Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools

School turnaround is a procces for helping chronically struggling schools raise student achievement dramatically and quickly, within one to three years. A practice guide from the Institute of Education Sciences recommends four school turnaround practices.

Improved Leadership

—Hire new leader from inside or outside the system, or change leadership practices.
—Communicate clear direction and expectations.
—Demonstrate instructional leadership and accessibility.
—Establish connections with the community.

Quick Wins

—Identify areas that matter for rapid change.
—Develop strategies for accomplishing goals quickly.
—Consider goals set by other schools that led to quick wins.

Committed Staff

—Recruit new staff.
—Assess the strengths and weaknesses of staff.
—Redeploy or reassign staff as needed.
—Replace teachers who actively resist the change.

Focus on Instruction

—Examine school-, classroom-, and student-level data.
—Provide targeted and intensive professional development.
—Modify instruction and provide interventions.
—Track progress and make adjustments.

DOING WHAT WORKS
U.S. Department of Education