Chapter 4
Why School Turnaround Failed: Lethal Problems

> Given the widespread current attention to turnaround schooling, it is important to analyze and critique the origins, practices, and outcomes associated with the reform movement. (Peck & Reitzug, 2014, p. 27)
>
> Successful turnaround remains the exception rather than the rule. (Peurach & Neumerski, 2015, p. 382)

4.1 A Definition that is More Harmful than Helpful

> Turnaround is a highly innovative and comprehensive intervention that differs from school improvement that dramatically increases organizational performance and student learning in rapid fashion, i.e., in a very short period of time and brings the school to the door of sustainability. (Huberman et al., 2011, p. 1)

The definition of school turnaround almost ensures that any turnaround effort will fail. There are a variety of criteria in the definition of turnaround that are unsupported at any time in any situation. Using such criteria can end up having a devastating impact on everyone associated with turnaround, from state legislators to children. To begin with, there is no empirical support that all failing schools can be turned around. There is no empirical evidence that most failing schools can be turned around. There is no empirical evidence that many failing schools can be turned around (Loveless, 2010; May & Sanders, 2013; Peurach & Neumerski, 2015; Stuit, 2010). For example, only 26 of the original 2025 low-performing schools in the Stuit (2010) study "made it into the top half of their state's proficiency ranking within five years" (p. 5). There is considerable evidence across industry and

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Table 4.1 Definitional elements of turnaround without evidence

All Failing Schools can Succeed.
Challenging Goals.
Dramatic Improvement.
Highly Innovative Strategies.
Significantly different than School Improvement.
Rapid Change.
Reference Only to Academic Gains
Sustainability.
Scalability.

time that organizations do best when leaders help set challenging goals. But it is foolish to establish foolish targets (Table 4.1).

A second and related definitional criterion, dramatic improvement (Herman et al., 2008) also finds almost no support in the research. It has not happened in the past (Berends et al., 2002; Malen et al., 2002), is not happening now (Hochbein, 2012; Huberman et al., 2011), and there is strong evidence that it is unlikely to happen in the future (Murphy & Meyers, 2008).

Proponents also hold without evidence that highly innovative strategies will define school turnaround (see Le Floch et al., 2016; Peck & Reitzug, 2014; Trujillo & Renee, 2015). There is also in play a very fallible claim that turnaround work will be significantly different than the school improvement work from 1975–2000. Again, these claims not only lack empirical support, but the evidence we do have informs us that they are false (Herman, 2012; Yatsko et al., 2015). It is nearly impossible to find SIG strategies that were not employed by school improvement researchers 40 years ago (Trujillo & Renee, 2015; Orland, 2011). If there is a problem in the area, it is that the SIG work leaves out critical elements of school improvement (e.g., meaningful involvement of parents, a topic we take up in Chap. 5).

Turnarounds are expected to produce these dramatic increases in outcomes in a rapid period of time. First, there is no empirical reason to form this assertion (Gill, Zimmer, Christman, and Blanc, 2007; Meyers & Hambrick Hitt, 2017; Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, & Bush-Mecenas, 2016). Second, there is no evidence that rapid change is occurring at the current time (Aladjem et al., 2010; Anrig, 2015; Thompson et al., 2011). Third, there is no empirical evidence that the concept of rapid change will appear in the future (Peurach & Neumerski, 2015; Ylimaki, Brunderman, Bennett, & Dugan, 2014).

The seventh criteria of turnaround is that improvement is to be determined solely by reference to academic gains in reading and mathematics, a decision that solidifies for many the understanding that academic achievement is the sole purpose of schooling (May & Sanders, 2013) or as Booher-Jennings (2005, p. 260) puts it, "the singular focus on increasing aggregate test scores rendered school-wide discussion of the best interests of children 'obsolete' "

The eighth criterion of the definition is that successful turnaround schools should maintain sustainability "over an appreciable period of time" (Aladjem et al., 2010, p. 67). Most tellingly, obviously sustainability is impossible for turnaround efforts that never take root and develop, i.e., the overwhelming majority of turnaround efforts: "if this is a guide, few schools across the nation are likely to make quick and sustainable gains in student achievement that sustain over time" (Orland, 2011, p. 3).

The ninth and final element contained in the definition of turnaround is scalability. This is the notion that success should breed further success and over time we should see expanding coverage of "the school failure map" with much better schools (Kutash et al., 2010). Again, there is almost no empirical support for this claim.

4.2 Lack of Evidence for Starting Turnaround Work

> None of the four variants encouraged since 2009 were based on research evidence, and little evidence of effectiveness has since appeared. (Lubienski & Mirón, 2012, p. 1).

Turnaround work failed because when it was formalized in 2009 there was almost no evidence to suggest it could work (Gill et al., 2007; Hess, 2012). That is "research on school restructuring that preceded expanded federal improvement grants did not provide much support for this approach" (Lubienski & Mirón, 2012, p. 2; Murphy, 1991). The kindest interpretation is that the evidence needed to launch the reform strategy was missing (Anrig, 2015; Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, Bush-Mecenas, & Weinstein, 2016). While beliefs, hopes, "unsubstantiated" assumptions (Waddell, 2011, p. 10) and "unsubstantiated claims" (Trujillo & Renee, 2015, p. 1) were placed in the service of turnaround (Herman et al., 2008; Stuit, 2012), empirical data were largely conspicuous by their absence. Indeed, some of the limited data that were available actually suggested that transformation may harm efforts at improvement (Anrig, 2015; Booher-Jennings, 2005; Rice & Malen, 2010), especially as we will see below via unintended consequences. Equally

important, the evidence narratives cover all four of the SIG models covered in Chap. 1 (Raymond, 2009; Hamilton et al., 2014; Trujillo & Renee, 2015).

Not only was there a lack of evidence to ground turnaround improvement work in 2009, that picture has grown darker over the ensuing years (Anrig, 2015). Yet the policy and practice worlds continued to privilege turnaround as the pathway that could improve failing schools even when we knew that it could not. That is, not only did the definition almost guarantee failure, so too did the claim that the reform efforts would work.

Reports between 2009 and 2015 revealed the continued absence of much positive news of the SIG programs, i.e., "there is no evidence of widespread success of turnaround schooling" (Peck & Reitzug, 2014, p. 28). Overall the gaps we just discussed continued to widen and deepen (Anrig, 2015; Heissel & Ladd, 2016; Trujillo & Renee, 2015), with documented turnaround efforts being quite rare (Peurach & Neumerski, 2015). For example, as noted above, Stuit (2010) tells us that only 26 of 2025 low-performing schools "made it into the top half of their states' proficiency rankings within five years." In an earlier study, Loveless (2010) reveals that only 4 of 115 turnaround schools (3.5%) moved from below the 10th percentile to at or above the state average from 1989 to 2009. Peck and Reitzug (2014, p. 28) lay out the paradox here quite nicely: "There is no evidence of widespread success of turnaround schooling, yet the concept receives high priority in federal education policy." The potential to improve school performance remains suspect (Rice & Malen, 2010, p. 7) and the research suggests that it is very hard and relatively infrequent for a school to successfully sustain a turnaround (American Institutes for Research, 2011): "studies. .. offer little evidence that school turnaround or similar approaches are an effective way to improve academic performance dramatically across multiple schools" (Peck & Reitzug, 2014, p. 11).

4.3 Firing the Wrong Person

> Indiscriminant replacement of principals and teachers simply because they work in poorly performing schools seems a recipe for continued trouble rather than success. (Peck & Reitzug, 2014, p. 22).

In the turnaround legislation, as discussed in Chap. 1, various venues for school improvement are underscored: turnaround (reconstitution), transformation, school closure, and turning the school over to a private provider (e.g., an educational management organization). The turnaround option requires the school to fire all of its teachers and allows the school to rehire

up to 50% of those educators. There is no evidence anywhere that suggests that taking half of one's employees to the wall is a useful strategy for turning around a failing organization. Nothing in the research on turnarounds in the corporate or non-profit sectors even raise the notion of mass terminations of employees (Murphy & Meyers, 2008). "Little attention has been given to the theoretical underpinnings of replacing existing staff on achieving the goals of policymakers" (Hamilton et al., 2014, p. 189). There is no empirical evidence on this strategy.

