



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL TURNAROUNDS MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 17, 2014
9:00-12:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Indiana Government Center South
Conference Room C
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Board Members Present: Committee Chair Daniel Elsener, Sarah O'Brien, and Tony Walker. Additionally, Special Assistant to the Governor Claire Fiddian-Green, Board Executive Director Robert G. Guffin, and Board General Counsel John Snethen.

I. Call to Order/Meeting Minutes Approval

Mr. Elsener called the meeting to order and introduced the committee members. Mr. Walker made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. The committee voted 3-0 to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2014 and October 22, 2014 meetings.

Mr. Elsener said there are three requests for public comment, Carole Craig, Michael Chisley, and Fred Klipsch. Mr. Klipsch responded he would only make public comment if needed. Mr. Elsener called upon Ms. Craig for public comment. The Chair waived the board operating procedure for public comment sign-in to allow for an additional member of the public to speak.

Ms. Craig, stated she is speaking on behalf of the Greater Indianapolis NAACP Branch President Chrystal Ratcliffe. Ms. Craig said she appreciated Mr. Elsener's remarks that he has listened to the NAACP and see opportunities. The Greater Indianapolis NAACP rises in support of the Arlington community and the communities of the other three Indianapolis state turnaround schools. NAACP supports these communities in terms of listening to their voices and supporting the dramatic need for the best research, educational practices for democratic and equitable schools, thus eliminating the gaps in access and opportunity which are devastating these communities, ultimately the larger community and the state. NAACP hears concerns from the Arlington community regarding continuous neighborhood disruption, lack of stable leadership, high teacher turnover, lack of information, lack of community engagement, and the continuation of excessive out of school suspensions. When the NAACP spoke to the Deputy Mayor's office about the excessive suspensions, the Mayor's office indicated they had no authority to demand a change in the policy for any school. After writing to the Department of Education, an attorney responded to Ms. Craig and stated the Department had no authority to change any policy at the school and if there were any concerns about civil rights it would have to go to the federal level.



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NAACP is alarmed to know that the civil rights of these children are not protected on the front end. For these reasons, the NAACP recommends the Arlington proposal presented at the October 9, 2014 committee meeting which would embrace a Pre-K-20 community school, bringing about cohesiveness, supports and interventions, with continuity of the curriculum programs and instruction. The school would have full extended day learning and wrap-around services to eliminate the severe gaps that hamper the success of urban children. However, included in that proposal, in order to eliminate the damaging mistakes made while currently experimenting with these children, NAACP asks that equitable policies and practices, with appropriate accountability and authority for these policies be included in the contracts and performance evaluations of whomever is responsible for oversight. The two technical education centers in Indiana have available tools that can be used to develop and measure equitable policies and practices to fulfill this expectation.

Mr. Elsener called upon Mr. Michael Chisley for public comment. Mr. Chisley spoke on behalf of the Indianapolis Alliance of Black School Educators (IABSE) and as resident of the Devington area. Mr. Chisley addressed the three recommendations proposed by IPS. IABSE is not in favor of recommendation A or C. A vacant school bears no fruit. Devington is too large of a community to have a vacant high school for any period of time. One only has to look back at court-ordered desegregation to those school that were closed and what happened to those communities. Those communities were devastated by closing schools. Second, the combined proposal of Arlington and John Marshall is an accident waiting to happen. The combination of two long-time rivalry schools could result in the same outcome as Muncie when Southside and Central were combined. There are two different demographic communities with stability factors. IABSE feels Plan B needs more substance. All three plans are an attempt to warehouse teenagers in a large building. The better approach IASBE would propose is a true community-based school with Pre-K through high school, with an adult education component, teaching 21st century and adult education skills. IASBE would also like to see a school that addresses the high suspension rate and expulsions, such as the 88% suspension rate that is presently going on at Arlington High School. IASBE would like to see public accountability, oversight with the same data that all other public schools have to adhere to, community services, and community engagement in a positive school climate that is culturally responsible. IASBE asked the committee to take these recommendations under consideration as they make their decision.

Mr. Elsener called upon Mr. Ron Gibson for public comment. Mr. Gibson serves as the President of the Devington Community Association, which is on the northeast side of Indianapolis representing approximately 40,000 residents. Arlington High School is the only high school in the area. Mr. Gibson previously served on the City County Council for eight years in Indianapolis. Mr. Gibson stated he stands before the committee representing all of those students who have been suspended or expelled in the last five years at Arlington. Mr. Gibson asked how and why minor infractions have been allowed to take away from basic rights every



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child deserves, leading to scores of young people to drop out and become hopeless. One could argue this is a violation of their civil rights. The neighborhood is full of young people walking down the street with no dreams, no hopes, and primarily in young African American males. They have been suspended in high, record numbers. Public education has let them down. In particular, Mr. Gibson argued, there is no accountability in suspensions and expulsions. The excessive patterns did not begin when Tindley took over Arlington, but continued under their watch. At one time Arlington had over 1,000 students, and was a quality school years ago, but now there are only a couple hundred students without adequate staff or special education. Mr. Gibson made the following two recommendations for Arlington turnaround:

- 1) Transparent accountability with measureable goals and deliverables, including the measurement of suspensions and expulsions.
- 2) The community opportunity school model including Pre-K with a continuum to post-secondary education.

Mr. Elsener thanked those who provided public comment. Mr. Elsener also thanked his committee member colleagues, SBOE staff, and consultants for their time and efforts.

