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School Turnaround AmeriCorps National Evaluation: Final Evaluation Report

TECHNICAL APPENDIXES

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A.1.   Survey Sampling Frame and Response Rates

The main body of this report describes findings from Grantee, School Leader, and School Staff surveys in Year 1; Grantee surveys in Year 2; and School Leader Surveys in Fall and Spring of Year 2.[1] It reflects responses provided by 13 grantees[2] (both years), 37–40 school leaders,[3] and 215 instructional staff and/or counselors, respectively. All 57 school leaders whose schools were in their second year of School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation were surveyed.[4]

The Year 2 surveys were administered to school leaders whose schools were new to the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program, while school leaders whose schools had discontinued participation were dropped. The study team used a multi-step process to survey a sample of instructional and counseling staff from those 57 schools. First, the team requested rosters of instructional and counseling staff from all 57 schools. Of them, 48 schools subsequently provided rosters. Next, the team selected a random sample of 543 staff from a sampling frame of 1,743 relevant staff (those who work with the grades served by AmeriCorps members). Approximately 31 percent of staff at each school were surveyed, with at least five staff from each school included in the sample.

The Year 1 School Leader and School Staff surveys were administered online between January, 2015 and February 2015; the Year 1 Grantee survey was administered online in May and June 2015 and the Year 2 grantee survey was administered online in February 2016. The Year 2 Fall School Leader Survey was administered online between August 2015 and October 2015, and the Year 2 Spring School Leader Survey was administered online between March 2016 and April 2016. Response rates differed by survey (see Appendix Exhibit A-1 below).

The Grantee survey had a response rate of 100 percent. The School Leader Survey had response rates between 66 and 74 percent. Despite repeated reminders, the response rate for the Staff survey was 40 percent.

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[1]   In this report, Year 1 represents the first year of the *evaluation*, which corresponds to the second year of *program operation* (2014–15 school year), and Year 2 (2015–16) references the evaluation's second and the program's third year, respectively.

[2]   There were 12 grantee *organizations* and 13 grantee *programs*. Four grantee organizations implemented their own programs. Eight grantee organizations were state service commissions with subgrantee organizations that implemented the grantee programs. One state commission had two subgrantee organizations, each of which operated one grantee program. The term "grantee staff" specifically refers to staff of grantee and/or subgrantee organizations who participated in the grantee focus groups; the term is generally synonymous with "program staff." Eleven of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps programs were single-state programs that must apply for funding through state service commissions and address local needs in only one state; two are national programs that must apply for grants directly from the Corporation for National and Community Service and address local needs in at least two states. Throughout these appendixes and the accompanying report, grantee programs are referenced by a random ID number from 1 to 13 rather than their program name to preserve confidentiality of responses.

[3]   School leaders were typically the administrators in charge of the school, typically school principals.

[4]   Two schools in the sample shared a principal. The study team surveyed this principal about one of the two schools to reduce respondent burden.

Exhibit A-1: Response Numbers and Rates for School Leaders, Instructional Staff, and Counselors

Respondent Type	Number Selected	Number Responded	Response Rate
Grantees (Year 1 and Year 2)	13	13	100%
School Leaders (Year 1)	56[a]	38[b]	68%
School Leaders (Year 2 Fall)	56	37	66%
School Leaders (Year 2 Spring)	54	40	74%
Instructional Staff and Counselors (Year 1)	543	215	40%

Notes:

[a] Two of the schools shared a principal. This principal was surveyed only once to minimize respondent burden.

[b] One school leader reported having misunderstood the survey and asked to retake it, and then did not complete the survey upon starting it a second time. Consequently, this survey was excluded from analysis. Two respondents indicated that they occupied positions other than principal, assistant principal, or site director. The study team followed up with these two respondents and determined that their roles were equivalent to those of principals in other schools.

Exhibit reads: 100% of grantees, 68% of school leaders in Year 1, 66% of school leaders in Year 2 Fall, 74% of school leaders in Year 2 Spring, and 40% of instructional staff and counselors responded to the surveys.

Survey Weighting and Adjustment for Nonresponse

The School Leader and School Staff survey respondents did not represent the entire population that had been asked to complete surveys, and therefore the respondents were not necessarily representative of their respective groups. Consequently, the study team developed survey weights to enhance the representativeness of the survey responses. The weights were developed in two steps. First, the study team created a base weight for each individual invited to take a survey. A base weight is the inverse of the probability that the given individual would be selected to take a survey. For the School Leader Survey, the goal was to obtain a census of all treatment schools, and therefore invitations were extended to those schools with certainty. This meant that the base weights for the Leader survey were 1. For the School Staff survey, approximately 30 percent of instructional staff (teachers) at each school were randomly selected, yielding typical base weights of about 3.3. While all staff at a given school were assigned the same base weight, the base weights differed slightly from school to school, reflecting the slightly different school-specific sampling rates.[5]