Turning to formal leadership change, there is no mention anywhere of firing mid-level managers. And thus there is no empirical evidence to follow the solution pathway of hiring all new principals (with less than 2 or 3 years experience in their current schools).

> Turnaround-style reforms are not only based on unwarranted claims; they ignore contrary research evidence about the potential of mass firings to improve organizational performance. (Trujillo & Renee, 2015, p. 1).

> Wholesale staff replacement is not typically part of successful turnarounds across sectors. (Rhim et al., 2007, p. 19).

The person to be fired is the chief executive officer (CEO) of the organization. In the case of schooling, this is the school superintendent. It is really inconceivable that the developers of school turnaround could have completely missed "the law of CEO change" (Murphy & Meyers, 2008, p. 141). Here is what an investigation of this law tells us about executive turnover in turning around failing organizations:

> It is usually a foregone conclusion that the CEO will change in a turnaround. (Rindler, 1987, p. 12).

> Recovery from decline is often facilitated by replacing the CEO and other top executives. (Barker & Duhaime, 1997, p. 20).

> One of the most unanimous assertions of past researchers is that a declining firm's chief executive officer or top managers will usually be removed to initiate the turnaround process. (Arogyaswamy, Barker, & Yasai-Ardekani, 1995, p. 505).

> The literature generally posits that turnarounds required the appointment of 'chief executives' who are outsiders and unfettered by allegiance to organizational traditions or precedents and untarnished by past disasters. (Khandwalla, 1983–1984, p. 20).

It is important to point out that management change is a core element and a dominant theme in the turnaround literature that recovery from decline is often facilitated by replacing the CEO (Barker, & Duhaime, 1997, p. 20): "One of the most unanimous assertions of past researchers is that a declining firm's chief executive officer or top managers will usually be removed to initiate the turnaround process" (Arogyaswamy et al., 1995, p. 505; Grinyer

& Spender, 1979; Slater, 1999)— "The evidence suggests more often than not management should be changed" (Gerstner Jr, 2002; O'Neill, 1986, p. 87). Visible in the literature is a clear message that, in general, there is a "need for an infusion of new top managerial blood to revitalize the company and direct the turnaround" (Modiano, 1987, p. 174).

The logic here is that almost all other elements of the turnarounds are dependent on and "inexorably linked with management cognition and interpretation" (Short, Palmer, & Stimpert, 1998, p. 154), that "though many variables are involved in turnaround success or failure, competent management can impact most of them" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2002; Zimmerman, 1991, p. 6). In particular, as Stopford and Baden-Fuller (1990) found, the role of the chief executive is "critically important both in triggering the initial change and in acting as teacher during the ensuing steps" (p. 412). In organizational turnarounds, it is leadership that provides "a sense of direction by setting priorities and short-term goals; establish[es] a sense of urgency; define[s] responsibilities; resolve[s] conflict; convey[s] enthusiasm and dedication; and give[s] credit where it is due and reward[s] it accordingly" (Slatter, 1984, p. 148; Gadiesh, Pace, & Rogers, 2003; Lohrke, Bedeian, & Palmer, 2004).

And to be clear, superintendents, not principals, are the "chief executive officers" of school districts and the "top managers" are other officers of the school districts. Research on the competencies that define "turnaround leaders" is in very short supply (Kowal & Hassel, 2005; Rhim et al., 2007). What we do know is that it is often difficult to recruit leaders to turnaround positions (Peck & Reitzug, 2014; Yatsko et al., 2012) and that it is often difficult to retain leaders who move to turnaround schools and are successful (Hamilton et al., 2014, p. 202).

4.4 Turnaround has Little to do with Children

Surprisingly, the turnaround literature generally ignores students (Kirshner & Jefferson, 2015; Peck & Reitzug, 2014). We think that there are two main reasons for this lethal flaw. First, it is often difficult to hone in on missing parts of a picture, especially in an area that is underdeveloped. Second, there is an "assumption of children" whenever we talk about schooling. In some sense, "they are there." But when you run the tape across the literature base on turnaround schools, it becomes fairly clear that they really are not there: at best they are background material to be worked on—uninvolved, unseen, and unheard. Neither are there more than a handful of studies or reviews in

which they play any role in helping plan what their "new" schooling experiences might look like, either formally or informally (Quaglia & Corso, 2014). For example, in the few turnaround studies where interviews and surveys were employed, the "student" voice was almost never picked up. In the one place where we begin to "see" students, they are universally presented as "a product," oftentimes as numbers, a raw material that is worked on by adults. Peck & Reitzug (2014) aptly capture the picture: "The core constituents and members of schools are children, yet there is scant mention of students and their needs in the turnaround literature. Indeed, students are rarely separated from their achievement and thus are essentialized as concepts rather than being treated as living beings" (p. 24).

At best, students have been cast in largely passive terms (Alderson, 2000; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004), "almost entirely as objects of reform" (Levin, 2000, p. 155). In addition, recent forces on the accountability front in schools have reinforced nondemocratic foundations of schooling (Mitra & Gross, 2009) employing "conceptions of childhood that regard young people as dependent and incapable" (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004, p. 3), based on the idea of children as "recipients" (Levin, 2000, p. 156).

This is problematic because nowhere is the literature on organizational recovery clearer than in the area of customer focus. While trouble has many roots in turnaround organizations, the taproot is generally failure to stay close to customers and to organize the enterprise based on customer needs. In case after case—in churches, hospitals, political parties, universities, and in nearly every sector of private enterprise, both manufacturing and service—we see that decline can be traced to a disconnect from the customer (Murphy & Meyers, 2008). We are exposed to an almost limitless supply of examples in which attending to internal dynamics (Goldstein, 1988; Rindler, 1987; Slater, 1999), "where work is determined by department requirements rather than customer requirements" (Shelley & Jones, 1993, p. 80), failure to know and understand customers (Bratton & Knobler, 1998; Yates, 1983), focusing primarily on "completing tasks and procedures" (Shelley & Jones, 1993, p. 79), and creating a producer-driver culture can cause organizations to derail (Murphy & Meyers, 2008).

On the flip side, we see repeatedly in every sector of the recovery literature that turnaround efforts that "look outside in" (Mirvis, Ayas, & Roth, 2003, p. 105) and that "build the [organization] from the customer back" (Gerstner, cited in Slater, 1999, p. 173)—that "put the customer first" (Slater, 1999, p. 177); that pay "continuous attention to the market and what the customers want" (Grinyer, Mayes, & McKiernan, 1988, p. 123); that make "listening and staying close to customers. .. part of the fabric of the organization" (Rindler, 1987, p. 135); and that create structures and processes

predicated on customer needs—that, in short, provide the infrastructure for a "customer-driven" (Shook, 1990, p. 166) organization—offer real promise for important improvement in performance (Murphy & Meyers, 2008).

Almost all of the scholars working on student perspective understand and therefore "see" the importance of knowing schooling partially through student eyes (Murphy, 2016a, b). However, in the overwhelming bulk of the turnaround literature, especially on the center stage issue of academic press, there is a profound silence on the issue of student voice.

We move to two essential grounding points. First, "it is not what the teacher or researcher sees that is the immediate cause of the student's behavior. It is what the student sees that counts" (Maehr & Midgley, 1996, p. 87). The consequence is clear: "We need to try to understand where young people are coming from and how such understanding can help us with the task of school improvement" (Rudduck, Chaplain, & Wallace, 1996b, p. 170). Or as Mergendoller and Packer (1985, p. 581) capture it, "thorough understandings of these perceptions is necessary if appropriate interventions are to be made in school organization and classroom instruction."

Second, there is a growing belief that "students can contribute a valuable perspective on education" (Spires, Lee, Turner, & Johnson, 2008, p. 497), that students should contribute to the work of strengthening schools: "Students are the experts on their own perceptions and experiences as learners" (Oldfather, 1995, p. 131).

