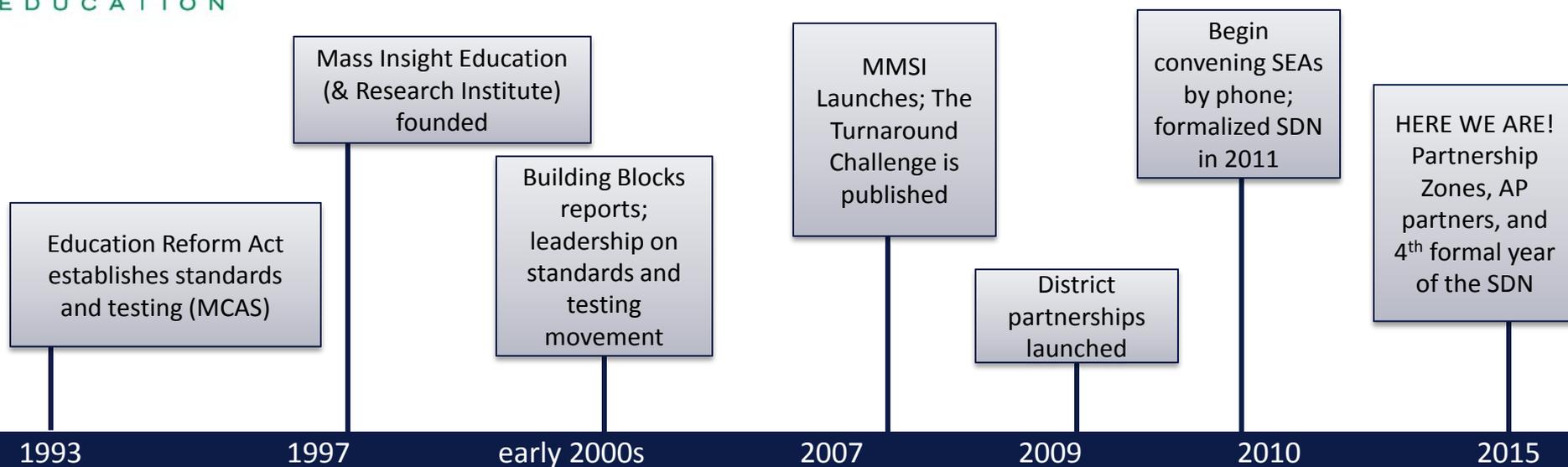
Our Mission: Transform public schools into high-performance organizations and close the achievement gaps.



Our Work:

- ★ School and District Transformation
- ★ AP Program/College Success Communities
- ★ State Development Network

Mass Insight Education History



The State Development Network Framework for School Turnaround



1. **Policy:** Cultivate the policy environment, governance structure, and operational and staffing flexibility necessary for dramatic school turnaround.
2. **Strategy:** Commit to a comprehensive, cohesive, agency-wide theory of action and to turn around the state's lowest-performing schools.
3. **Organizational Structure:** Design a structure that empowers a unit of state government with the capacity to turn around schools.
4. **Communication:** Design a coherent agency-wide turnaround message and communicate it consistently.
5. **Resources:** Focus time, energy, and funds where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact.
6. **Accountability:** Develop an accountability system that sets clear standards and performance targets for schools, LEAs and the SEA, monitors and reports on progress, and incentivizes dramatic reform.
7. **Human Capital:** Invest in highly effective teachers and leaders to drive turnaround at the district and school levels.

Substantial progress addressing MIE's 2012 SEA Turnaround Diagnostic recommendations

- **Develop and communicate a clear turnaround theory of action**
 - Office of District and School Performance now has a T of A for its work with schools and districts
 - T of A recognizes CDE's limited capacity and concentrates support in Network districts
 - Inconsistent understanding of and support for T of A in other CDE units
- **Identify and track leading indicators of school turnaround**
 - Adopted a framework and rubric for use in the Network
 - Defined leading indicators and process for tracking and using the data for continuous improvement
- **Consider how to leverage third party groups**
 - Now have substantial partnerships with UVA, WestEd, Relay, and Mass Insight Education
 - Continuing work with local partners
- **Provide state support to recruit and develop a pipeline of turnaround leaders**
 - Building state turnaround leadership program