Second, the study team modified the base weights to adjust for survey nonresponse, in accordance with the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB; 2006) Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys (sections 1.3 and 3.2) to address the potential concern that respondents may differ systematically from those who did not respond, and hence would not accurately represent the views of the population from which they were drawn. A standard mitigation approach, therefore, is to adjust the base weights of respondents to make them more representative of the selected sample as a whole (that is, both respondents and non-respondents) on baseline characteristics measured on the entire sample. For instance, because gender and school enrollment were known for all individuals invited to take either

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[5]   Though the study's sampling rate target was 30 percent, the effective percentage of instructional and counseling staff sampled from each school varied slightly, as not all schools necessarily had a sampling frame cleanly divisible by 10. Also, since the study team sampled a minimum of five instructional staff and/or counseling staff per school, smaller schools (those with relatively few such staff) had sample percentages significantly larger than 30 percent.

survey, it was possible to make weight adjustments separately for the two surveys, based on these and other measured characteristics, to make respondents resemble the entire sample.

Consider, as an example, the first row of Exhibit A-2. Among all school leaders in the Year 1 sample, 66 percent were female, whereas 58 percent of respondents were female. A potential concern, given these different proportions, is that the representativeness of any survey item responses that might be correlated with gender could be compromised given the relative underrepresentation of females among the respondents. However, once the final nonresponse-adjusted weights are applied, the estimate of 67 percent nearly matches the sample-wide value of 66 percent, and addresses the relative lack of representativeness. Similarly, in the second row of Exhibit A-5, base-weighted respondents over-represent the whole-sample base-weighted estimate of the proportion of females in the staff population, and this has been adjusted via the use of nonresponse-adjusted weights. Though imperfect, the nonresponse adjustments generally improved the representativeness of the respondents on the measured baseline characteristics. See Exhibits A-2 through A-4 for details about the School Leader survey and Exhibit A-5 for the Staff survey. One caveat: This adjustment does not guarantee improvements of similar magnitudes regarding the representativeness of the survey responses of the respondents.

To develop the nonresponse adjustments, the study team fit a logistic regression model separately for each survey to predict the probability that each sample member would respond to the survey based on his or her observed characteristics. These response probabilities are called propensity scores. The propensity scores were then sorted and divided into quintiles. Each sample member in a quintile was assigned a nonresponse weighting factor equal to the inverse of the average propensity score in the quintile. This factor, multiplied by a respondent's base weight, gave the respondent's final weight. The final weights of non-respondents were set to zero. These final weights were used in all survey item data analyses.[6]

Exhibit A-2: Characteristics of School Leader Survey Sample and Respondents in Year 1

Variable	Sample (base weight)	Respondents (base weight)	Respondents (final weight)
Female	66%	58%	67%
Student enrollment (school)	512	545	514
Student-teacher ratio (school)	15.1	15.7	14.9
Percentage minority students (school)	83%	77%	84%
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (school)	85%	82%	86%
Percentage of students proficient in math (school)	33%	37%	33%
Percentage of students proficient in reading (school)	38%	41%	36%
Region			
Northeast	25%	32%	24%
Midwest	32%	29%	34%
South	29%	26%	31%
West	14%	13%	11%
School Level			
Elementary	57%	55%	59%
High	43%	45%	41%

Exhibit reads: Sixty-six percent of school leaders in the Year 1 School Leader Survey sample were female, compared with 58 percent of Year 1 School Leader Survey respondents. Using final non-response survey weights, the weighted proportion of school leader respondents who were female was 67 percent.

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[6]   See Valliant, Dever, & Kreuter (2013, pp. 316–338) for a discussion of nonresponse adjustment.

Exhibit A-3: Characteristics of School Leader Survey Sample and Respondents in Year 2 Fall

Variable	Sample (base weight)	Respondents (base weight)	Respondents (final weight)
Female	61%	55%	60%
Student enrollment (school)	584	566	573
Student-teacher ratio (school)	13.1	14.2	13.1
Percentage minority students (school)	83%	78%	83%
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (school)	85%	84%	85%
Percentage of students proficient in math (school)	28%	29%	27%
Percentage of students proficient in reading (school)	34%	35%	34%
Region			
Northeast	27%	34%	28%
Midwest	23%	18%	23%
South	29%	29%	28%
West	21%	18%	21%
School Level			
Elementary	55%	58%	56%
High	45%	42%	44%

Exhibit reads: Sixty-one percent of school leaders in the Year 2 Fall school leader survey sample were female, compared to 55 percent of Year 2 Fall school leader survey respondents. Using final non-response survey weights, the weighted proportion of school leader respondents who are female is 60 percent.