Mr. Walker shared his thoughts on the distinction between turnaround as state intervention and state support. Mr. Walker said many schools are in need of state support, which is not necessarily turnaround. Mr. Walker said the committee needs to be clear moving forward how to assist focus schools and other schools in need of state support without invasive measures that rise to the level of turnaround. Mr. Walker stated any school after four consecutive years in the focus and priority category should be subject to state intervention. He said the turnaround model being used at Roosevelt is not the best model. Mr. Walker said two prerequisites should be considered when evaluating turnaround status: 1) determine the need for the seats at the school in the district, and 2) economic viability and sustainability of the facility in the district. Mr. Walker continued to share his thoughts on external partners, turnaround operators, and the turnaround process overall.

Ms. O'Brien stated she served on the Board when the initial turnaround conversations began, and the Board knew it would be making positive choices for these schools. Ms. O'Brien said she was grateful the Board took time to review and analyze the turnaround process and will continue to evaluate.

Mr. Elsener stated the Board has an outline and strategic plan to focus that they will build capacity to teachers, principals, etc. and engage the communities in the schools. Mr. Elsener said the model of subsidiary is best, but when it is clear there are futures being robbed, the state has a moral obligation to improve it.



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II. Presentation by National Consultant Public Impact

Please visit <http://www.in.gov/sboe/2591.htm> for the complete presentations.

Mr. Tim Field, Senior Consultant with Public Impact greeted the committee and shared background on Public Impact. Mr. Field described the research process taken to provide the recommendations to the committee. Public Impact has focused on how to improve the model and how to focus on the transitions and options for consideration. Public Impact analyzed school performance data and conducted a number of interviews. Public Impact provided eight recommendations that will be highlighted. Of the key findings, turnaround academies, especially those with turnaround school operators (TSO), serve a markedly different school population than before school intervention. For many TSO schools, enrollment has been cut in half. The percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch has jumped from eight to twenty-one percentage points across the schools.

Mr. Elsener stated he also noticed the number of special needs students increased in the turnaround academies. Mr. Field said the number of special needs students was not as consistent as free and reduced lunch, but the number certainly did increase. Mr. Field added the greatest consistency was the drop in enrollment and the increase of free and reduced price lunch. Mr. Field noted it is important not to underestimate the impact of the transition challenges that took place, including operational issues such as transportation, facilities management, student records, and the effect of decreased enrollment on the financial conditions of the schools, which ultimately affected staffing. Mr. Field added one of the most critical pieces of a successful turnaround are the teachers in the building. The turmoil and level of uncertainty around enrollment challenged the staffing model for these schools.

Mr. Field stated performance has been uneven with modest gains on some indicators. It is important to note it is based on two years of data. Mr. Elsener asked Mr. Field if during the interview process found that the culture and the environment of the schools had improved. Mr. Field replied Public Impact was not able to get into the schools. Pensarus consulting firm came last year, was able to be in the schools, and had a number of findings about the culture and climate in the buildings. That data along with interviews indicate there has been improvement, but it is difficult to interpret suspension and expulsion rates. There are cases where there are increases while establishing a new culture, but there should be decreases over time. Mr. Field stated he would define the data as descriptive, rather than an evaluation of the effectiveness of the model.

Mr. Field continued that evidence shows the act of state takeover itself has motivated bolder, more dramatic changes for school corporations. Evansville is an example where they have taken significant steps to improve the schools. Finally, Mr. Field said across the interviews a number of findings showed a need for clearer goals for all parties and the need to make decisions about schools in a broader context of the district.



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Mr. Elsener said he would like system thinking to be the mantra. A school cannot be analyzed in isolation, not economically, not socially, not culturally, and not on academic performance. Mr. Field added the recommendations shared by Public Impact will address this issue.

Mr. Field presented on the eight recommendations on the model. First, there needs to be a clearer set of transition options for turnaround academies. Secondly, there needs to be more state capacity to manage the process. Mr. Elsener asked if there is need for a takeover intervention office. Mr. Field replied absolutely and added he will discuss what a turnaround unit could look like. Public Impact's recommendation is there should be a dedicated unit for the management of the turnaround process that has clear accountability to the State Board. Mr. Field continued, the third recommendation is community engagement. Mr. Walker stated that has been part of the challenge and is more of a district responsibility. Mr. Walker asked whose responsibility is it to engage the community. Mr. Field replied it is definitely a responsibility of the district, however, when the state intervenes, the state must manage and support community engagement. Mr. Elsener stated the third goal of the Board strategic plan is comprehensive leadership across all entities. Mr. Elsener continued if the Board wants to keep schools out of intervention, the Board needs to systemically lead community involvement, and need leadership at the state level. Mr. Walker responded he is uncertain how this process works, because in some cases the school has been abandoned by the community. Mr. Field said the fourth recommendation speaks to the work ahead, it does require a deeper bench of partner organizations, and educators who are prepared to support turnaround work.

Mr. Field continued, the fifth recommendation is to formalize the transformation zone model as a state intervention. Evansville has used this model. The sixth recommendation is to re-purpose the "Lead Partner" model. To date it has been a state-directed intervention. The challenge to the current model when a partner organization is in a school, are the policies, hiring procedures, and accountability can make it very difficult for a lead partner to have the authority necessary to make dramatic change. The value to the lead partner model should be a district level and corporation level lead strategy and to pre-empt and avoid state intervention.

Ms. O'Brien stated she agreed with Mr. Field's statement on the lead partner model being a pre-emptive strategy. Ms. O'Brien asked does it come down to a contract wording issue; could the lead partner model be more successful when framed differently. Mr. Field replied, there are two pieces, currently the contracts are between the state and lead partner; ideally, it would be a contract between a school corporation and lead partner. At the same time, the state has a role in analyzing the contracts and determine whether that partnership will bring the dramatic change that is needed. Mr. Elsener asked would the state's role be in the early stages to direct the school and corporation to get a partner before the state must intervene? Mr. Field responded that is right. Mr. Elsener added the lead partner and the school district establish the relationship, the Board will hold them accountable, not manage the process but add incentives.



