



United Way
for Southeastern Michigan

AGENDA FOR CHANGE INVESTMENT GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS: TURNAROUND HIGH SCHOOLS

Vision

Creating the Next Generation of High Performing High Schools where caring adults and supportive partners help graduate students prepared to succeed in post secondary education, work, and life.

Goal

Graduation rates of 80% or higher by 2018 in all 30 high schools in Southeastern Michigan that were labeled “drop-out factories” by national research in 2008.¹

Metrics

The number of 9th graders who missed 20 or more days of school AND failed two or more classes. This number is the projected dropout rate and must be less than 20%, measured and accessible on a weekly basis throughout the student’s high school career.

Overview of Investment Strategies

Guided by the belief that no child should go to a high school with less than a 60% chance of graduation, the United Way for Southeastern Michigan set a goal in 2008 of turning around or shutting down 30 high schools in the region (among 2,000 nationwide) labeled “dropout factories” by 2018. These efforts will not succeed without community participation and ownership. We are therefore transforming our 2011 investment process to foster robust non-profit, business, and community partnerships that will extend and redesign learning time. This will be accomplished in three ways:

1. Launching a competitive application for a second network of turnaround high schools and by coordinating investments with nonprofits and businesses to provide additional learning opportunities for students outside of the regular school day as well as other services identified by school leaders to enhance the high performing high school culture.
2. Coordinating scalable best practices comprised of local and national partnerships that improve student’s academic outcomes throughout the region.
3. Seeking innovative practices and policies developed to improve the educational system in Michigan.

Investment Opportunities

Strategy 1: Launching a Network of Excellence for Turnaround High Schools (Invitation Only)

High schools that incorporate the theory of change based on proven strategies identified by Mass Insight, a non-profit research organization that studied successful practices for building high-performing, high poverty schools in Miami, Chicago, Boston and New York. The Turnaround Framework has three primary elements:

1. **Change Conditions** - Principals must have control over the people, programs and budget in their building.
2. **Build Capacity** - Schools must partner with educational intermediaries experienced in turning schools around and closing the achievement gap.
3. **Cluster for Support** - This work must be done in clusters, or networks, of highly competitive and collaborative schools.

¹ The Silent Epidemic, Robert Balfanz and Joanna Fox, Johns Hopkins University 2008. High schools were labeled Dropout Factories if they had senior classes that are less than 60% the size of their freshmen class for three or more years.

Eligible Applicants: Leaders of high schools identified as one of dropout factories (See Appendix A). School leaders from 5% of the lowest performing high schools may be considered.

Eligibility Criteria:

- site-based management
- a turnaround partner (coach) and plan
 - a. vision for becoming high performing high school
 - b. unique eligibility characteristics of school
 - c. description of academic partners
 - d. plan for developing community partnerships
 - e. requirements for improving academic outcomes for staff and students
 - f. collaborative partnership for letter of intent
- strategies for sharing and using on track and off track indicators for graduation rates
- district approval to participate in the formal turnaround model evaluation

Funding Range: Investments will allocate by school leadership teams but will be paid directly to the provider of services, **not** to the school or school district. Grants up to \$200,000 per small high school (500 students or fewer) will be awarded to create high performing high schools.

Timeline: Invitations to Network of Excellence will be sent in January 2011. Screening and identification of eligible applicants will begin in February 2011 with the final approval completed by March of 2011.

Number of School Investments Expected: The Greater Detroit Education Venture Fund will select leadership teams from up to five high schools for the Network of Excellence. The following schools in the first network of turnaround schools will also be included:

- Academy of Critical Thinkers at Cody
- Academy of Public Leadership at Cody
- Medicine and Community Health at Cody
- Institute of Technology at Cody
- Melvindale High School
- Evergreen Academy at Osborn
- Math and Science at Osborn
- Osborn College Prep
- Pontiac High School
- VanDyke Lincoln in Warren

Community Partnerships and Student Support Services

School leadership teams in these networks will be able to apply their funding to non-profit organizations, colleges, and businesses that are supporting their strategies to keep more than 80% of their students on track for graduation. By June 1st of each year, School Leadership Teams will be asked to submit their plans and partnerships anticipated for the upcoming school year.

The supportive services of the funded partners will be overseen by “Champions Councils” at each school. These groups are comprised of neighborhood, school, non-profit and business leaders who volunteer to help students and teachers be successful in achieving their long-term and short-term goals.

Special emphasis will be given to supportive services that provide immediate solutions for:

- Improving student attendance
- Increasing school safety
- Implementing innovative strategies that enhance the culture of high performing schools

Number of Awards Expected: Investments will **not** be paid to schools, school leaders, or school districts. Funds will be distributed directly to organizations consistent with the plans and strategies of the School Leadership Team and overseen by the Champions Council.

Timeline: School leaders will submit a plan/vision by June 1 or each year proposing the use of funds for the following school year.