"We must cease developing strategies to rectify various illnesses without asking the patients questions" (Howard, 2001, p. 132), without consulting the children (Burke & Grosvenor, 2003; Mitra & Gross, 2009; Quaglia & Corso, 2014). "It seems illogical if the very people who are at the heart of these initiatives are not consulted about the things that might be done to help them achieve" (Rudduck, Chaplain, & Wallace, 1996a, p. 20). Young persons "are central to the work of teachers, and they see teacher merit and worth from a point of view unlike those of administrators, teachers, parents, or researchers" (Peterson, Wahlquist, & Bone, 2000, p. 135).

Two broad notes merit attention. To begin with, schooling is nested in a larger society that has developed in ways that do not devote much attention to student perspective (Cook-Sather and Shultz, 2001). The "traditional exclusion of young people from the consultative processes, this bracketing out of their voice, is founded upon an outdated view of childhood which fails to acknowledge children's capacity to reflect on issues affecting their lives" (Rudduck et al., 1996b, p. 170), from a societal perspective that views "children as incompetent and incomplete" (Holloway & Valentine, 2004, p. 5). Children need to be told what to do, not to be empowered to participate

in the development of social institutions such as schools (Rudduck & Flutter, 2004). Children are to be seen and not heard (Lodge, 2005).

On the education front specifically, Cook-Sather (2002, p. 3) helps us see that the concept of "student perspective runs counter to US reform efforts which have been based on adults' ideas about the conceptualization and practice of education." "The social organization in traditional classrooms is constituted and controlled by teachers" (Dillon, 1989, p. 254). Students have been cast in largely passive terms (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; Weinstein, 1983), "almost entirely as objects of reform" (Levin, 2000, p. 155). In addition, recent forces on the accountability front in schools have reinforced non-democratic foundations of schooling (Mitra & Gross, 2009), employing "conceptions of childhood that regard young people as dependent and incapable" (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004, p. 3), based on the idea of children as "recipients" (Levin, 2000, p. 156).

4.5 Turnaround has Little to Do with the Core Technology of Schools

4.5.1 Instruction and Curriculum

The core technology of schools is comprised of three broad domains: instruction, curriculum, and assessment. We learn little about the "teaching" or instruction that goes on in turnaround schools. The nine core elements of instruction are: academic care, challenge, task-focus, active learning, engagement and vitality, cooperative learning, meaningfulness, student-anchoredness, and evidence-based feedback. Given what we see in the turnaround literature, we say only that "evidence-based feedback" is prevalent. There is very little information provided about the other eight elements of quality instruction. If we had to make an informed judgment from information found in other areas (e.g., assessment), we believe that there is little of the dynamics of great instruction in turnaround schools. Given that quality instruction is the key variable in student learning, this is a very troubling conclusion.

Curriculum is the what of the instructional program, the content to which students are exposed. At a core level, it is useful to describe curriculum in terms of quality or rigor and quantity or content coverage (Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002; Hallinan & Kubitschek, 1999). On the topic of quality, the spotlight is focused on the breadth and depth of content standards (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Luppescu, 2010; Conchas, 2001), concepts

that are established by curricular frameworks and the scope and sequence of courses (Wilson & Corbett, 1999). In addition to inspecting the power of individual courses, it is also helpful to define quality in terms of the rigor of the sequences of courses available to students (Oakes & Guiton, 1995).

Building on the work of Brophy, Leithwood et al. (2004) outline the elements of a robust curriculum.

> This is a curriculum in which the instructional strategies, learning activities and assessment practices are clearly aligned and aimed at accomplishing the full array of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions valued by society. The content of such a curriculum is organized in relation to a set of powerful ideas. Skills are taught with a view to their application in particular settings and for particular purposes. In addition, these skills include general learning and study skills, as well as skills specific to subject domains. (p. 62).

In a quality curriculum, "what is taught is worth knowing in the first place and is treated in sufficient depth to engage students' interests and offer them a challenge" (Cotton, 2000, p. 10). The touchstones are meaningfulness and challenge, what Louis and Marks (1998, p. 537) refer to as "intellectually serious work" and Carbonaro and Gamoran (2002, p. 819) label "intellectually challenging content."

On the quantity side of the curriculum ledger, the essential issue is content coverage or "opportunity to learn" (Murphy, 1988; Murphy & Hallinger, 1989). That is, quantity is determined by the overall amount of work students complete in individual courses and across their programs (i.e., sequence of courses) (Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002). Quantity opportunities are defined not only by "credit accumulation" (Allensworth & Easton, 2005, p. 16) but by a press to do more intellectually challenging work (Murphy, 2016a, b; Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, & Mitman, 1982). Opportunity to learn also has a good deal to do with the pacing of content over individual classes and over time across schooling (Bryk et al., 2010; Goldenberg, 2004).

As was the case with instruction, curriculum is comprised of key elements. Two of those elements are authenticity and cultural relevance. Authenticity in the domain of curriculum refers to the ability to match learning context to the ways in which students learn most effectively. It refers to curriculum that moves from abstract concepts to include tangible work. It carries meaning for students to learning activities. That is, authentic work is grounded not only in relevant standards but, given what we reported above, also in the values, goals, and interests of students (Noguera, 1996; Roney, Coleman, & Schlichting, 2007). Relevance is a core concept here, embedding learning in "contexts in which students are interested and [involving them in] topics about which they are curious" (Roney et al., 2007, p. 290). In short, curriculum is seen through the eyes of students as well as the eyes

of the disciplines (Cook-Sather, 2006; Murphy, 2016a, b). Considerable attention is devoted to "valid educational content" (Newmann, 1992, p. 206). Authentic work also has value and meaning beyond the instructional context. It includes "linking academic instruction to examples in students' everyday experiences" (Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005, p. 86). It features real life problems (Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999), problems, often emerging from young people themselves (Eggert, Thompson, Herting, & Nicholas, 1995; Farrell, 1990); a "broad curriculum base" (Day, 2005, p. 576); "active and inquiry-based learning" (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002, p. 87); project-based learning (Shear et al., 2008); and co-construction of products, including support from peers as well as teachers (Eggert et al., 1995; Farrell, 1990; Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999; Murphy, 2016a, b).

Culturally relevant curriculum extends the notion of authenticity to the backgrounds of children (Gault & Murphy, 1987), especially children (and families) that have been marginalized in the traditional curriculums in schools (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006; Shannon & Bylsma, 2002). More specifically, in many schools "there often is a mismatch between curriculum and students' values" (Mukuria, 2002, p. 434). The curriculum often "devalues the home and experience" (Eckert, 1989, p. 10) of those from non-mainstream backgrounds (Quiroz, 2001). In short, in a culturally relevant curriculum there is greater sensitivity to the assorted cultures at the school (Datnow, Borman, Stringfield, Overman, & Castellano, 2003; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012) and in the community and nation (Burns, Keyes, & Kusimo, 2005). This means, more concretely, that "the formal and informal curricula reflect the cultural values and political realities of the communities and provide students with educational and social experiences closely aligned with community and cultural resources" (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006, p. 410).

Analysts who focus on culturally relevant curriculum have distilled a number of its defining elements. Such curriculum "connects students' lives at home with their lives at school" (Scanlan & Lopez, 2012). There is direct attention to "crossing racial and ethnic borders [and] integrating cultural, linguistic, and historical connections in the curriculum" (Galletta & Ayala, 2008, p. 1971). Culturally relevant curriculum "challenges the notion that assimilation is a neutral process" (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006, pp. 412–413). There is a conscious link of academic content with the cultural and ethnic lives of students (Blair, 2002; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012), especially the use of relevant materials (Antrop-González, 2006; Galletta & Ayala, 2008). Underlying this perspective is an embedded belief that "students bring something of value to contribute to the curriculum" (Ancess, 2003, p. 99) as well as "a commitment to provide students with important

historical knowledge grounded in their identities" (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006, p. 417). Schools marked by cultural relevance assume an additive approach to schooling (Antrop-González, 2006; Steele 1997).