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Mr. O'Brien added that is what she eluded to at the Gary meeting, she does not want to wait until year six. Ms. O'Brien agreed with Mr. Walker that something needs to happen by year four, a lead partner model should be attempted prior to Board intervention. Mr. Elsener asked Mr. Field why wait until year four. Mr. Field replied Public Impact does not have a specific recommendation on the year. There has to be a close examination of capacity and what the implication is if intervention occurs at year four or year five.

Mr. Field stated the seventh recommendation is to more clearly define roles and responsibilities with MOUs and contracts. Mr. Field continued the state needs to play a stronger role in guiding and mediating the process by formalizing MOUs and contracts. The last recommendation is to reset performance goals. The initial set of goals for the turnaround academies were inadequate especially given the change in student populations.

Mr. Field explained he would describe the eight recommendations in detail and pause between each for committee discussion. The current law does not provide enough specificity on transition options and criteria, so there is a need to clarify and create a pathway for transition. Mr. Field said there are two key considerations that should guide transitions, the first is to evaluate the school's success in student academic growth, operating conditions, and range of measures. Secondly, Mr. Field added, ask did the school corporation demonstrate additional capacity to support low-performing schools. Converting to a charter is a viable option.

Mr. Elsener asked if an existing operator is in the school(s) and the parents and community are seeing great success, there isn't anything in your recommendation which says at the end of any contact, the school(s) would be thrown back to the district? Mr. Field said that is correct, going back to the idea of local control, converting to a charter school can be a local control situation. The state can play a role in insuring the charter conversion results in a capable, empowered, locally-based governing board for that charter. Mr. Elsener cited the strategic plan. Mr. Elsener and Mr. Field continued to discuss the transition options and criteria.

Mr. Field addressed the second recommendation regarding increasing state capacity to manage the scope of state-directed turnaround interventions, including the development of a state turnaround unit. Mr. Elsener asked Mr. Field about the turnaround unit model. Mr. Elsener stated Indiana used to have a turnaround office in the Department. Mr. Field said the accountability to the state board makes sense to have accountability be clear and direct. Mr. Field stated there are two options in developing a state turnaround unit. The first is to develop an independent state turnaround unit reporting to the State Board that is staffed and given clear guidance about roles and responsibilities to manage the process. The other model some states take is to create a separate takeover district, organized as a separate LEA. There are some benefits and challenges to both models. Public Impact recommends consideration of both models as both could serve the needs of Indiana.



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Mr. Elsener added those models could be melded. Mr. Field agreed indeed they could, an independent turnaround unit could be developed, then over time evaluate the need for conversion to an LEA.

In response to Mr. Walker's comment, Mr. Field said the state does need to have the authority to takeover failing school corporations as a last resort. This option should be used if a high percentage of schools in the corporation are subject to individual takeover or if the state determines the tools for individual school turnaround are not the best approach.

Mr. Field moved on to the third recommendation for community involvement. Public Impact recommends the state should take a lead role to ensure that local, community-based advisory councils are actively involved in the turnaround process. The state role could include establishing local councils and/or the assignment of state-level community engagement coordinators to work with the turnaround academy school communities.

Mr. Elsener commented he could support the idea but had questions regarding state implementation. Ms. O'Brien said this structure was part of the former state turnaround office who lead these efforts. Mr. Walker said the Board did have all of the key elements in the chart accounted for in the process. Gary had great community engagement at the on-set of the turnaround process. Mr. Walker felt all of the key elements were there at the beginning of the intervention and continued when Edison opened. Mr. Walker added largely it is the same student population prior to the intervention, however, now there is a higher free and reduced lunch and special education population.

Mr. Field continued his presentation on the key elements of building a bench of partnership including actively recruiting external partners with a proven track record of success and building a pipeline of effective teachers and leaders. Mr. Field identified the need for the formalization of the transformation zone model as a state intervention and build off the Evansville Vanderburg model. The process for formalizing the transformation zone would require the school corporation to submit a bold plan for improving student performance within three years, the state would work with the school corporation to review the plan, the state would approve the plan and the state would enter into an MOU with the school corporation while clearly defining operating expectations and performance benchmarks. An alternative if the school corporation identifies an external partner, the state would contract with the external partner as a transformation partner.

Mr. Elsener said if the state intervenes with a district and advises them to select a partner, the partner needs a span of influence that is codified in a contract. Mr. Elsener asked if the lead partner has ultimate authority in the contract in which the district operates. Mr. Field replied there are different ways a partner can engage with a transformation zone. Mr. Field explained the current model with Mass Insight and Evansville Vanderburgh to lead the design of the transformation zone is a perfectly effective way given the right autonomy, authority, and



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accountability to ensure progress is being made. Mr. Elsener asked in a case where progress is not being made, is this where the state board would need to intervene. Mr. Field responded yes, that is where an MOU comes into play. The purpose of the MOU is to establish expectations but also apply accountability if expectations are not being met.

Mr. Elsener said under P.L. 221 some schools took it more seriously and took innovative steps to turn schools around. Essentially if the district with the lead partner is producing results, no further intervention is required, but if it does not, then you get back to the moral obligation to intervene. Mr. Field said there are two options, one is the state can assign a TSO, the other is requiring more intense intervention in the transformation zone where the partner is directly responsible for managing those schools. The transformation zone could involve a partner organization taking a more direct role and that could be the next level of intervention.

