

School Redesign Support for Louisiana Schools

RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

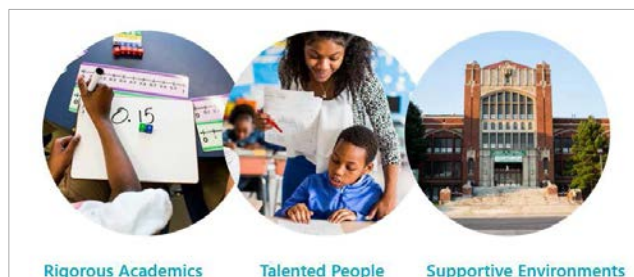
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TNTP Background

TNTP is dedicated to ending the injustice of educational inequity by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom. We work at every level of public school systems nationwide to create engaging classrooms by focusing on three core areas: rigorous academics, talented people, and supportive environments.

Nationally, TNTP has a 20-year track record that includes working at every level of the education system to plan and execute ambitious reforms, from training individual teachers and leaders to staffing entire districts and supporting states to craft and implement state policy. We have trained and certified more than 54,000 teachers, been leaders in using performance data to shape educator supports, and designed an actionable school climate tool that gives teachers a voice and leaders a clear action plan for improving school culture. We estimate that our broad-ranging work has benefitted over 1.3 million students.



We have deep roots in Louisiana, and we have evolved our approaches over the past two decades to meet the changing needs of the state. Through initial local programs like teachNOLA and TNTP Academy, we have recruited, trained and certified more than 2,000 teachers for some of the state's highest-need schools, pioneering a system for making teacher certification decisions based on demonstrated classroom effectiveness. As *Believe and Prepare* program partners, TNTP also develops and provides new teachers with a licensure path through the Louisiana's Collegiate Academies Teacher Residency program. With the launch of *Good to Great*, a month-long, intensive professional development institute held in New Orleans, TNTP has helped over a 100 experienced Louisiana teachers master instructional shifts needed to unlock the power of the Common Core. In districts across the state, we have been a critical human capital partner, staffing hard-to-fill vacancies in over 150 schools and training school leaders to support and develop their top teaching talent. TNTP's Louisiana-based staff are experts in developing the skills teachers and leaders need to lead rigorous instruction and create a supportive, positive environment. Drawing on our experiences in and beyond the state, we are poised to help those in historically under-performing schools to change the trajectory of teaching and learning.

Our School Support Model

We have seen Louisiana students make steady progress toward becoming college and career-ready. While it is encouraging that the state's focus on academic rigor is reaping promising results, with all-time high ACT scores and graduation rates, students attending Louisiana's lowest-performing schools are being left further and further behind. These schools need coordinated strategies that work quickly to put students on the same path to success. School redesign grants provide an opportunity to envision and implement a comprehensive, cohesive plan for sustained improvement. To achieve radically better results, stakeholders must come together and simultaneously address (1) culture and climate, (2) leadership and talent, (3) instructional improvement, and (4) student support and operations.

- **Culture and Climate.** Both research and our experience in the field underscore our belief that successful schools start by offering students and adults a safe and secure environment, fostering a positive culture of continuous learning. They must also establish equitable student discipline policies and ensure all students have access to the supports they need to be successful. TNTP will help school leaders design plans that create such an environment and establish the professional learning and support structures to help sustain it.
- **Leadership and Talent.** Schools need a staff structure aligned with the redesigned school plan, drawing from existing assets and supported with well-defined goals, clear expectations and embedded, tailored professional

development. Leaders need specialized, intensive support to fully navigate the opportunities provided through a redesign effort, such as selecting and retaining high-performing staff and practicing goals-based management.

- **Instructional Improvement.** The school redesign effort must center on a clearly articulated academic vision that all school staff and students understand and believe in. The school team must have access to curricula, materials and other instructional resources that support not only rigor, but a sequence of learning that will meet all students' needs. Academic priorities should include a focus on foundational literacy skills and plans to steadily increase rigor. Teachers should receive coaching and development, ensuring continuous strengthening of core instructional skills.
- **Student Support and Operations.** Good systems make sense to the people using them. Particularly in the turnaround context, operations should efficiently advance the school's overarching vision and maximize teaching and learning time. TNTP will ensure assessments and tools such as data dashboards align with the school improvement plan. We will facilitate staff's ability to use these tools in service of differentiated instruction, equitable resource access, and sufficient, meaningful interventions for students with special needs.