The third domain of curriculum to which leaders need to attend is coherence and alignment (Wellisch, MacQueen, Carriere, & Duck, 1978) or what we have called "tightly coupled curriculum" (Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, & Mitman, 1985, p. 367). We preface this work with some important reminders. To begin with, we see that curriculum coherence is nested in the larger concept of overall "organizational integration" (Youngs & King, 2002, p. 646). This operational coherence addresses the extent to which the various systems and domains of the school are integrated and are all pulling in the same direction (Balfanz, Herzog, & MacIver, 2007; Stringfield & Reynolds, 2012). One way to describe this has been provided by Mitchell and Castle (2005, p. 422) who talk about "the degree of order within and consistency across various directions and instructional movements in a school." On this point, Robinson (2007) notes the "importance of overall guidance through a common set of principles and key ideas" (p. 13). Another strategy is to focus on the cohesion among systems and areas of work such as personnel management, instructional program, school operations, support activities, student services, and so forth. Here we see a school that "operates more as an organizing whole and less as a loose collection of disparate systems" (Murphy, 1992, p. 98). Bryk and team (2010, p. 63) put the direction and systems strategies together in the concept of "strategic orientation." Strategic orientation creates a theory of action for how and why actions work and provides a center of gravity for the various systems so they all hold together (Murphy et al., 1985). In so doing, each of the domains and systems takes on life beyond itself. Each ends up touching one or more of the other domains (Spillane, Diamond, Walker, Halverson, & Jita, 2001).

There are a number of ways to link content together, various methods for leaders to engage program integration and alignment. An important strategy has to do with creating alignment between the curriculum in special programs (e.g., special education, English Language Learners) and that in the regular program. A second is the coordination of the curriculum with district and state standards and objectives (Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999; Murphy, Hallinger, & Mesa, 1985). A third has to do with the classes where the curriculum unfolds: (a) the integration of curriculum standards in a course (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000); (b) the same subject across classes (e.g., writing across the curriculum) (Bryk et al., 2010); (c) integra-

tion among classes in a discipline (i.e., sequenced program of study) (Burch & Spillane, 2003); (d) among subjects (e.g., science and history); and (e) the alignment with higher education courses (Kleiner & Lewis, 2005). A fourth lens on curriculum coherence is to see through the experiences that occur for each student, whether they experience "academic drift and curricular debris" (Murphy, Hull, & Walker, 1987, p. 351) or well-cohered programs of study (Oakes & Guiton, 1995). Of special importance here is how well new material links to students' prior learning (Huberman et al., 2011). All of these aspects of curricular coherence find space in the idea of "curriculum mapping" (Eilers & Camacho, 2007, p. 614), "the subject matter that students are exposed to as they move across grades" (Bryk et al., 2010, p. 74).

There are also principles of operation and systems of support that influence curriculum alignment for better or worse. One is the linkage between school vision and goals and curricular content (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1995; Spillane et al., 2001). As Leithwood and Montgomery (1982, p. 324) reported at the start of the effective schools era, the difference between ineffective and effective school leaders on coordination of the curriculum was "the relatively precise focus of the effective principal on curriculum goals as the basis for integration rather than the more ambiguous diffuse goals of the typical principal on curriculum work being done in the school." Because "curriculum alignment is a social activity as well as a technical act" (Bryk et al., 2010, p. 117), the principle of collaborative teacher work in a reciprocal manner comes into play in the curriculum alignment narrative. Or, alternatively, curriculum alignment work is most productive in the context of professional learning communities. So also, we see supportive policies around how time is allocated and protected in the curriculum coherence storyline (Eilers & Camacho, 2007; Firestone & Wilson, 1985). Relatedly, longer time commitments and consistent policy environments support program alignment (Desimone, 2002; Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001). Finally, policies and guidelines that link resources and the curriculum help build alignment (Halverson, Grigg, Prichett, & Thomas, 2007), especially professional development (Newmann et al., 2000).

The turnaround literature has even less to say about curriculum in turnaround schools than it does about instruction. All we can say for sure is that there is a curriculum in each school. There are also hints that the curriculum, whatever it is, has been shaped with regard to state standards (Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, & Bush-Mecenas, 2016). Given that "opportunity to learn" is the second most critical variable in the academic press side of the "good schooling" equation, this is another particularly damaging conclusion about the state of turnaround in America's schools.

4.5.2 Assessment

Assessment is the third point on the instructional program triangle, in combination with pedagogy and curriculum. While we address the technical dimension of assessment below, we are concerned primarily with exploring the overarching narrative of a climate or culture of inquiry (Eilers & Camacho, 2007; Halverson, et al., 2007), "a school environment conducive to data-based decision making" (Ingram, Seshore-Louis, & Schroeder, 2004, p. 120). Supovitz and Klein (2003, p. 2) refer to this conception of assessment as a "culture of systematic inquiry into the relationship between the instructional practices of teachers and the learning of their students." And Wohlstetter, Datnow and Park (2008) remind us that this culture is about the development of widely shared norms and expectations about how data is employed.

Research underscores the essential elements and principles of productive assessment systems. While these ingredients are blended in schools and districts, we pull them apart for analysis. We discuss them under the following descriptors: actionable, coherent, professionally anchored, and supported.

Actionable assessment systems, as noted above, are purpose and goal driven. Actionable means also that assessment programs are understandable (i.e., user friendly) (Datnow, Park, & Kennedy, 2008; Kerr, Marsh, Ikemoto, Darilek, & Barney, 2006) and that the information produced is valid, relevant, and useful (Datnow et al., 2008). Actionable systems offer guidance and concrete data (Hayes, Christie, Mills, & Lingard, 2004; Wayman & Stringfield, 2006). There is efficiency in access to data. Teachers view the data as necessary (Levin & Datnow, 2012). It allows them to see "how they [can] address emerging issues in their classrooms" (Halverson et al., 2007, p. 41). It pushes the spotlight onto instruction. In the words of Wayman and Stringfield (2006, p. 569), actionable systems "help teachers use data rather than being used by data." Data is accessible but not intrusive (Friedkin & Slater, 1994). Information is made available in a timely manner (Kerr et al., 2006; Lachat & Smith, 2005) to "enable teachers to quickly analyze data for instructional decision making" (Datnow et al., 2008, p. 32). Actionable systems provide comparable data (Blanc, Christman, Liu, Mitchell, Travers, & Bulkley, 2010). There is a focus on authentic measures of demonstrating learning (Bryk et al., 2010). They promote the unpacking and disaggregation of data (Lachat & Smith, 2005; Murphy, 2010).

Analysts routinely describe a second element of productive assessment systems— coherence—as well as the principles that help define the element. Coherence covers a good deal of space in the assessment narrative. One principle of coherence is the continuous nature of assessments (Huberman

et al., 2011; Kerr et al., 2006). So too is the reliance on a comprehensive platform of both internal and external forms of data collection (Ingram et al., 2004). Coherent assessment features multiple and varied types of data to provide insights into quality instruction and student learning (Lachat & Smith, 2005; Leithwood, 2008).

A core principle here is that there is "breadth and depth to data-related functions" (Young, 2006, p. 544). That is, coherence arises in part from multiple and overlapping functions. Mayrowetz and Weinstein (1999, p. 423) capture this aspect of coherence when they report that "redundancy" is a critical dimension of productive assessment systems. Another principle developed during the effective schools era highlights the linkage between assessment and the larger task of school improvement (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Because data-driven decision making is not something that can be brought to life in isolation, in cohesive assessment systems these two domains are intricately linked (Datnow et al., 2008; Lachat & Smith, 2005). We also find in a coherent world that adult learning and assessment are deeply intertwined (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2007; Murphy, Hallinger, Weil, & Mitman, 1983). Coherence here also means that there is planful alignment between assessments and the other domains of the instructional program, i.e., curriculum and instruction (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Wohlstetter et al., 2008).