Mr. Field discussed the re-purposing of the lead partner model. Mr. Field identified the problem with the original lead partner model limited the authority of partner organizations which inhibited their ability to be effective. Mr. Field recommended re-purposing the model by ceasing its use as a state intervention and use as opportunity for school corporations to pursue dramatic change and possibly avoid state intervention. Mr. Field added if there is not good will and collaboration there will always be challenges. Mr. Elsener said there are two types of intervention and support. The first is where all partners are aligned, then there is where the state places a partner and the district and school do not collaborate. At that point, the Board has to take a more serious approach or leave the students in a school that doesn't work. Mr. Field said when a school says they are going to take a bold approach, success measures but must be predetermined. Mr. Field continued to present the role and responsibilities regarding MOUs.

Mr. Elsener said one of the problems we have had is after the TSO is in place, they have not been able to get the records and that confusion cost a lot of progress. Ms. O'Brien added that is where community engagement comes in to play because it can help alleviate some of the spin in previous scenarios. Mr. Walker said that is there the language of "takeover" really hurt the process because the community was suspicious.

Mr. Field presented on the final recommendation of performance goals. He recommended resetting performance goals for existing and future turnaround academies to inform transition options. Mr. Field added there is also a need for clear growth measures. Finally, the state should set goals to evaluate a school corporation's capacity to receive a school back from state intervention.

Ms. O'Brien asked has it been determined what legislative changes would be required to make these recommendations. Ms. Fiddian-Green responded the committee would be discussing legislative changes during the facilitated discussion.



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Mr. Elsener said there are a few points worth reemphasizing such as clarity, performance, roles and responsibilities, and systems thinking. Mr. Field said there is also a role in using the state's incentives and consequences to instigate school corporation actions that are in the best interest of students. Mr. Walker asked Mr. Field to define "state" in terms of State Board or Department of Education. Mr. Field said the recommendation if the State Board is directly responsible for making decisions regarding intervention, then there is a compelling reason for accountability that implementing those policies should be under the State Board. There is a need to have a well-thought out aligned relationship with the Department of Education is essential. Mr. Walker said there is some confusion at the school and district level, as to the Department's responsibilities related to the ESEA waiver for focus and priority schools and those are often the same schools in turnaround, so there needs to be some consistency and efficiency in the message to these schools. Mr. Elsener said there is a need to look at governance and structure at the state level, fundamentally the State Board should have the responsibility to intervene in the schools. It was clear in the public hearings that there were too many changes.

Mr. Field transitioned to School-Level Recommendations. First he reiterated the three existing models being used in Indiana: the lead partner model, the TSO model, and the transformation zone. The first recommendation is regarding the three TSO schools operated by Charter Schools USA (CSUSA). CSUSA proposed a five year extension to the current contract. Public Impact recommends extending the contract by two years, setting clear and specific benchmarks for the schools, establish an MOU between the state and IPS that clearly defines IPS' role, and establish three-year benchmarks by June 2018 about the schools performance and the district's transition of these schools.

Mr. Elsener asked if Public Impact is recommending a two-year extension of the contract because it is necessary to see improvement in that timeframe, rather than being locked into a long-term contract. Mr. Field replied that a five-year extension seems unnecessarily long.

Ms. Fiddian-Green added while the current intervention began in 2012-13, if it is continued through June 2018 that would be six full years. The law currently states the Board is obligated to make a decision about the exit strategy by December of that last year, so then you would have five years of data at that point. The other recommendations that Public Impact has made regarding having clearer goals and performance benchmarks, would allow the Board greater flexibility and allow for Board action earlier in the process. Ms. Fiddian-Green asked the committee to be mindful of the level of challenges the schools have had due to lack of clarity. Ms. Fiddian-Green supported the two-year extension with added performance benchmarks to allow enough time for evaluation to decide if the schools will be returned to the district or continued to be operated by the TSO.



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Mr. Elsener said it may be an issue of wording. He would like to see a two-year minimum but an option to renew under performance. He would like to see continuity and look at the language.

Ms. O'Brien said she does not see an option on the chart as a continuation with the current partner. If the school is demonstrating success, but the corporation is not, on the chart the option is conversion to charter school. Mr. Field said it is an option, there are advantages of converting to a charter school. Ms. O'Brien said it could potentially be CSUSA converting it to a charter school. Ms. Fiddian-Green added depending on the structure, if it were a state take-over district they could authorize as an LEA, LEAs have that authority now. At this point the committee does not have enough information on the best exit strategy, so that is why you need more time. Mr. Elsener said

Ms. Fiddian-Green suggested completing the recommendations on CSUSA and IPS in totality. Mr. Elsener announced the committee would complete the recommendations then call upon Dr. Ferebee and Mr. Hage for comments.

Mr. Field said the second component of the CSUSA proposal is to expand Emma Donnan from grades 7-8 to K-12 in the current building. Mr. Field said this has to do with the legal authority of the Board. Ms. Fiddian-Green said the economic model is not viable and having a 7-8 model is undesirable, so based on Board Council's conclusion that the state does not have the legal authority to allow it to become K-8 school, the recommendation would be to address some of the concerns and place students in Manual, and the facility owned by IPS would be returned to the district.

Mr. John Snethen said there is not statutory authority for placing a feeder school in a turnaround academy. Part of the problem is that could be viewed as the creation of a new school, which is normally a power exercised locally. Unless all parties are in agreement, one could expect pushback from the local school corporation. Mr. Snethen stated it is not an option he can recommend.

