

Denver Public Schools

DISTRICT BACKGROUND 2010–11:

Enrollment.....	79,000 students
\$/Pupil.....	\$10.25K per pupil
% Free & Reduced Lunch.....	73%
% Special Education.....	12%
% English Language Learners.....	31%
Year Turnaround Program Initiated.....	2005; updated 2009

	Schools	Turnaround Schools
Elementary	73	5
K–8	16	1
Middle	16	2
High School	12	4
Other (eg 6–12)	15	2
Charter	30	0
Total	162	14



IN A NUTSHELL: Create a portfolio of charter schools, innovation schools, and turnaround/transformation schools, with student choice system.

TURNAROUND ELEMENTS

Strong leaders: Replace principals where needed; provide executive coaches, PLCs, and leadership retreats

Effective teaching teams with expert support: Provide a Dean of Instruction, instructional coaches, weekly PLCs, team-based incentives, intensive summer PD; implement a new teacher evaluation system; replace more than 50% of teachers at 3 schools; hire all new staff in 7 schools

Individual attention & time: Extend the school day (1 hr) and school year (6 days) in 9 schools; partner to provide tutoring; analyze formative assessment data regularly to track individual student progress

Health, social & emotional support: Implement a home visit program; audit and align community resources

Safe & welcoming community: Hire a communications specialist; summer retreats for staff to work on school culture/vision/expectations

TURNAROUND PROCESS

- Ratings:** Schools evaluated using School Performance Framework; those in bottom two categories considered for turnaround
- Diagnostics:** Internal and external reviewers assess school status and needs
- Stakeholder engagement:** Community discussions on school needs and suitable strategies
- Interventions:**
 - Federal transformation or turnaround approach, with defined action steps for instruction, human capital, and community engagement areas
 - School closure
 - Replacement with new school through the Call for Quality Schools process

RESULTS SO FAR

Not yet available

DISTRICT STRUCTURES & SUPPORTS

Central office governance: Two regional offices (each with 4–5 staff) overseen by an Assistant Superintendent also responsible for regular schools; Charter and Innovation schools overseen by separate Chief Officer

School-created model: Schools or networks develop their own research-based approach, which must be approved

Accountability & support: Project Management Approach for planning and monitoring turnaround progress, including quarterly report and rigorous School Performance Framework to track progress; schools evaluated by outside agencies

Removing barriers to innovation: Schools may apply for Innovation Status, gaining exemptions from certain state, district & union rules

Community & parent involvement: Stakeholder engagement process on options for low-performing schools

Portfolio approach: Mix of transformation/turnaround, charter, and innovation schools

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TURNAROUND

Average district \$/pupil	\$10K per pupil
Average \$ per turnaround school	\$500K for ES, \$750K for MS, and \$1M for HS, per year for 3 years
Average \$ per turnaround pupil	\$2K per pupil
Top turnaround expenditures	Varies by school
Sources of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal School Improvement Grants (over \$15M) District general fund Philanthropic funds (\$4M)

KEY PARTNERS

Blueprint Schools Network
 Effective Associates
 City Year
 National Center on Time & Learning
 Cambridge Education