Exhibit A-4: Characteristics of School Leader Survey Sample and Respondents in Year 2 Spring

Variable	Sample (base weight)	Respondents (base weight)	Respondents (final weight)
Female	59%	61%	59%
Student enrollment (school)	580	566	584
Student-teacher ratio (school)	12.8	12.7	13.1
Percentage minority students (school)	82%	80%	81%
Percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (school)	85%	85%	84%
Percentage of students proficient in math (school)	28%	30%	29%
Percentage of students proficient in reading (school)	35%	35%	36%
Region			
Northeast	28%	31%	28%
Midwest	24%	22%	23%
South	31%	32%	32%
West	17%	12%	17%
School Level			
Elementary	31%	34%	30%
High	15%	12%	14%

Exhibit reads: Fifty-nine percent of school leaders in the Year 2 Spring School Leader Survey sample were female, compared with 61 percent of Year 2 Fall School Leader Survey respondents. Using final non-response survey weights, the weighted proportion of school leader respondents who were female was 59 percent.

Exhibit A-5: Characteristics of Instructional Staff and Counselor Survey Sample and Respondents in Year 1

Variable	Sample (base weight)	Respondents (base weight)	Respondents (final weight)
Teacher	84%	84%	86%
Female	70%	77%	70%
Student enrollment (school)	666	684	675
Student-teacher ratio (school)	16.8	15.9	16.7
Percentage minority students (school)	82%	76%	81%
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (school)	84%	81%	84%
Percentage of students proficient in math (school)	37%	38%	36%
Percentage of students proficient in reading (school)	43%	44%	43%
Region			
Northeast	28%	25%	31%
Midwest	23%	20%	23%
South	41%	48%	40%
West	7%	8%	6%
School Level			
Elementary	23%	17%	22%
Middle	15%	15%	16%
Elementary & Middle	16%	21%	16%
High	40%	41%	41%
Middle & High	6%	7%	6%

Exhibit reads: Eighty-four percent of instructional counseling staff in the Year 1 instructional staff and counselor survey sample were teachers, compared with 84 percent of Year 1 instructional staff and counselor survey respondents. Using final nonresponse survey weights, the weighted proportion of instructional staff and counselor respondents who are teachers is 86 percent.

Standard Error Calculations

Data analyses for the School Leader and School Staff surveys were implemented using the Stata 13 suite of svy survey commands. The study team collapsed four-level Likert scale survey items to binary endorsement indicators (e.g., "strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree" collapsed to "agree/disagree"), and used the final survey weights to estimate endorsement rates (e.g., proportion of the population agreeing with the item). To quantify the uncertainty in estimates based on a survey sample, jackknife resampling was used to generate standard errors and confidence intervals. Jackknife resampling involves creating subsamples that systematically exclude one or more sample members, recalculating the members' survey weights, and then re-estimating the population endorsement rate. The initial standard error is then derived from the set of re-estimates.[7] The study team then constructed 95 percent confidence intervals around the jackknife point estimates by applying a finite population correction[8] to the initial standard errors and multiplying the product by 1.96 to obtain the margin of

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[7] See Valliant et al. (2013, pp. 418–426) for a description of the jackknife procedure. For the School Leader Survey, the study team created 56 subsamples, each of which excluded one sampled school leader. For the instructional staff and counselor survey, 177 subsamples were created, each of which excluded between 1 and 8 sampled staff, following Valliant, et al. (pp. 437–441).

[8] The finite population correction accounts for the added precision of collecting data from a sample that approaches the size of the target population. Following Lohr (1999), the study team used a finite population correction equal to $\sqrt{(N - n)/N}$, where N is stratum size and n is the number of respondents.

error, which is half the width of a standard 95 percent confidence interval. When the estimated endorsement rate was very high in the Leader survey, the study team limited the upper bound of the confidence intervals to one minus the proportion of sample members who did not endorse the item, as the population proportion cannot possibly exceed this figure. Likewise, when the estimated endorsement rate was very low, the lower bound of the confidence intervals was limited to the proportion of sample members who did endorse the item. Exhibits A-6 (table) and A-7 (graph) display confidence intervals for a representative item from the School Leader surveys.

Exhibit A-6: Example of Jackknife Confidence Intervals

Statement	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 1 Lower CI (%)	Year 1 Upper CI (%)	Year 2 Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2 Fall Lower CI (%)	Year 2 Fall Upper CI (%)	Year 2 Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2 Spring Lower CI (%)	Year 2 Spring Upper CI (%)
Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program	88	79	93	97	93	98	97	95	97
The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of implementation of turnaround activities at this school.	94	90	94	100	100	100	94	90	95
The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of students and share this information with AmeriCorps members.	82	71	89	94	89	95	91	86	92
The principal and/or school leadership team communicates a clear vision of turnaround to AmeriCorps members.	85	75	92	96	93	96	84	77	88
AmeriCorps members are integrated into regular staff meetings and communication.	85	77	88	91	84	95	79	71	85

Exhibit reads: In Year 1, 88 percent of school leaders Agreed or Strongly Agreed that "Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program." The lower bound of the 95 percent confidence interval is 79 percent of school leaders, and the upper bound of the 95 percent confidence interval is 93 percent of school leaders.