TNTP is poised to ensure these four elements are consistently prioritized as we approach the work in two main phases:

FOUNDATION: OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT & DESIGN	ONGOING: IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze local policy barriers to success for these schools • Assess school climate and culture (e.g., school and community stakeholder interviews) • Review instructional quality (e.g., classroom walkthroughs, material/resource assessments) • Facilitate design sessions to iterate on draft plans with stakeholder feedback—ultimately creating a multi-year school improvement plan aimed at turning around student performance • Ensure the right talent and resources are in place for the start of the school year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help leader drive the school improvement plan (e.g., supporting strong talent management and development practices) • Establish a high-functioning professional learning community • Align teacher coaching and professional development supports with academic strategy • Establish systems for high quality progress monitoring (e.g. use of Instructional Rounds, analysis of formative assessment data and other leading indicators)

Opportunity Assessment & Design: From the onset, TNTP can help district leaders diagnose the needs and assets of the school community. We will closely examine existing data, assess school culture, analyze instructional practices, review curricular materials, and determine facility needs. We will help our partners engage members of the broader school community, aiming to maximize the energy and resources available to the turnaround effort.

In addition, because of our deep understanding of educational policy, we will help district and school leaders assess the risks to improvement plans by analyzing the local, state and federal policy context (e.g., collective bargaining agreements, statutes, ESSA) and recommend the best path forward.

Finally, TNTP will work closely with school teams to ensure they have a strong foundation from which they can successfully operate the new school design. Drawing from our deep experience steering school-based human capital strategy, we will support the district's effort to staff each partner school with the best available talent.

Implementation Support: In schools around the country, TNTP has helped set the stage for measurably improved student outcomes. In each context, our role has varied based on school needs, existing assets and client preferences. The Foundations phase will reveal the most strategic way TNTP can support the school improvement plan. Examples of objectives we may lead as part of ongoing implementation include:

- Increase the school leadership teams' skill sets in the areas of data-driven decision-making, orchestrating a culture of learning, accurately assessing performance and effective teacher coaching;
- Establish productive professional learning communities that provide leadership and development opportunities to all adults in the building—including school leaders and instructional coaches— foster a growth mindset and support continuous improvement; and
- Deliver teacher coaching and professional development focused on core instructional practices, and using culturally and linguistically responsive practices to meet the unique needs of all learners.

Our Success as a School Improvement Partner

Springfield Empowerment Zone Partnership (MA): Since 2015, TNTP has partnered with struggling middle schools in Springfield, MA to help them exercise new autonomy granted as part of an innovative turnaround approach. TNTP provided strategic advisory and data analysis, training on effective talent management practices, and evaluation support to our partner schools in an effort to help them execute on new school operational plans. In our first year of support, schools saw chronic student absenteeism go down while teacher attendance went up. Schoolwide culture also improved measurably: in just the first six months, out-of-school suspensions dropped in one school by seven percent. We have also positioned all partnering schools to strategically manage their talent, explicitly working to retain their best teachers and seeking to fill vacancies much earlier in the season, when top candidates are typically seeking employment.

Neumann-Goretti HS, Philadelphia, PA. TNTP currently partners with Neumann-Goretti Catholic High School to help the school achieve its vision of providing a college preparatory education to all members of its racially and socio-economically diverse student population. Over fourteen months, TNTP conducted four phases of work: 1) comprehensive diagnostics of their academic model, teacher development strategy and school culture; 2) the development of a one-year school transformation plan; 3) leadership coaching and progress monitoring throughout the year focused on transformation plan goals; and 4) the creation of a four-year strategic plan to guide the school's ongoing transformation efforts. In the first year of a new transformation strategy, leading indicators such as teacher effectiveness, instructional culture and student culture improved significantly, putting the school on a trajectory towards achieving its long-term vision.

Pinellas County, Florida: TNTP supported the "Scale Up for Success" initiative in five elementary schools in Pinellas County, Florida for 18 months starting in January 2015. Our work included supporting coaches to help teachers improve, working with leaders to increase the number of effective teachers in their buildings, creating positive and safe learning environments for students, and making substantial changes to create the conditions necessary for effective school turnarounds in each of these five schools. These schools cut discipline referrals in half in the 2015-16 school year. Each school we supported in Pinellas made significant academic gains in the 2015-16 school year, some as large as 20 percentage points in the number of students with passing scores in math and ELA in grades 3-5.