Strategy 2. Best Practices/Regional Partners (Open Process)

United Way for Southeastern Michigan will seek a Request to Partner from organizations that have best practice models for improving high school graduation rates of students, which can be replicated throughout the region. Examples of partnerships could include results oriented mentoring services, and in-school or after-school supportive services that are quality, cost effective solutions for improving academic performance and expanding the worldview of students.

Eligibility: Strategic partners that serve at least 5,000 young people through local and national affiliates which have scalable evidence based programs that help increase high school graduation rates by providing additional learning opportunities for students outside of the regular school day (extending learning time).

Outcomes should improve the quality of life for students consistent with the Five Promises framework:

- Opportunities with caring adults
- safe places
- an effective education or marketable skills
- a healthy start
- community service.²

Special emphasis will be given to supportive services, interventions, and regional partners that provide immediate solutions for

- Improving student attendance
- Increasing school safety
- Implementing innovative strategies that enhance the culture of high performing schools

Preference will be given to those organizations serving or able to serve significant concentrations of children in the Networks of Excellence described in Strategy 1.

Eligibility Criteria:

- 501(c)(3) organizations in operation for a minimal of three years
- Demonstrated capacity, performance, and strategies for improving high school graduation rates
- System for providing real time weekly data results
- Capacity to replicate the best practice model regionally
- Willingness to be part of a collaborative network and share best practices with other grant recipients receiving these funds
- Outcomes that are measurable and attainable which demonstrate how program service will further the Agenda for Change 10-year education goals
- Indicators that clearly reflect how the agency will know that the outcomes have been achieved
- Evaluation procedures in place
- Technological capacity to complete reporting requirement in the On-line Data Management system
- Demonstrate an ability to leverage United Way dollars

Number of Awards Expected: To be determined and based on the number of eligible requests to partner and available funding.

Timeline: On going throughout the fiscal year beginning in January 2011 and funded on an annual basis.

² See www.americaspromise.org for more details.
Updated December 17, 2010

Funding Range: Grant awards may range up to \$200,000.

Strategy 3. Innovation (Breakthrough System Change Work)-(Open Process)

New practices and policies must be developed to improve the educational system in Michigan. A limited number of grants will be awarded to partners that provide innovative system change models for improving graduation rates.

While some partners may be invited, all prospective partners must complete the on-line profile.

Eligibility Criteria:

- 501(c)(3) and for profit partners that have been in operation for three or more years with a track record for delivering on outcomes
- Able to drive, deliver and disseminate timely and insightful data to shape public opinion and policy about the status of high schools
- Strategic in increasing parental support and solutions that improve students' academics
- Scalable and outcome driven
- Maximizes the use of technology activate partners to create system change
- High impact and cost effective
- Advance multiple UWSEM outcomes
- Drive systems

Number of Awards Expected: To be determined based on funding availability.

Funding Range: Up to \$500,000

Timeline: Request to Partner online profiles will be considered throughout the United Way fiscal year.

Other Considerations

Project should include United Way as a partner and not just as a funder. The Request to Partner should demonstrate how the organization will leverage other funding. In addition, priority will be given to partners that integrate other programs.

Timeline

Month	Activity
October/November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Release the investment guidelines to CIC ○ Release the investment guidelines and timeline to Board ○ Fall exploratory conversations ○ Turnaround Challenge application revised ○ Invitation to apply to join the 2nd network of 2nd Network of Turnaround sent out ○ Initial work to form Champions Councils
December 2010/January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Venture Fund Advisory Board meets ○ Initial identification of eligible high schools for turnaround process ○ Formal announcement of eligible schools ○ Selection process begins for final selection of Turnaround schools ○ Best Practice/Regional Partners and Innovative/New Idea Request to Partner opens and forms are available on line for investment consideration
February – March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2nd Network of Turnaround approved and awarded ○ School leaders' Plan/Vision for supportive partners due
April – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supportive partners for 1st and 2nd Network of Turnaround identified
April - June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of submitted Request to Partner online profiles ○ Investment recommendations prepared ○ Recommendations submitted to appropriate leadership for approval ○ Selected and declined partners are notified by June 15, 2011

Appendix A

Eligible Turnaround School	
Central (Detroit)	Southeastern (Detroit)
Chadsey (Detroit) CLOSED	Southwestern (Detroit)
Cody (Detroit)**	Western International (Detroit)
Communication & Media Arts (Detroit)	Detroit School of Industrial Arts (Detroit)
Cooley (Detroit) CLOSED	Academy for Business & Technology (Melvindale)
Davis Aerospace (Detroit)	Melvindale**
Denby (Detroit)	East Detroit (Eastpointe)
Finney (Detroit)	Ecorse
Ford (Detroit)	Hamtramck
Kettering (Detroit)	Hazel Park
Mackenzie (Detroit) CLOSED	Lincoln Park
Northwestern (Detroit)	Pontiac**
Osborn (Detroit)**	River Rouge
Pershing (Detroit)	Van Dyke Lincoln (Warren)**
Redford (Detroit) CLOSED	

***Denotes high schools currently in United Way's turnaround network*