Exhibit A-7: Graphical Example of Jackknife Confidence Intervals
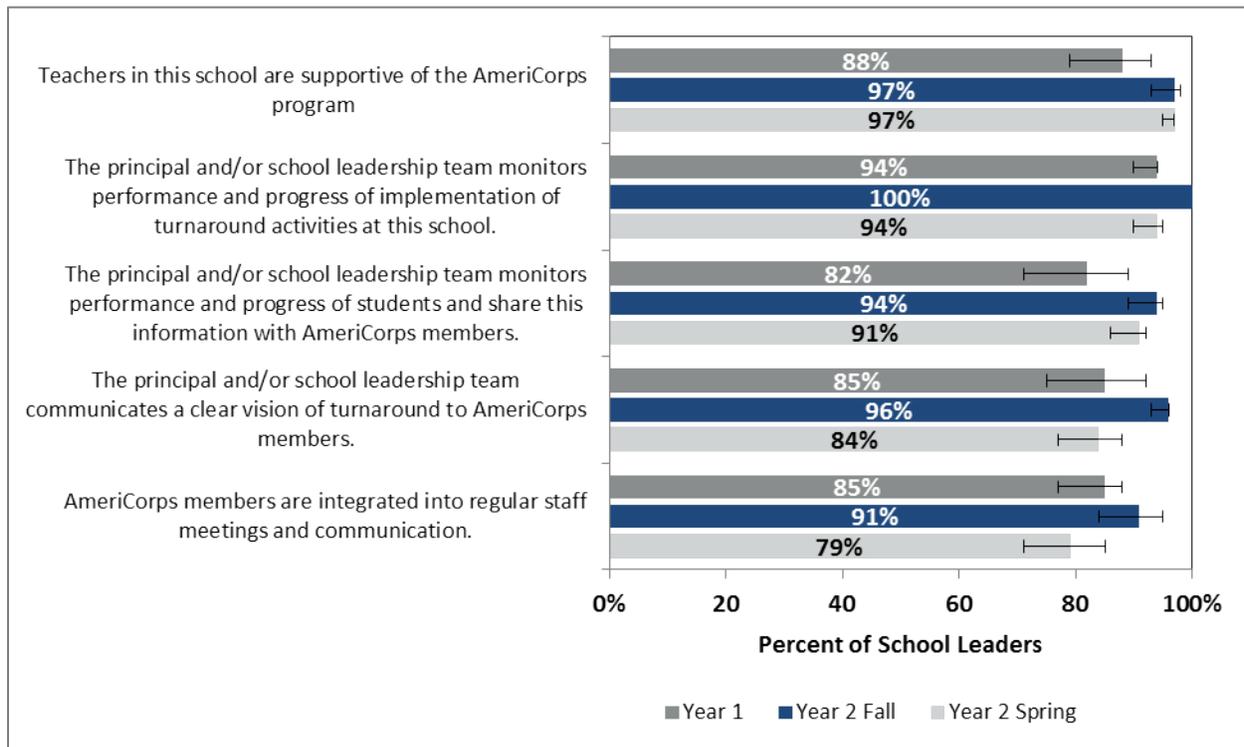
Exhibit reads: In Year 1, 88 percent of school leaders Agreed or Strongly Agreed that "Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program." The lower bound of the 95 percent confidence interval is 79 percent of school leaders, and the upper bound of the 95 percent confidence interval is 93 percent of school leaders.

A.2.   Survey Cross-Sectional and Time Comparison Computation

The study team conducted cross-sectional and pre-post analyses of the Grantee and School Leader surveys.[9] The cross-sectional analyses examined survey responses collected at a single measurement occasion, and the reflected experiences with and perceptions of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program at that point in time. The purpose of the cross-sectional analysis is to characterize the views of grantees and school leaders at a given point in time. Because the grantee survey was administered twice, there are two grantee cross-sectional analyses, one for the Spring 2015 (Year 1) survey and another for the Spring 2016 (Year 2) survey. Because the School Leader Survey was administered three times, once in Winter 2015 (Year 1), once in Fall 2015 (Year 2 Fall), and once in Spring 2016 (Year 2 Spring), there are three school leader cross-sectional analyses. [10] The five cross-sectional analyses therefore allowed analyses that compare responses collected at different points in time (and different years).Because of the large number of potential statistical comparisons (dozens of items across three time-period comparisons), the study team undertook a power analysis to estimate the minimum detectable difference in proportions among the three surveys. The power analysis estimates standard errors by formula rather than deriving them empirically through jackknife resampling, as the latter method requires information on which

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[9]   In all cases, the study team conducted design-based rather than model-based analyses (Lohr, 1999), as the goal was to learn about the current populations of grantee staff (and principals) at the specific set of participating program schools (and their grantees).