Mr. Elsener said at this time the State Board has taken responsibility for Emma Donnan. The State Board would want to retain the authority to approve anything that went into Emma Donnan. Mr. Elsener said the Board would want to approve the plan if someone is going to put a school in Emma Donnan. Mr. Walker disagreed, stating the school is just a number, once the school number is closed out, the building is there to use as the district sees fit. Mr. Elsener said on one level he agrees, on another level when considering the school as part of a system, it is going to interact with Manual and IPS. Mr. Walker said it needs to be clear if the school is being discussed as separate from the building. Ms. O'Brien said she recalled a memo that stated one failing school could not be merged with another failing school, and asked how this is different. Mr. Snethen confirmed one failing school could not be merged with another failing school.



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Mr. Snethen said his understanding is this is something that is not a turnaround academy, which would go into a building where a turnaround academy is contained, and feed the turnaround academy. Mr. Snethen explained think of the turnaround academy as the students, not necessarily the infrastructure in which they are housed. The affected students themselves constitute the school and that is what the focus of the turnaround statute is aimed at, the students. Ms. O'Brien asked so it is not merging the two separate schools, but rather the facility. Mr. Snethen confirmed that is correct. Ms. O'Brien asked would the Board continue to oversee Emma Donnan in this scenario. Mr. Snethen stated that is how he understood the plan to be and that is where the State Board's authority to do that becomes questionable. Mr. Elsener added there will probably be some clarification on this statute in the legislature this year. Ms. Fiddian-Green stated the committee will need to make recommendations to the full Board at the end of today's meeting.

Mr. Field continued stating CSUSA additionally proposed if a K-8 school is not granted, they request to transition to a charter school, but again this gets into the legal authority of the Board because the Board does not have authority to grant charters. Furthermore, CSUSA has not been hired by a non-profit charter board that can authorize to operate a charter school. Public Impact recommends this is outside of the discretion of the Board to make a decision about a K-6 charter in the building. The other important decision point is regarding EdPower/Tindley, who has indicated they are going to withdraw. The committee will need to make an immediate decision on how to best support students in that school. Public Impact recommends working with IPS to create a transformation zone model including Arlington in the zone, have IPS assume direct management of the school, and use the Mayor's office as an oversight entity. There is not a viable TSO operator to fill the space of EdPower/Tindley. There would an MOU with IPS and the State Board defining expectations. The intervention status would need to be extended to June 2018.

Mr. Elsener asked should the Board demand an external partner in this process. Mr. Field replied it is not an absolute necessity that an external partner be involved in the transformation zone. However, to the extent the Board has faith and confidence in the improvement in these schools, there is value in having an external partner in the process. Ms. Fiddian-Green discussed the option of HEA 1321, which Dr. Ferebee had presented on October 9, 2014 to the committee, Mr. Snethen concluded that is not an option under the turnaround statute. Ms. Fiddian-Green added due to EdPower/Tindley's decision to withdraw from Arlington and the request for relief from CSUSA, the committee may want to consider asking CSUSA to withdraw their petition and wait if funding changes can be made.

Mr. Elsener inquired about the Board's direct involvement versus IPS taking back the sole management of the process. Mr. Field said a successful transformation zone supports a cluster of schools, since IPS has no prior experience with this, Public Impact would recommend an external partner be included in the transformation zone.



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Mr. Field responded to the question are there benefits of having an external partner manage the schools within the transformation zone. He said in Philadelphia, the district had charter school operators actually take over the schools but the district initiated the change for the operators to run the schools. Ms. Fiddian-Green added a critical component of success with an external partner is having a collaborative relationship between the district and the external partner. Mr. Field said the three IPS schools that have lead partners all require an intervention plan due to withdrawals and changes with lead partners, therefore Public Impact recommends including the lead partner schools in the transformation zone.

Mr. Elsener invited Dr. Ferebee to the podium. Dr. Ferebee thanked the board for their turnaround efforts, and expressed that IPS is pleased with the transformation zone proposal. Public Impact's transformation zone model would benefit IPS. He stated this concept would allow IPS to be an active part of the process, by identifying a partner, and maximizing the partnership and collaboration needed to improve student outcomes. Dr. Ferebee asked the Board to give consideration to IPS toward individual schools—although progress has been made but they need more time to show greater improvements. The new administration would like the opportunity to get involved. In regard to the CSUSA schools, he cautioned the Board against expanding the charter organization by allowing students who are not an initial part of the intervention to be merged because IPS views this as unlawful. Otherwise, IPS is at risk of being in a situation similar to Arlington. A transition plan is needed to ensure that IPS schools within the turnaround will not lose their community. Without this assurance, there will be no partnership. Previously, IPS was not as engaged as it is now.

Mr. Walker asked have any efforts been made to identify or engage a new partner.

Mr. Ferebee responded IPS began deepening a relationship with KIPP Indianapolis. IPS also has innovation fellows and IPS has changed facility utilization in the district. He encouraged the committee to consider the academic intervention separately from facility utilization. IPS has had favorable conversations with Marzano as a lead partner and has also conducted research on Mass Insight.

Mr. Elsener asked Dr. Ferebee if IPS intended to have a lead partner. Dr. Ferebee responded that with this model he would like the opportunity to select a lead partner, and have roles defined to ensure the relationship would be successful. He felt there was much to learn from Evansville. Mr. Elsener said the Board will take the committee's work and develop a template or clear outline of expectations, which IPS would then negotiate, then enact, and report back in detail. Mr. Elsener indicated Dr. Ferebee (IPS) would select the lead partner. Mr. Elsener said the same standards and definite timeframes to show improvement would be applied to all turnaround schools.