This third element carries us into the domain of culture, what we refer to as a professionally anchored assessment system (Datnow et al., 2008; Young, 2006). Cosner (2011, p. 794) characterizes this as "an inquiry-oriented schoolwide culture," a climate in which "using data to guide instruction become[s] a habit of mind for teachers" (Cooper, Ponder, Merritt, & Matthews, 2005, p. 12). There is a culture of collective development of and use of assessment systems and the resulting data (Young, 2006; Wohlstetter et al., 2008). Here we find teachers that talk more "of collaboration that [is] academic and professional" (Wayman & Stringfield, 2006, p. 565). In professionally anchored assessment systems, "teachers are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively in building their capacity to use data" (Lachat & Smith, 2005, p. 236). "Norms of interaction" (Young, 2006, p. 540) and deprivatization hold high ground where professionally grounded assessment cultures flourish (Louis, Marks, & Kruse, 1996; Murphy & Torre, 2014). Collaborative work and learning norms are underscored (Halverson et al., 2007; Murphy, 2015). The reflective sense making we explored earlier is a sense of ownership of results from data collection and analysis (Levin & Datnow, 2012), teachers coming together to make data their data (Lachat & Smith, 2005). The front side of this ownership is commitment and sense of responsibility for student learning (Johnson Jr. &

Asera, 1999; Murphy, 2015), a collective and "overwhelming consensus about the importance of using data to improve teacher performance and student achievement" (Datnow et al., 2008, p. 5). The backend is mutual accountability (Murphy & Torre, 2014; Wohlstetter et al., 2008), "a community that holds its members accountable for learning" (Young, 2006, p. 538).

Support is the final piece in the assessment system. Support includes leadership, resources, and systems and structures, i.e., "school conditions and practices that. .. promote staff use of data" (Lachat & Smith, 2005, p. 334). We begin with a central theme of the book: leadership is a required support for productive assessment systems to take root and grow (Beck & Murphy, 1996; Hallinger & Murphy, 2013). In the best sense of the term, leaders are "instigators" (Supovitz & Klein, 2003, p. 2), and advocates and champions (Lachat & Smith, 2005). In a real sense, leadership helps the other supports to materialize (Murphy et al., 2001). The research illuminates a number of important leadership activities, all of which center on creating organizational capacity (Young, 2006).

> Principals have been found to be pivotal in modeling effective data use and in enabling teachers to use technology. Principals are also critical in providing ongoing learning opportunities for teachers to discuss and analyze their students' data. (Levin & Datnow, 2012, p. 180)

> Four roles individually enacted by principals include (a) establishing, communicating, and reinforcing an evidence-based agenda and necessary work tasks, (b) modeling data use and maintaining an organizational routine that made public the practice of evidence-based grade-level collaboration, (c) buffering and filtering the school from the district in ways that support evidence-based grade-level collaboration, and (d) supporting and shaping shared leadership in service of evidence-based grade-level collaboration. (Cosner, 2011, p. 801)

Leaders in schools and districts with effective assessment systems are key in getting the goals of measurement in place (Blanc et al., 2010; Supovitz & Klein, 2003). They are often in a unique position to move financial and human resources to assessment work (Blanc et al., 2010), especially individual and collective capacity-building activities (Lachat & Smith, 2005; Wayman & Stringfield, 2006).

In robust assessment programs, we see considerable energy linked to the following interconnected resources: money, time, people, training, and tools. Where assessment works well, money is dedicated to developing the required pieces of the continuous data system (Brunner et al., 2005; Cosner, 2011). Funds are set aside to provide time for teacher to learn about the workings of assessment programs (Young, 2006). Ample time for collaborative work is routinely cited in the research (Ingram et al., 2004). Time to

collect, analyze, and put data to use is essential (Kerr et al., 2006; Wayman & Stringfield, 2006). Particularly salient is "furnishing instructional resources linked to issues arising from data analysis" (Young, 2006, p. 540), helping teachers master more effective teaching strategies (Dannetta, 2002; Datnow et al., 2008). At a more concrete level, resources include tools and protocols to use with the data system and in turning information into more effective instruction (Kerr et al., 2006; Levin & Datnow, 2012).

Also important is time for professional development, the building of individual and collective knowledge and skills in the assessment domain (Blase & Kirby, 2009; Cosner, 2011) or the "building of strong human capacity for data-driven inquiry" (Kerr et al., 2006, p. 498). Targeted assistance or "data support personnel" (Datnow et al., 2008, p. 34) is a resource in the area of professional development often seen in the assessment research. Here, we find the provision of help in the form of data coaches and opportunities to work on data teams (Kerr et al., 2006). This work is designed to mentor "teachers in managing and using data" (Datnow et al., 2008, p. 34). This type of mentoring is sometimes extended to include the new instructional practices that derive from thoughtful use of data (Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999; Young, 2006). Overall then, we find time being devoted to understanding the data system and to learning how to strengthen teaching and learning (Kerr et al., 2006; Young, 2006).

The final resource is the presence of a well-developed system of assessment that guides data-based inquiry (Kerr et al., 2006), what Cosner (2011, p. 793) calls "enabling organizational conditions that offer support for the substantive inquiry-oriented work embedded in evidence-based collaboration." Halverson et al. (2007) refer to this support as a "data-driven instructional system" while Kerr and team (2006, p. 508) call it a "data management system." We know that these systems attend to both the "infrastructure and methods" of assessment (Datnow et al., 2008), especially the needed structural supports (Lachat & Smith, 2005; Levin & Datnow, 2012). These structures provide frameworks for the data collection inquiry cycle (McDougall, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2007; Supovitz & Klein, 2003), frameworks that are essential to "establish[ing] coherent and high-level data-system capability" (Lachat & Smith, 2005, p. 336).

Assessment systems adhere to the elements and principles noted immediately above are expected to have positive impacts on teacher and students. The theory of action and the empirical evidence that powers this assumption relies on the creation of more productive schools by strengthening teaching and learning. The end point in this theoretical and conceptual chain is that "when teachers use indepth analysis of assessment information to assist them to modify their programme, student achievement is raised" (Robinson,

2007, p. 15). That is, "previous research suggests that data-driven decision making has the potential to increase student performance" (Wohlstetter et al., 2008, p. 239).

The intermediate point between productive assessment and student learning is more informed, more responsive, and more effective teaching. More specifically, research on teacher perceptions reveals that well-grounded assessment systems lead to a number of improved conditions. There is an increased sense of clarity about teaching, a stronger sense of focus (Stringfield & Reynolds, 2012) in general and enhanced focus on student learning and success in particular (Lachat & Smith, 2005). Professionalism grows (Wayman & Stringfield, 2006). That is, "[S]tudies indicate that effective use of data. .. enhances the ability of schools to become learning organizations" (Datnow et al., 2008, p. 10). In important ways, there is a tightening up of the looseness of instructional practice in schools (Bryk et al., 2010). Data focuses attention, concentration, and action (Blanc et al., 2010). Especially important here is that teachers often get to know their students better (Supovitz & Klein, 2003). That is, a productive assessment system "allow[s] them a deeper and more rounded view of their students' learning" (Wayman & Stringfield, 2006, p. 563), more "detailed pictures of their students' strengths and weaknesses" (Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999, pp. 146–47). This, in turn, leads to "improved identification of students' learning needs" (Kerr et al., 2006, p. 501), particularly the needs of students "who are in need of additional assistance" (Supovitz & Klein, 2003, p. 19). The use of data to identify needs is associated with more and better responses to those needs (Wayman & Stringfield, 2006). This includes increases in expectations (Gray, Hopkins, Reynolds, Wilcox, Farrell, & Jesson, 1999) and more appropriate diversification and differentiation of instruction (Datnow et al., 2008; Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999) including more productive use of student groups (Wayman & Stringfield, 2006). Concomitantly, highly functional data systems allow teachers to discern their effectiveness with greater clarity and validity (Supovitz & Klein, 2003).

The one area of the technical core where turnaround scores well is in the domain of assessment. It is a routine activity in schools as teachers and formal school leaders work to overcome low test scores. They often give locally developed tests which they then use to determine areas needing additional attention. These examinations are often reviewed by teams of teachers who plan together. Thus there is an element of professional development in the assessment process. The assessments are also coherent (e.g., aligned with the standardized tests and appropriate curriculum), actionable, and buttressed with needed supports. However, we also see that these "test based assessments" are often quite limited in breadth and scope.