[10]   Though the number of school leader respondents was similar across the three surveys, the exact administrators responding to each survey varied. Twenty-three school leaders took all three surveys.

respondents endorsed an item. However, the resultant standard errors are relatively similar with both methods. The study team estimated minimum detectable differences among all pairwise time comparisons (Year 1 versus Year 2 Fall, Year 1 versus Year 2 Spring, etc.) at three example endorsement proportions: 50 percent, 70 percent, and 90 percent. The minimum detectable differences were around 20 percentage points or higher for two-tailed tests at standard significance levels (α = .05, β = .20).

Exhibit A-8: Quantitative Data Sources by Stakeholder, Mode, and Timing of Collection

Respondent Type	Number Selected	Number Responded	Response Rate	Mode of Data Collection	Timing of Data Collection
Grantee Staff (Year 1)	13	13	100%	Survey	May–June 2015
Grantee Staff (Year 2)	13	13	100%	Survey	February 2016
School Leaders (Year 1)	56[a]	38[b]	68%	Survey	January–February 2015
School Leaders (Year 2 Fall)	56	37	66%	Survey	August–October 2015
School Leaders (Year 2 Spring)	54	40	74%	Survey	March–April 2016
Instructional Staff and Counselors (Year 1)	543	215	40%	Survey	January–February 2015
Parent Interviews (Year 1)	50	N/A	N/A	Interview	January - February 2015

Notes:

[a] Two of the schools shared a principal. This principal was surveyed only once to minimize respondent burden.

[b] One school leader reported having misunderstood the survey and asked to retake it, and then did not complete the survey upon starting it a second time. Consequently, this survey was excluded from analysis. Two respondents indicated that they occupied positions other than principal, assistant principal, or site director. The study team followed up with these two respondents and determined that their roles were equivalent to those of principals in other schools.

Exhibit reads: 13 grantee staff were selected and responded to the grantee staff survey between May – June, 2015 in Year 1 for a response rate of 100 percent.

A.3.   Qualitative Methodology

The School Turnaround AmeriCorps program national evaluation encompassed qualitative data gathered from a large number and variety of stakeholders over two years in order to triangulate findings based on multiple perspectives. A summary of all data sources is below, followed by a more detailed breakdown of case study data collection. Following that is discussion of the considerations specific to each data source.

Exhibit A-9: Qualitative Data Sources by Stakeholder, Mode, and Timing of Collection

Stakeholder	N	Mode of Data Collection	Timing of Data Collection
Grantee staff	13	Telephone interviews	November–December, 2014
	3 groups (11 participants)	Online focus groups	February, 2015
	12	Telephone interviews	June, 2015
	13	Telephone interviews	October–November, 2015
	13	Telephone interviews	March–May, 2016
Principals	25	One-on-one telephone interviews	December 2014 – February, 2015
	3 groups (9 participants)	Small group telephone interviews	April–May, 2015
	12	Year 1 case study interviews (4 in-person, 8 telephone)	May, 2015
	36	Survey narrative responses	May, 2015
	5 groups (8 participants)	One-on-one and small-group telephone interviews	October, 2015
	27	Case study interviews (12 in-person, 15 telephone)	January–April, 2016
	33	Survey narrative responses	August–October, 2015
	36	Survey narrative responses	March–April, 2016
Parents	50	Telephone interviews	January–February, 2015
	10	Focus groups during case study site visits	January–February, 2016
Members	3 groups (10 participants)	Online focus groups	March, 2015
	26	One-on-one telephone interviews	February–April, 2015
	9	Case study telephone interviews	January–February 2016
	10	Case study in-person focus groups	January–February 2016
School staff	32	Case study interview (8 in-person, 24 telephone)	April–June, 2015
	4 groups (14 participants)	In-person focus groups	May, 2015
	87	Case study interviews (12 in-person, 75 telephone)	January–April, 2016
	19	Case study focus groups	January–February 2016
Grantee progress reports	12 2013-14 mid-year 12 2013-14 end-of-year plus 16 supplements 12 2014-15 end-of-year	Provided by CNCS	N/A
Partnership agreements	12	Provided by grantees	October–November, 2015
	11		March 2016
	11		May 2016

Exhibit reads: Thirteen grantee staff were interviewed by telephone from November–December, 2014; 11 grantee staff participated in 3 online focus groups in February, 2015; 12 grantee staff were interviewed by telephone in June, 2015; 13 grantee staff were interviewed by telephone from October–November 2015; and 13 grantee staff were interviewed by telephone from March–May, 2016.