2015 SEA Turnaround Diagnostic: Findings in five major areas

1. School Turnaround Network
2. CDE alignment
3. Resource alignment
4. Political environment
5. Collaboration

Findings: School Turnaround Network

- “Network is helpful in putting systems in place that are more likely to turn things around more quickly.” (district leader)
- “Enough commonalities across the network that can learn from one another.” (district leader)
- “Seems likely other departments don’t understand the Network - There’s a lack of clarity around what the Network is and isn’t designed to do.” (district leader)
- “Would be useful to have a trajectory of what the engagement process looks like over the course of the network life cycle.” (district leader)
- “I understand what’s happening in the network; not clear on what’s going on with the other schools.” (CDE)

Findings: CDE alignment

- “We get messages to do different things or maintain systems that are different and contradictory, but compared to how it used to be there are huge improvements.” (district leader)
- “We have surface-level alignment; our work is aligned but not integrated so we ask schools to do a lot of similar but disjointed work that results in confusion.” (CDE)
- “There is no single school improvement plan for schools on the clock.” (CDE)
- “Who owns school turnaround work? There’s an undefined locus of control.” (district leader)
- “What is the role of the District Performance Manager? Do I go to them for everything or do I go to one of the other offices?” (district leader)
- “We call different people depending on the answer we want.” (district leader)

Findings: Resource alignment

- “Resources are not going to the schools that need them the most.” (CDE)
- “Intentionality of how to leverage funds is obscured by the need to just get things through the process.” (CDE)
- “Want to honor the constraints that federal programs is under but need to be clear about the risks that we’re trying to mitigate.” (CDE)
- “Shared ownership of TIG is not working.” (district leader)
- “How is CDE using grants as a true lever for change?” (district leader)

Findings: Political environment

- “Not clear that the state board will approve school actions.”
- “Heavy hammer approach doesn’t work in the long run; just damages the relationships.”
- “State will continue to have all the authority it needs regardless of board decision-making.”

Findings: Collaboration

- “Pathways have great promise.”
- “Coordinated support team process keeps getting better.”
- “Need a tracker of which unit is doing what in a district.”
- “Leadership needs to make it clear that collaboration needs to happen.”

2015 SEA Turnaround Diagnostic: Recommendations

1. Stay the course
2. Get everyone on the same page
3. Align funding with strategy
4. Actively manage cross-department collaboration
5. Ignore the distractions

Recommendation #1:

Stay the course

- Continue to develop and expand the School Turnaround Network
- Complete the Pathways project and ensure that all relevant CDE departments are prepared to communicate about the Pathways and support their adoption by districts
- Identify the capacity required from CDE and partners to support district work on the Pathways; work with external partners and funders to build the required capacity

Recommendation #2: Get everyone on the same page

- Clarify CDE strategy regarding schools and districts that are on the clock
- Clarify the nature and level of SEA engagement, support, monitoring, and funding for each group of schools and districts
- Define “who does what when” for each group of schools and districts
- Continue to move toward a single improvement plan for schools in turnaround

Recommendation #3: Align funding with strategy

- Examine the processes for applying, reviewing, awarding, monitoring, supporting and renewing grants to schools and district that are on the clock to ensure that the state is using available resources to advance the strategy and maximize the impact of grants while also mitigating the risk of audit problems

Recommendation #4:

Actively manage cross-department collaboration

- Consider appointing a strategy manager who coordinates and facilitates work across departments
- Continue to develop the coordinated support teams process as a way of encouraging alignment across CDE; consider including districts and using the process as a forum for managing performance
- Develop or obtain some common tools, e.g., Sales Force, that support collaboration and communication
- Provide regular reports to CDE leadership on the progress of shared, cross-department strategies

Recommendation #5: Ignore the distractions

- Recognize that the state board's willingness to take action on schools will have minimal impact-- don't let it be a distraction and excuse
- Make the delivery of effective support and the building of district capacity a priority