4.6 One Half of the Equation of Successful Schools Is Missing in Turnarounds (Care)

> A press toward higher academic standards must be coupled with ample personal support. (Bryk et al., 2010, p. 60)

Schools that serve children and young people well are defined by two anchoring pillars, strong academic press and supportive culture. Ancess (2000, p. 595) refers to this as "a combination of nurture and rigor or affiliation and intellectual development" and Bryk and team (2010, p. 74) characterize it as "a press toward academic achievement … coupled with personal support from teachers." Focusing primarily on the academic side of the equation is insufficient (Murphy, 2016a, b; Shannon & Bylsma, 2002; Thompson & O'Quinn III, 2001), especially for students placed in peril by poverty (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Rumberger, 2011). Academic press alone "does not attend sufficiently to the quality of social relations required for effective teaching and learning" (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, p. 493). That is, schools with strong press can still prove inadequate if they provide little attention to the social and relationship dimensions of education (Crosnoe, 2011; Quint, 2006).

We also know that because there is a "fundamental relation between learning and social interaction" (Eckert, 1989, p. 183) that press and support work best when they are viewed as an amalgam (Murphy & Torre, 2014), or conceptualized as two strands of DNA that wrap around each other (Dinham, 2005; Strahan, 2003). "Rigor and care must be braided together" (Fine, cited in Antrop-González, 2006, p. 274) to work best. There are some differences in the literature, however, about the relative importance of each strand and the order in which they load into the success equation. What is not in question is the fact that both need to be present and that the specific context will help determine issues of importance and timing (Murphy, 2013).

4.6.1 The Power of Relationships

Pastoral care for students is "a philosophy of caring and personalization" (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2002, p. 79). These elements are most powerful when they are in play at both the classroom and school levels and in both individual and group relationships. Efforts here are designed both to deinstitutionalize the school climate and to add community assets to the culture.

We know that positive relationships are essential to all forms of community in schools. (Ancess, 2003). As Bryk et al. (2010) and Rumberger (2011) remind us, these relationships are a hallmark ingredient in school improvement work, the "most powerful driving force of schools" (Ancess, 2003, p. 127). This is the case because "schools are fundamentally social institutions that depend daily on the quality of interpersonal relations with which they are imbued" (Goddard, Salloum, & Berebitsky, 2009, p. 293).

More specifically, analysts help us see that "student-teacher relationships matter for the development of children" (Adams, 2010, p. 258), that positive linkages between students and teachers are foundational for creating personalized communities for students (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). These relationships are heavily responsible for establishing the educational value of classrooms. They make academic press a possibility for many students (Darling-Hammond, Ancess, & Ort, 2002; Rodríguez, 2008). Because many students "learn only from teachers promoting healthy personal relationships" (Opdenakker, Maulana, & Brock, 2012, p. 99), "the power of positive teacher-student relationships is critical for learning to occur" (Hattie, 2009, p. 118) and for students to experience academic success (Darling-Hammond et al. 2002; Goddard, 2003). These relationships have "far-reaching significance in terms of the various trajectories that children follow throughout their schooling experience" (Birch & Ladd, 1997, p. 69). Positive connections create the social capital needed for effective work to unfold in classrooms (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Croninger & Lee, 2001). They provide the engine and the drivetrain to power the norms in personalized communities (Epstein & McPartland, 1976; Farrell, 1990; Patterson, Beltyukova, Berman, & Francis, 2007).

These positive relationships are of singular benefit for students from low-income homes and in schools with high concentrations of students in peril (Battistich, Solomon, Kim, Watson, & Schaps, 1995; Marks, 2000). When these relationships do not exist, students are placed in a compromised position relative to learning (Rodríguez, 2008). Or as Croninger and Lee (2001, p. 569) assert, "an absence of positive social relationships and contacts with teachers denies students resources that help them develop positively." Deteriorating and negative relationships are even worse (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). They are "destructive to student outcomes and development" (Opdenakker et al., 2012, p. 95). In short, "relationships mediate student performance" (Ancess, 2003, p. 82).

According to Sweetland and Hoy (2000, p. 705), culture is a "concept used to capture the basic and enduring quality of organizational life." It encompasses the values and norms that define a school (Dumay, 2009; Franklin & Streeter, 1995). It is "those facets of organization that reflect

underlying assumptions guiding decisions, behavior, and beliefs within organizations" (Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, & Valentine, 1999, p. 155). It can be thought of as the personality of the school (Hoy, Hannum, & Tschannen-Moran, 1998).

School culture is well described in terms of community, a construct that is defined in a variety of overlapping ways (Beck & Foster, 1999). Battistich et al. (1995, p. 628) use community to capture "the psychological aspects of social settings that satisfy group members' needs for belonging and meaning." It consists of ingredients such as membership, integration, and influence (Baker, Terry, Bridger, & Winsor, 1997; Osterman, 2000). Community stands in juxtaposition to institutionalism and hierarchy as an organizational frame of reference (Beck & Foster, 1999; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001; Scribner et al., 1999).

> Communally organized schools are marked by three *core components*: (1) a set of shared and commonly understood organizational values and beliefs about institutional purpose, what students should learn, how adults and students should behave, and students' potential as learners and citizens; (2) a common agenda of activities that defines school membership, fosters meaningful social interaction among members, and links them to school traditions; and (3) the distinctive pattern of social relations embodying an ethic of caring visible in both collegial and student-teacher relationships. (Shouse, 1996, p. 51)

Understanding of such communities is critical because at the heart of the educational narrative is this essential truth: "It is students themselves, in the end, not teachers, who decide what students will learn" (Hattie, 2009, p. 241) and students do not volunteer effort when they are detached from school (Crosnoe, 2011; Newmann, 1981; Weis, 1990). Creating attachments is key to the work of educators and we need to learn all we can about accomplishing that goal (Murphy et al., 2001). Analysis is also critical because, as we document below, supportive community for students exercises strong influence on school improvement defined in terms of student learning (Carbonaro & Gamoran, 2002; Rodríguez, 2008; Rumberger, 2011), "it explains a large amount of the variation in school effects" (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach,1999, p. 83). Indeed, "failure to examine school culture can easily lead to ineffective reform" (Rodríguez, 2008, p. 760, emphasis added).

Schooling for students is profoundly voluntary. Children have to "go to school." They need to debark from the bus and go into the building. Beyond that, especially as they mature, the decision to "do schooling" is substantially their own. This means, of course, that they are key decision makers in the learning production. The major purpose of supportive learning community is to positively influence students' willingness to learn what the school believes they require to be successful in life, to cause students to embrace

academic challenges, and to help them reach those ends. Two corollaries arise here. First, to a much greater extent than has been the case, schooling needs to be understood through the eyes of students (Murphy, 2016a, b), not as a goal in itself but rather because it provides the framework for a school to achieve its mission: ensuring that all children reach ambitious targets of academic success. Second, adult actions need to be shaped based on those insights from students.

Educators here have three choices, ignore this reality, fight to change it, or use it as a platform for action. The first and second options have been the tools of choice for education historically. This is hardly surprising given the institutional nature of schooling and the managerial logic of school leadership (Callahan, 1962; Cuban, 1988) and the institutional approach to school turnaround. The problem is, however, that these choices have not been especially effective (Boyer, 1983; Crosnoe, 2011), especially for students placed at risk by society and schooling (Alexander, Entwisle, & Horsey, 1997; Murphy & Tobin, 2011). Supportive learning community for students moves us to option three, weaving the wisdom, needs, concerns, interests, and worries of students deeply into the "doing of schooling" without sacrificing academic press. Or more globally, it requires educators to acknowledge that achieving valued outcomes for students "involves, as a first step, recognizing that school culture is the setting in which [students] are being educated" (Crosnoe, 2011, p. 40). For example, we know that social concerns form the caldron of interest for students in schools (Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamburn, 1992; Patterson et al., 2007). We also understand that to reach working-class youngsters we need to address social connections beyond the schoolhouse (Eckert, 1989; Farrell, 1990). The charge for school people is to learn how to work these and related realities productively in the service of helping students master essential academic goals.

School communities in which many young persons find themselves, especially older students and youngsters in peril (Adams, 2010; Baker et al., 1997; Quint, 2006) do not exert the positive influence and support necessary for them to commit to "do schooling" (Balfanz et al., 2007; Croninger & Lee, 2001). Student disengagement, often passive, sometimes active, is common in schools (Hattie, 2009; Patterson et al., 2007; Quint, 2006). This is hardly surprising given that one of the pillars of institutions and bureaucracy is impersonality (Murphy, 1991). As Ancess (2003, p. 83) reminds us, because of this "schools are conventionally organized as though relationships are not only unimportant and irrelevant, but an obstacle to efficient operation."