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Mr. Walker asked if IPS needed the seats at Arlington and Emma Donnan. Dr. Ferebee indicated the current student population at Arlington posed a large operational cost to the district. IPS needs former students from the neighborhoods to return to those two schools, otherwise there will be operational challenges—with a school capacity at two thousand, but enrollment closer to three hundred. IPS has more facility space than it has students. IPS would like to combine some of the students at CSUSA sites to free up a facility for other use, such as a dedicated middle school to improve that age group's performance.

When asked if IPS would maintain the facilities, Dr. Ferebee responded that IPS does and will continue to maintain facilities, if enrollment can be bolstered and Arlington can be operated more efficiently. Mr. Walker asked if other schools could share facilities. Dr. Ferebee responded that John Marshall could potentially be incorporated, but more students would need to return to the schools. When asked if he anticipated a single or multiple external partners, Dr. Ferebee said one partner would allow for a more comprehensive approach, provide an environment with clear leadership structure, encourage professional development opportunities, and create a network focused on intensive support. Dr. Elsener said in Evansville the structure includes transformation zone leaders, a turnaround officer who reports directly to the Superintendent, and the Superintendent reports directly to the State Board.

Mr. Walker asked about the transition timeline. Dr. Ferebee said the transition process should be shortened but will take at least eighteen months to two years, but that it is not necessary to make a five year commitment if the partnership works.

Mr. Jon Hage said he observed as the plan is examined, it is important to note the potential changes to the law that will help the turnaround process. He stressed that Indiana should seek to increase the number of high quality turnaround operators. As an operator, CSUSA feels the turnover of leadership has been challenging. The message has been on what works for the system instead of what works for students. Students in turnaround schools were far behind before they arrived at his school door. Mr. Hage made the case to intervene earlier in the schools within the feeder pattern, and to extend contracts without this intention will not be effective. Contract extension is not the goal, but rather to have the school succeed. Incentives and the opportunity to continue working on the school is valuable. If the operator is not serving the needs of the students, then the operator should be replaced. If a charter option is better, it should be considered. Reform is to build up the school. Mr. Hage would like to continue working with Dr. Ferebee.

Ms. O'Brien expressed the need to make the operators' opportunity desirable, and that this committee should try to attract the right people to do the work. Mr. Hage responded the Board should not dis-incentivize success—that high standards and good results are rewarded. Mr. Elsener said the Board's role is not to perpetuate systems, or governance structures, it is to make sure those things are the servants to students and communities. The purpose of a contract is to ensure uniform standards are met.



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If the relationship is working, the board would renew. Mr. Hage was asked how CSUSA would approach community engagement. Mr. Hage said there should be an engagement template with structure of support upon arrival. This is a time of evaluation and course correction.

Mr. Elsener said the law limiting turn around to 7-12th grade was not ideal, and asked Mr. Hage what the law should say. Mr. Hage replied there should be choice embedded in law, and law should focus on whether standards are being met, and if measurable improvements are being made. If the focus is on driving achievement, and the operator is proving successful, that operator should have access to the turnaround process in earlier grades. The barrier right now may be the legal or political ramifications of doing that.

Ms. Fiddian-Green asked the Chair if the committee should continue recommendations on Evansville and Gary, then move to IPS. Mr. Elsener suggested moving on to recommendations and return to specific school discussion later.

Mr. Field began the recommendations. First, transformation zones should not be limited to just turnaround academies. To the extent that there is a compelling reason to include feeder schools, elementary schools in turnaround, Public Impact would support that. Second, transition timeline is not arbitrary. If there is success, then sustain it—whether that is a charter school, contract school, or district managed school. Finally, regarding Dr. Ferebee's idea to control Emma Donnan, which makes sense, Mr. Field advised the committee to carefully consider consolidation with more schools, such as transitioning more students into Manual. The committee should avoid potential enrollment emergencies because now another middle school is being formed, for instance.

Mr. Elsener said he would like to see a plan before taking over a group of students, because they are part of a system, it may need to clear in the law, if there are too many square feet for a number of children, as in charters, for example. It cannot be done in isolation.

Ms. Fiddian-Green stated the Board has the authority now to order the closure of schools and consolidation. The Board has authority as part of the state directed intervention, to ask for a comprehensive plan, which would inform the decision-making.

For Glenwood, Mr. Field recommended that transformation zone model be formalized, an MOU be drafted with the state, and performance expectations and operating conditions be clarified therein. A more formalized process is needed for Glenwood, because though it has made improvements, it is still an F school. Ms. O'Brien asked whether the recommendation of Mass Insight goes beyond what has already been agreed to with Glenwood and Lincoln. Mr. Guffin recommended their term be extended because Glenwood and Lincoln have not progressed far enough. Mr. Guffin recommended a conversation with Dr. Smith and Mass Insight to ensure that an extension would be agreeable.



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Mr. Walker requested a copy of the contract between Mass Insight and Evansville. Mr. Guffin said it has been requested and Dr. Smith agreed to forward it.

Mr. Field moved on to recommendations on Gary. Regarding Roosevelt, the current contract does not have the explicit performance benchmarks that are necessary to have formal transition decisions. Mr. Field recommended to renegotiate the contract to have explicit benchmarks. Edison is also interested in this. He recommended an MOU between the state and Gary School Corporation that clarifies roles and responsibilities and ensures smooth operating conditions. There should also be benchmarks to assess the district's capacity so that when transition options can be put in place. These are important to ensure the school's success but also the corporation's success. Third recommendation, based upon the premise of a two-year contract extension, but the caveat is financial strain Gary School Corp is under. Any decision made for this school system, regarding intervention, would be informed by a comprehensive needs assessment for Gary—both a school corporation plan and a school plan. He believes there is a potential role for Edison to play, with Dunbar-Pulaski. There could be consolidation with Roosevelt, but these needed to be part of a school corporation plan. Mr. Walker asked if the Department of Education has been doing a comprehensive needs assessment of Gary in preparation of a high-risk designation action plan, since Gary gave up their rights to federal money in February. Mr. Walker said a lot of the need comes down to money.