Exhibit A-10: Number and Type of Case Study Participants by Case Study Site

Case Study Schools	Principals	Teachers	Members	Parents
Year 1 and Follow-up Case Studies	2014–15 / 2015–16	2014–15 / 2015–16	2015–16	2015–16
Program School 1A	1/1	3/3	n/a	n/a
Program School 1B	1/1	3/3	n/a	n/a
Program School 2A	1/1	3/3a	n/a	n/a
Program School 2B	1/1	3/3	n/a	n/a
Program School 3A	1/1*	2 (interviews), 4 (focus group) / 3 (interviews)	n/a	n/.a
Program School 3B	1/1	2 (interviews), 4 (focus group) / 3* (interviews)	n/a	n/a
Program School 4A	1/0	3/0	n/a	n/a
Program School 4B	1/0	3/0	n/a	n/a
Program School 5A	1/1	2 (interviews), 4 (focus group) / 3* (interviews)	n/a	n/a
Program School 5B	1/1	2 (interviews), 4 (focus group) / 2 (interviews)	n/a	n/a
Program School 6A	1/1	3/3	n/a	n/a
Program School 6B	1/1	3/3	n/a	n/a
Y2 Case Studies	2015–16	2015–16	2015–16	2015–16
School 7A	1	2 (interviews), 4 (focus group)	3 (focus group)	6 (focus group)
School 7B	1	2 (interviews), 3 (focus group)	n/a	n/a
School 8A	1	2 (interviews), 3 (focus group)	3	n/a
School 8B	1	2 (interviews), 3 (focus group)	n/a	n/a
School 9A	1	3	2	n/a
School 9B	1	3	n/a	n/a
School 10A	1	2 (interviews), 3 (focus group)	4 (focus group)	4 (focus group)
School 10B	1	2 (interviews), 3 (focus group)	n/a	n/a
School 11A	1	3	4	n/a
School 11B	1	3	n/a	n/a
School 12A	1	2	1	n/a
School 12B	1	3	n/a	n/a
School 13A	1	3	2	2
SIG Exiter Case Studies	2015–16	2015–16	2015–16	2015–16
SIG Exiter School 1	1	3	n/a	n/a
SIG Exiter School 2	1	2	n/a	n/a
SIG Exiter School 3	1	2	n/a	n/a
SIG Exiter School 4	1	3	n/a	n/a
Total	39 principals	138 staff	19 members	12 parents
Number of Unique Participants	30 principals	113 staff	19 members	12 parents

a Denotes one or more different individuals interviewed in Year 1 versus Year 2.

Exhibit reads: Program School 1A, a Year 1 and Follow-Up Case Study, included an interview with one principal in 2014–15, an interview with one principal in 2015–16, interviews with three teachers in 2014–15, interviews with three teachers in 2015–16, zero interviews with members in 2015–16, and zero interviews with parents in 2015–16.

Case Study Matching and Selection

The Year 2 matching procedure followed the same procedure used in the Year 1 evaluation, with several adjustments. The matching procedure included the following steps:

1. For each of the six selected program schools, the research team grouped its associated set of potential comparison schools. All potential comparison schools have AmeriCorps member service years (MSYs) less than or equal to 3, and at least 2 less than the program school's MSY.

2. For each program or potential comparison school within such paired groupings, the study team computed the averages of the school's respective mean reading and math proficiency percentages from 2012–13 across its relevant grades.

3. An average proficiency percentage caliper of 15 percent was employed in the matching. This meant that a program school could only be matched to a potential comparison school whose average proficiency percentage (computed in step 2) was within 15 percentage points of its own proficiency percentage. For instance, a program school with an average proficiency percentage of 35 percent could be matched to a potential comparison school with an average proficiency percentage within the 20 percent to 50 percent range, but not to a potential comparison school outside of this range. This ensured that matches occurred between schools with reasonably similar levels of academic achievement.

4. Mahalanobis distances were computed between each of the six program schools and its associated grouped potential comparison schools.[11] These distances were computed from schools' profiles of the key characteristics (as measured in 2012–13): mean reading proficiency, mean math proficiency, relevant faculty size, percent minority students, percentage of students eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch, and percentage students with disabilities(when available).