We know that students arrive at school ready to learn. They naturally engage in the work of schooling. As they progress, many youngsters divert

from the pathway of active engagement. They pull away from school. Some of these students become passively engaged. They attend school, collect Carnegie units, stay quietly at the back of the room of academic pursuits, do not work especially hard, and do not receive a quality education. These are the withdrawn and anonymous. Other youngsters exercise a more aggressive form of disengagement. They move in opposition to school values and expectations. These are the resistant and the alienated. Some from each of these two groups, the passive and actively disengaged, simply withdraw from the game altogether, dropping out of school.

We know that the actions of schools have a good deal to do with the engagement choices of students. Particularly salient here, as we reported above, are the relationships between teachers and students. Good schools keep students actively engaged by demonstrating an ethic of care and robust systems of academic and social support. Because some students in all schools are free to disengage and many students in some schools are free to do so, schools are filled with a good number of unconnected youngsters. Care helps close the door to disengagement and failure.

4.6.2 The Tablets of Care

4.6.2.1 Teachers Work to the Best of Their Ability

Although it is much too infrequently discussed as such, students routinely remind us that a cardinal element of the norm of care is teachers who work to the best of their ability, who consistently bring their "A" games to the classroom—who challenge students to do their best work (Felner, Seitsinger, Brand, Burns, & Bolton, 2007; Marks, 2000; Sanders & Harvey, 2002). Students also document what an instructional "A" game looks like. It includes working hard to make classes meaningful, and to show that meaningfulness to youngsters. It means teachers not simply going through the motions, doing their jobs, but rather demonstrating palpable interest in whether students learn or not (Fredricks et al., 2004; Newmann et al., 1992). Teachers who work to peak performance, acknowledge the difficulties of teaching, especially teaching students who are struggling, but they embrace those challenges—not offer excuses and justifications (Roney et al., 2007). They, according to Shouse (1996, p. 66), "appreciate the rugged demands of learning." They are firm and orchestrate structured classrooms (Ancess, 2003; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). These teachers are painstaking in their efforts to ensure that all students are brought along and successfully complete learning journeys, not jettisoned on the trip (Ancess, 2003; Wilson &

Corbett, 1999). According to students, teachers accomplish this by establishing clear goals, maps, and benchmarks of success and by providing close monitoring, abundant feedback, and targeted encouragement and help (DeRidder, 1991; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). They work hard to connect with students, not simply to present information (Murphy, 2015; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Teachers who routinely strive for personal excellence in the classroom put learning in perspective for youngsters and work hard to align and integrate goals, activities, and structures for learning (Battistich et al., 1995; Marks, 2000). According to students, caring teachers demonstrate considerable imagination, live beyond the textbook, and unearth multiple pathways to accomplish work and show success (Wilson & Corbett, 1999).

4.6.2.2 Teachers Reveal Themselves as Persons

Another hallmark element of caring relations in schools is the willingness of teachers to reveal themselves to children as persons, not solely as organizational functionaries (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Antrop-González, 2006). They do this by opening aspects of their non-professional lives to their pupils, especially incidents that are relevant to the decisions and struggles that confront youngsters (Rodríguez, 2008): "The self that teachers offer is a student self rather than a career self" (Farrell, 1990, p. 25). According to Adams (2010), part of this opening process is the willingness of teachers to allow themselves to be vulnerable in front of their students. This stance "humanizes the teacher as a person" (Rodríguez, 2008, p. 765) and helps establish a frame of authenticity for student-teacher connections (Raywid, 1995). It also permits students to feel safe in sharing their "hopes, dreams, problems, and disappointments" (Reitzug & Patterson, 1998, p. 167).

4.6.2.3 Challenging Students

Care is also fundamentally about standards and about challenging students to meet and exceed robust expectations (Alexander & Entwisle, 1996; Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). There is abundant evidence on this point: "Teachers who push students prove to be an important dimension to the personalized student-adult relationship" (Rodríguez, 2008, p. 772). Perhaps the essential point here is the integration of push and press with other elements of care discussed above (Murphy 2013), a practice labeled as "hard caring" by Antrop-Gonzalez and De Jesus (2006, p. 413) and "rugged care" by Shouse (1996, p. 48). There is an especially valuable line of research that confirms that many students, especially students in peril

will not benefit unless the elements of care and the other norms of personalization are blended (Becker & Luthar, 2002; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). When this cocktail of push and support is in place, students are able to see challenge "as coming from a place of teacher concern about the students themselves" (Patterson et al., 2007, p. 136). Challenge also means providing students with as much responsibility as they can handle (Joselowsky, 2007) and upholding a commitment to help them succeed (Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Obstacles are acknowledged but they are not accepted as explanations for lack of performance (Rodríguez, 2008; Shouse, 1996).

Challenge for students in a caring environment is laced with clear and high expectations (Rodríguez, 2008; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Teachers ask more of students. There is strong academic and social press (Ancess, 2003; Johnson Jr. & Asera, 1999). They place higher order cognitive demands on students, moving beyond basic skills to higher order thinking (Battistich et al., 1995; Marks, 2000). They expect students "to be active interpreters of knowledge, rather than docile recipients" (Newmann, 1992, p. 185). In schools where care is engrained in the culture, teachers provide more challenging assignments and tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004),"more complex and cognitively challenging class work" (Marks, 2000, p. 157), and greater depth of understanding (Newmann, 1981). They expect students to take intellectual risks and reward them for doing so (Cooper, 1996, 1999).

In strong communities, care is more than providing high expectations and challenge, i.e., academic and social press. Caring teachers take away the possibility of passive involvement. Students cannot check out or drift through class (Ancess, 2003; Huberman et al., 2011). They are pulled into the game. No spectators are allowed. Neither are students allowed to easily accept failure. "Teachers not only believe that students [can] complete their work, they do everything possible to make that happen" (Wilson & Corbett, 1999, p. 77). In caring environments, "teachers make it harder to fail than succeed" (Ancess, 2003, p. 74). They "stay on students" to complete their work (Wilson & Corbett, 1999, p. 80). Teachers are there to help students succeed, not simply teach subject matter. They push and pull students to the goal line (Ancess, 2003; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Oakes & Guiton, 1995) and acknowledge and celebrate successes along the way. Classes are rich with extra help and teacher-guided second chances (Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Teachers are particularly adept at addressing "patterns of behaviors and performances that are unproductive and problematic" (Ancess, 2003, p. 76) for student development (Cooper, 1996).

Earlier, we argued that high functioning communities for students close down opportunities for students to select pathways of disengagement and disaffiliation. Here we suggest that they also preclude the selection of failure

in the face of rigorous expectations and standards (Ancess, 2000; Huberman et al., 2011; Shear et al., 2008). Efforts here pivot on the positive perspective of assets-based analysis we outlined above and the commitment to the elimination of deficit-based thinking (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006; Hattie, 2009). Possibilities hold the high ground: "Youth are resources to be developed, not problems to be fixed" (Bloomberg, Ganey, Alba, Quintero, and Alvarez-Alcantara, 2003, p. 50). All of this "hard care" is layered over significant opportunities for students to be successful (Antrop-González, 2006; Strahan, 2003).

4.6.2.4 Knowing Students Well

A fourth dimension of caring is knowing students well, a quality Ancess (2003, p. 65) refers to as "intimacy" and a condition that Bryk et al. (2010, p. 58) establish as "essential to the effective design of classroom lessons that advance academic learning for all." In a caring environment, teachers make efforts to learn about the youngsters they teach (Antrop-González, 2006). They commit the time necessary for this understanding to form and grow (Ancess, 2000). Teachers know what is unfolding in the lives of their students, "socially and at home. They know their students as learners in the class and in the classes of their colleagues" (Ancess, 2003, pp. 65–66). They are cognizant of the social and cultural worlds in which their pupils live (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006; McLaughlin, 1994). Teachers employ this knowledge to help students learn and to pursue their personal goals (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Murphy & Torre, 2014; Newmann, 1992).