Ms. Fiddian-Green said a concern was raised. Board staff met with Edison last week and were notified of operating losses due to lower than expected student enrollment and Edison's investments in the facility they have been required to make to ensure a safe environment. Edison is interested to know if they were to take on Dunbar-Pulaski, could there be some combination of facilities, so there will be economy of scale. More recently, Board staff has learned of liens put upon Gary Schools by the IRS and the water company. With the transportation issue, the concern is that the district may not be able to provide basic services to students. Edison may not be able to afford to extend their relationship with Gary.

Mr. Elsener moved the conversation back to IPS. He said there should be the same standards of progress for every turnaround school, regardless of operator. He wants to see the contract extensions more like a minimum with clear requirements to have the contracts extended further. If the state intervenes, the district wants to know that this won't go on for years. The committee's intention is to maximize community engagement and buy-in. He wants a direct line of sight from the Board to the turnaround office to the superintendent, all through the turnaround office; all with the intention of avoiding confusion and bureaucracy. The school is part of a system which the Board must take into consideration when intervention is made.

Ms. O'Brien felt all eight recommendations need to be official and clear or the full Board would be hesitant to approve them. The guiding principles need to be specific to turnarounds.



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Mr. Elsener asked IPS and Emma Donnan to come to the Board with a plan, similar to what was required of Evansville. Clarity will be required for the Board to approve any plan.

Ms. Fiddian-Green summarized the agreements made of a two-year contract extension minimum, with requirements for how CSUSA can extend the relationship further or continue as a charter, if that is what the board decided to do. For the transformation zone plan, which includes Emma Donnan, the committee wants to see a detailed plan from IPS first, in order to give the Board time to examine the plan and make a decision before the start of the next school year. Ms. Fiddian-Green said Emma Donnan's situation required additional guidance from the committee, in order to act upon any direction to have the facility go back and students go into Manual, unless they have seen the plan.

Ms. O'Brien asked for clarification because transformation zone included Emma Donnan; but Emma Donnan, in terms of student population, is still under CSUSA. Ms. Fiddian-Green explained that part of the transformation zone plan has to be a master facilities plan for the district as a whole. If it is true that the facility must go back to the district, then "we" need to see a plan for facilities usage, which might include closure, for excess capacity, or other actions, at the board's direction. The board has to approve the plan for the transformation zone. Mr. Walker questioned SBOE's jurisdiction over how a school uses its facility. Ms. Fiddian-Green said, under board intervention, correct. They would have to provide a plan to the committee you with a plan for how they are going to use their space, so that the board can determine that none of the district's plans undermine the turnaround process.

Mr. Elsener expressed that the struggle is economic scale is important for the board to know, but is outside the board's control. Ms. Fiddian-Green described conflicting requests. First, CSUSA wants to have a feeder, which Mr. Snethen has concluded is not possible, under existing law. She suggested that a possible solution is to combine with Manual to create a 7-12 school. She said that with the committee's uncertainty, the committee needs to hear a revised request from IPS and CSUSA about Emma Donnan, with a recommendation to be made to the full board at the December 3rd meeting. Ms. Fiddian-Green asked whether there could be flexibility for CSUSA, on Donnan, to move at the speed necessary, relative to any plan the board would approve about the transformation zone for IPS. Ms. Fiddian-Green felt that in order to provide clarity to both parties at the December meeting, that more conversation was needed in the coming days. Mr. Walker felt that much latitude should be given to TSOs and school corporations, because if students were moved, IPS could potentially make use of the building vacated, with little board intervention, other than possibly changing school number from one facility to the other.

Mr. Elsener asked Dr. Ferebee to share his thoughts. Dr. Ferebee said that in terms of the transformation zone, there has been no talk about resources, which were an important contributing factor to the success of the transformation zone model.



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His second issue is that a week or two was not sufficient time to produce a comprehensive plan, to a level to be presented to the board. He suggested embedding transition time into the conversation, so that IPS can develop a well-thought out strategic plan. IPS wants to engage in conversations with partners and with community members.

Ms. O'Brien said that the research does not support combining the middle grades with the high school grades. She asked if that finding was based upon strictly IPS. Dr. Ferebee said the finding was based on internal data. Students in K-8 and 7-8 schools are functioning better than 7-12 model. In regard to merging Emma Donnan and Manual, Ms. O'Brien did not recommend combining the schools for financial reasons, which will set students up for failure.

III. Facilitated discussion to determine committee recommendations to the State Board of Education

Mr. Elsener said the committee would like clarity on the extension. They want plans, cooperatively developed, template and outline of lead partners of how they will work with the transformation zones. They want uniform standards for all turnaround schools. In terms of Evansville, they want a formalized transformation zone model. In Gary, the open questions around economic viability need answered. Mr. Walker wanted to know, does Gary need the seats, and can Gary afford the building. If Edison can't move forward, he said, then the option is closure. Mr. Elsener said an issue within SBOE's structured principles is that the state level structure versus transformation zone districts will require legislative agenda item, for turnaround office under the board. He does not want to create an incentive for a school to get in trouble, and the state just gives it more resources, but there will be resources needed for critical issues.

Ms. Fiddian-Green said to clarify, Dunbar-Pulaski is up for Board intervention. Ms. Fiddian-Green said she understand the committee's concern regarding the RFP, but as the recommendation stated the Board should be hesitate to vote on anything until a broader assessment of the district is complete. The Board can work with the Department to see how far along their comprehensive assessment is to completion, then determine a time to present the plan to the Board. Mr. Walker asked what the Board is looking for in the assessment of the district.