5. For each program school, its initial matched comparison school was selected as follows:

   a. If there was at least one potential comparison school from the associated grouping that respected the proficiency caliper and was from the same school district,

      i. If at least one potential comparison school had an MSY of zero, then the MSY-zero school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

      ii. Otherwise, the potential comparison school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

   b. Otherwise, if there was at least one potential comparison school from the associated grouping that respected the proficiency caliper, was from a different school district, but was in the same urbanicity category (city, town, suburb, rural),

      i. If at least one potential comparison school had an MSY of zero, then the MSY-zero school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

      ii. Otherwise, the potential comparison school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

   c. Otherwise, if there was at least one potential comparison school from the associated grouping that respected the proficiency caliper but was from a different school district and urbanicity category,

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[11] Rosenbaum, (2010).

       iii.   If at least one potential comparison school had an MSY of zero, then the MSY-zero school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

       iv.   Otherwise, the potential comparison school with the smallest Mahalanobis distance from the program school was selected.

   d. Otherwise, there was no potential comparison school from the associated grouping that respected the caliper. The program school was dropped from consideration and a replacement program school with a richer set of potential comparison schools was chosen, if possible. Otherwise, the potential comparison school whose average proficiency percentage was closest to that of the current program school was selected.

6. The remaining schools in the potential comparison grouping served as potential replacements in case any of the matched comparison schools refused to participate in the evaluation.[12]

By using the proficiency caliper, this procedure prioritized matched pairs being similar on academic achievement. By considering whether a potential comparison school was from the same district as a program school, it prioritized limiting the number of school districts to recruit and highlighted the importance of the shared local environment. By considering whether a potential comparison school was in the same urbanicity category as a program school, it prioritized schools in similar geographic environments (size, density, and heterogeneity) that experienced similar school conditions and constraints.

The matching procedure did not distinguish between SIG change models, for several reasons. First, schools using the closure model were excluded from the pool of potential comparison schools. Second, the specific interventions used by the transformation and turnaround models (i.e., increased learning time, turnaround leadership, students' nonacademic needs, and community/family engagement) are very similar; the key differences in these models are primarily related to governance and management of school personnel (e.g., hiring, evaluating performance, professional development), which fall outside the scope of AmeriCorps members' influence. Third, the Restart model is distinct from the Turnaround and Transformation models, involving conversion or closure of an existing school and reopening of the school as a charter school or under the control of an education management organization.[13] However, this model is believed to be most distinct in the first few years of implementation. Within the program cohort, only two schools using the Restart model were in their second year of implementation; all others were in the third year of the Restart model or even further along. Thus, differences related to the organizational and operational challenges of undergoing a restart transition were hypothesized to be less significant in the third year or beyond, while the instructional strategies, increased learning time, and other non-academic support strategies of a Restart model are hypothesized to resemble those implemented in Turnaround and Transformation schools, justifying matching more "mature" Restart schools with schools using the other two SIG models.

Focus Group and Interview Data Collection

Most qualitative data for this project were collected through interviews (mostly by telephone), site visits, and focus groups (online and in-person as part of site visits). Across all data sources and stakeholders, the research team gathered data from 445 participants, 86 written documents, and 69 open-ended survey responses.

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[12]   The study team made one replacement after one matched comparison district declined to participate.

[13]   Center on Innovation & Improvement (2011).

The research team interviewed a knowledgeable representative from each grantee organization four times (during Fall and Spring 2014–15 and Fall and Spring 2015–16). Grantee staff members also participated in focus groups in Spring 2015.

The principals chosen for the 25 individual interviews in Year 1 were selected at random from the 57 schools in their second year of implementing the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. Interviewed principals' schools were affiliated with one of 12 (out of 13) grantee programs; principals from between one and four partner schools per grantee were interviewed. Interviews were conducted by telephone between December 23, 2014 and February 19, 2015 using a standard protocol, and then transcribed verbatim. Principals were also interviewed in small-group telephone interviews during both years; these were selected at random from among principals who had not participated in individual interviews or case studies.

Eight of the 13 School Turnaround AmeriCorps programs provided family and community engagement services as part of their grant. In 2015, the study team selected 50 parents associated with such programs for interviews. In 2016, two case study site visit schools were providing family and community engagement services, and ten parents from those schools were recruited to participate in focus groups interviews. In both instances, parents were recruited to participate through convenience sampling. The research team asked program staff, and, school leaders as needed, to provide contact information for parents who might be willing to be interviewed or participate in a focus group for the School Turnaround AmeriCorps evaluation. Those parents who agreed were potentially already among the most engaged parents in the school. Further, it is possible that parents with a positive view of the program were more likely to be referred and to complete the interviews. It is not clear how representative—or not—their feedback was of feedback from all parents whose children were involved in the program would have been.

Of 50 parent interviews, 42 were conducted in English and 8 in Spanish. Thirty-six parents knew something about the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program and provided open-ended information about the program itself. Of those, it is important to note that three parents were also teachers in the local district, and four parents were members of their children's respective school Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The remaining 14 parents who did not know about the program answered only scalar questions about the overall school climate. The 36 parents who knew about the program also answered these questions, and these 50 responses are integrated in the discussion of the survey findings in the main body of this report.