4.6.2.5 Valuing Students

In personalized communities, caring is defined also by students being valued by their teachers (Battistich et al., 1995; Conchas, 2001; Scheurich, 1998). According to Reitzug and Patterson (1998), this translates into teacher efforts to connect with students on a personal level, rather than on a categorical basis (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). More specifically, it means that each student is accepted as a person, someone who has value as an individual and as a member of communities in the school (Ancess, 2003; Conchas, 2001; Rodríguez, 2008), someone "worthy of mentorship and guidance" (Antrop-González, 2006, p. 288). In caring communities, being valued is conveyed through teachers being "person centered" (Hattie, 2009, p. 119). Valued status is communicated to youngsters when teachers express concern for what is happening in the world of the student and when they invest time

and energy in developing and maintaining personal linkages to students (Farrell, 1990; Hattie, 2009; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Included here is a not-so-subtle switch from seeing students as problems to seeing them as "willing and capable human beings" (Reitzug & Patterson, 1998, p. 168) who need help to address challenges in their lives. In these valued relationships there is a tendency to avoid blaming youngsters when things do not go well (Patterson et al., 2007).

In a related vein, caring is demonstrated when teachers take interest in and invest in their students (Croninger & Lee, 2001; Galletta & Ayala, 2008; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). This includes devoting considerable personal and professional capital into one's work with children (McDougall et al., 2007; Strahan, 2003) and the development and honoring of reciprocal obligations (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006). It includes being accessible to students on both academic and personal fronts (Goddard, 2003; Hattie, 2009; Noguera, 1996), "in their education and their lives" (Patterson et al., 2007, p. 128). Investment tells students that they are acknowledged for who they are as persons and for their potential (Ma, 2003; Steele, 1992). At the deepest level, it includes a ferocious unwillingness to permit students to founder or fail (Farrell, 1990). Students see "teachers as truly interested and invested in enabling [them] to succeed" (Wilson & Corbett, 1999, p. 73). They feel that adults are willing to provide personal attention (Cooper et al., 2005; Cotton, 2000; Rodríguez, 2008).

Caring means that teachers are accessible to students (Kennedy, 2011; Mitra & Gross, 2009). A dimension of accessibility is willingness to help, an ingredient that cuts across the norms of care and support (Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979). Another aspect is making time available to students, of building closeness (Birch & Ladd, 1997) in the context of warm relationships (Opdenakker et al., 2012, Strahan, 2003). Invitational threads are also woven into the fabric of accessibility (Ancess, 2003). So too are efforts to pull students into active participation. That is, accessibility means not exiting in the face of student resistance or oppositionality and not permitting youngsters to exit either (Newmann, 1981). The literature refers to this as maintaining beliefs in students through hardships and refusing to give up on students (Ancess, 2003). More aggressively, it is appropriate to think about accessibility in terms of advocacy for youngsters (Ancess, 2003). In strong, personalized communities of care, teachers stand up for students to ensure that conditions for success are forthcoming (Rodríguez, 2008). Students feel that their teachers are looking out for them. They are not left to pursue success on their own or only with the help of peers (Roney et al., 2007): "Teachers can be counted on to be accessible, accepting, and helpful" (Ancess, 2003, p. 68).

4.6.2.6 Seeing Through the Eyes of Students

Another theme in the chronicle on the norm of care in personalized communities is constructed around the ability and willingness of teachers to see things through the eyes of students (Flutter & Rudduck 2004; Murphy, 2016a, b), in popular parlance to know where students are coming from (Rodríguez, 2008). It includes a willingness to see and understand the developmental needs of students (Ancess, 2003) and to "embrace students' priorities" (p. 8). It means taking the world of students seriously (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984), remembering that things that are important to students are important regardless of whether they are important to teachers or not (Murphy, 2013). More importantly, it entails efforts to adapt schooling to the needs of students, not requiring students to constantly remold themselves to fit the school (Bulkley & Hicks, 2005; Day, 2005; Quint, 2006). This in turn requires seeing children as whole and in a positive light, not as defiant and damaged (Becker & Luthar, 2002). Viewing from the perspective of students requires an active responsiveness to youngsters. It means that when the norm of care is present, teachers listen to students (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Antrop-González, 2006), and that students believe that they are heard (Reitzug & Patterson, 1998; Rodríguez, 2008).

4.6.2.7 Seeing Students as Trustworthy

As we described above, trust is the foundation for relationships (Adams & Forsyth, 2009). Thus we should not be surprised to learn that an important piece of the caring storyline is teachers assessing youngsters as trustworthy (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997) and students reciprocating (Adams, 2010; Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006). The rule here is universal: no trust, no relationship (Bryk et al., 2010; Newmann, 1981). As with other dimensions of care, we find asset-based as opposed to deficit-based assessments in our analysis of trustworthiness (Ancess, 2003). Teachers need to earn the mantle of trustworthiness from pupils. This they do by being open, reliable, honest, benevolent, and competent in the eyes of students (Adams & Forsyth, 2009).

4.6.2.8 Treating Students with Respect

Treating youngsters with respect is a tenth dimension in the web of care (Antrop-Gonzalez & De Jesus, 2006; Hattie, 2009). Central points here are that teachers must give respect to receive it in return (Rodríguez, 2008) and

"that for many students respect precedes engagement" (p. 767). One half of the storyline here is the avoidance of actions that demean or belittle youngsters (Antrop-González, 2006). The other half of the narrative is the use of positive actions that demonstrate the fact that students are held in high regard (Raywid, 1995; Rodríguez, 2008). Treating students as young adults is important here (Ancess, 2003), with a sense of dignity (Leithwood et al., 1999). So too is the provision of opportunities for participation and voice. Actions that affirm students' cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds show respect (Gonzalez & Padilla, 1997; Noguera, 1996; Scanlan & Lopez, 2012). So too do behaviors that honor the assets students bring to the classroom more generally (Hattie, 2009).

4.6.2.9 Treating Students Fairly

Students possess a refined sense of equity. For that reason, care is often defined in terms of fairness, especially the perceived fairness of teachers in their treatment of students (Ma, 2003; Patterson et al., 2007; Wilson & Corbett, 1999). Reliability and consistency are key elements of fairness for students (Adams, 2010; Adams & Forsyth, 2009).

4.6.2.10 Recognizing Students

Finally, recognizing the link between the learning environment and motivation (Opdenakker et al., 2012), care includes students experiencing success and opportunities to receive recognition for that success (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Foster & St. Hilaire, 2003; Sather, 1999). That is, schools create a "culture of success" for students (Rodríguez, 2008, p. 776) and opportunities for acknowledgement. Newmann and his colleagues (1992, p. 22) underscore this element of care when they report that "if the school is to nurture a sense of membership, its most important task is to ensure students experience success in the development of competence."

4.6.3 Chapter Synthesis

We have explored the problematic nature of the definition of school turnaround definition. When the SIG program greatly expanded school turnaround efforts there was almost no evidence (available at the time) that the strategy would work. The SIG approach to turnaround was flawed from the

start. The emphasis in the SIG models of firing half of teachers is unsubstantiated by the turnaround literature. In the broader research on turnaround the CEO (i.e., the superintendent) is the official who policymakers should focus on replacing. The school turnaround policy casts children in passive terms as the object of reforms. This is problematic because it perpetuates the disconnect between student needs and the goals of schools. School turnaround focuses on only a single element of high quality instruction (evidence-based feedback). There is also no discussion about curriculum in the research on turnaround schools. The lone area where turnaround succeeds is with regard to assessment, which is a strong focus of the school turnaround process.

Beyond challenging students, turnaround has very little to say about school climate in general or student care specifically. For example, in the literature we read there are no hints about how cultures should be defined and assessed. Peck and Reitzug (2014, p. 23) capture this finding in their analysis as follows: "Education and society as a whole are increasingly cognizant of the influence of cultural factors on all aspects of human endeavor, yet the literature on turnaround schooling has until recently given little, if any, explicit attention to the cultural aspects of schooling."

Equally troublesome is the fact that the critical ingredient that explains about one-half of student success, care, is not visible. It is in the background at times, but it is heavily veiled when it is. The reason for this neglect is clear: School turnaround is focused nearly 100% on academic press and success on standardized tests.

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