Ms. Fiddian-Green replied the board has the authority to ask for a comprehensive assessment in order not to make a decision about a single school in isolation without analyzing its ecosystem. Especially in the case of Gary, there has been additional information regarding the fiscal sustainability. Mr. Elsener said he would like to see an evaluation at the district-level to discover why there are multiple failing schools and a crumbling financial ecosystem. Ms. O'Brien both historical context and future recommendations are needed. Mr. Elsener supported the idea of a district-wide evaluation as part of the recommendation.



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Mr. Walker debated between the current statute, which requires the district to provide transportation and the option of closing the school. Ms. Fiddian-Green stated the Board staff has legislative recommendations to share with the committee. Mr. Walker said the committee needs to determine when state intervention begins.

Mr. Field presented distinctions on the two models of the state independent turnaround unit and the state takeover district as a separate LEA. Mr. Elsener said he sees the turnaround unit as a precursor to the takeover district. Mr. Field said that is good rationale for creating the state turnaround unit as an immediate solution. Mr. Walker asked for clarification on the staffing of the turnaround unit. Mr. Field said it depends on how the roles and responsibilities of the unit are defined and funding is clear. Mr. Elsener it would make sense to structure the staff under the Board staff, but the larger point is the Board needs resources for a turnaround operation, especially if an LEA will be created. The Committee agreed the turnaround unit should be staffed as an office within the Board staff.

Ms. Fiddian-Green shared summary recommendations from Public Impact and requests from Indiana stakeholders that would require outreach and buy-in from partner organizations that may also require legislative or regulatory changes. Ms. Fiddian-Green presented the potential approaches to human capital and talent. She then asked the committee if they would support funding for talent acquisition because this is a budget request of the Board. The Chair responded affirmatively. Ms. Fiddian-Green continued sharing roles and responsibilities regarding the Board's direct authority to enter into MOUs or contracts with districts and external partners. She also asked the committee to consider the Board appointing the head of the turnaround unit with direct report to the Board, similar to the current special education model where the state special education director is appointed by the Governor and reports directly to the Board. The Chair stated his preference was to act swiftly and well. Regarding facilities, Ms. Fiddian-Green recommended the Board require district-wide assessment of facilities in districts with turnaround schools, and prepare a facilities master plan which would include the optimal use of facilities and identify which schools should be closed, repurposed or renovated. In addition, the Board may consider requesting the creation of a school turnaround facilities fund (revolving loan fund) to be administered by the Board. As previously recommended by Mr. Walker, another option would be to request ability for external partners to receive a *pro rata* portion of property tax dollars. These two options would require legislative changes. Mr. Walker recommended eliminating the entire statute regarding maintenance, and be subject to negotiation. The committee agreed with Mr. Walker's recommendation.

Ms. Fiddian-Green presented funding options to increase the level of financial resources dedicated to the management of the state intervention process, including the rethinking the allocation of SIG dollars to the TSOs to ensure the maximum amount of federal funds are being allocated toward external partners directly.



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Mr. Elsener said he would like to see state law support alignment again, once a strategic move is taken. He said if there are no resources under that governance model, it is not a reality. Ms. O'Brien added it should be a preemptive approach to finding a lead partner. Mr. Walker recommended the turnaround unit be responsible for grant distribution and funding allocation.

Ms. Fiddian-Green moved to systemic approaches and providing greater flexibility for districts and external partners. The first option would be to allow TSOs to enroll students in lower grades to create the feeder system, the second would be to allow charter schools operated by a TSO to be co-located in the turnaround facility. These recommendations were provided by CSUSA. Mr. Walker stated he is against both recommendations. Mr. Walker clarified he is against statutory changes but amenable to Board discretion.

Ms. Fiddian-Green stated that IPS asked for authority to expand the scope of HEA 1321. The first recommendation would be to allow that to be a turnaround tool, the second would be to expand it to other districts under the premise of maximum flexibility. It would be similar to the special management company in the turnaround statute. Mr. Elsener stated in the transformation zone it is important to give the ability to say these contracts are not working.

Ms. Fiddian-Green said the last recommendation Public Impact made is to seek ability to take over a failing school corporation as a last resort. Ms. O'Brien said she feels it is necessary. Mr. Elsener added when in this situation, the ability is needed to resolve the issue by taking it to the legislature.

Ms. Fiddian-Green presented ideas to address systemic issues earlier on such as implementing turnaround strategies for schools with a D or F and moving up the timeline from six years as an F.

Ms. O'Brien strongly supports a two-tier model and earlier intervention. Mr. Walker also supported a two-tiered model, one that would provide support in the second to fourth years, but after a school remains in the focus and priority category for four consecutive years, he thinks it requires state intervention. Ms. O'Brien said there is flexibility within the transformation zone model. Mr. Elsener also agreed there is benefit to earlier intervention and a two-tiered approach. Mr. Walker clarified when he envisions a four year intervention it includes an external partner. Mr. Elsener added the Board does not want to run the schools.

Ms. Fiddian-Green presented the final recommendation regarding access to data to the party responsible for monitoring and oversight.

IV. Next Steps



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Ms. Fiddian-Green stated Public Impact will present at the December 3, 2014 Board meeting. Board staff will follow-up with Mr. Hage (CSUSA) and Dr. Ferebee (IPS) on Emma Donnan and present a timeline for a comprehensive plan for IPS.

V. Adjourn

Mr. Walker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. O'Brien. Mr. Elsener adjourned the meeting with no objections.