Members recruited for interviews and focus group interviews in 2015 were selected at random from program rosters. If several attempts to contact a member were unsuccessful, she or he was replaced with another member selected at random. Overall, the sample sizes for the member focus groups were small. While it is possible that there are systematic differences between those members who did and did not participate in the focus groups, the study team does not have evidence to substantiate that. In 2016, 19 members placed in the six program schools of Year 2 case studies participated in focus groups (for site visit schools) or interviews (by telephone).

School instructional and counseling staff interviewed for case studies had been suggested by their principal as having sufficient knowledge to discuss the school's turnaround activities as well as partners and the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program, as applicable. Most school staff were interviewed by telephone. Staff were interviewed in person or participated in focus groups in those schools that received site visits: four schools in 2015 and six schools in 2016.

For all interviews, the interviewing team was trained on the OMB-approved interview protocol prior to conducting the interviews. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, with all personally identifying information (PII) expunged from the transcripts.

Interviews followed a standard protocol; however, not all interviewees provided similar information or the same level of detail to each question posed. Interviews rely on their participants' recall, impressions, and what details they chose to share during the interview. Because a given respondent shares more information on one topic during an interview does not necessarily mean that other respondents who provided less detail did not have relevant experiences with that topic. For example, one principal elaborated in an interview on how the strengths of individual members influenced what services were offered each year, because fulfilling members' own educational goals represented an important part of that school's model for its School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. Other schools may also have tailored services based on their members' personal strengths, but those other principals did not raise that aspect of program delivery or were not compelled to mention it in the interview.

As a result, the frequencies reported in this document represent lower bounds—when a frequency is reported, at least that many respondents shared the experience, but it does not mean that all other respondents disagreed or had different experiences.

Focus group moderators and note-takers were trained on the OMB-approved discussion guide used for member, grantee, staff, and parent focus groups. Online focus groups were conducted using the iTracks platform for video, audio, and chat-enabled online focus groups. Each focus group was video-recorded. A note-taker from the research team took real-time notes on participants' words, body language, and group dynamics; notes were supplemented as needed with a later review of the video. In-person focus groups were conducted in schools during site visits.

The research team received grantee end-of-year and mid-year progress reports from CNCS. Grantees provided written partnership agreements for the team's review and responded to follow-up questions via email about how they used the agreements.

Document Analysis and Surveys

The research team received grantee end-of-year and mid-year progress reports from CNCS. Grantees provided written partnership agreements and responded to follow-up questions via email about how they use the agreements.

Principal surveys included closed-ended questions about the individual schools, about the school's overall turnaround plan, components of and support for the AmeriCorps program, improvements and challenges in the school, and the general school environment. The Principal survey also included one open-ended narrative question about turnaround plan activities at the principal's school.[14, 15]

Qualitative Analysis

The study team developed a codebook documenting the source documents and the relevant open-ended questions and narrative responses to be analyzed from each source. It also created a hierarchical coding structure of topics and subtopics (content categories) to be coded. Topics were associated with each of the study's research questions and further developed through an iterative coding process as new data sources were incorporated. For example, based on grantee pre-interviews and grantee progress reports (GPRs), high level topic categories were identified that consisted of activities and interventions (such as

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[14]   The survey item read as follows: "Briefly describe the activities in your school's turnaround plan."

[15]   Nineteen principals both responded to the survey and participated in interviews.

"Direct Services"), administration and oversight, barriers and challenges, program changes, context, and members and staffing. Examples of second-level topics were "Tutoring" under "Direct Services" and "Retention" under "Members/Staffing."

The codebook was developed iteratively as new data sources became available and their information incorporated into the coding structure. As this happened, new codes were added based on findings in the prior rounds that, for example, more precisely identified the activities members lead, the structure of activities (e.g., one-on-one, small group), and the training and professional development activities in which members participated. Additionally, some codes were redefined to accommodate changes arising from stakeholder perspectives. For example, after the principal interviews, the node "School-Level Intervention" was redefined to code a school's turnaround plan as a whole instead of program activities targeting the whole school (which were found to be few). When comparison school case studies were added to the research design, this node became the umbrella for all turnaround activities and strategies,

The analysis team was trained in the codes and their definitions and ensured quality by performing peer coding of samples of the dataset throughout the coding process. At key points in the project (e.g., when a new source type was added), the Director of Analysis performed inter-rater reliability checks to gauge levels of agreement and areas for further training. Training and peer coding helped to ensure that team members interpreted the meaning of the text in the same way, similarly defined the unit of meaning when coding and categorizing a piece of text, and consistently applied the appropriate codes to the data, thereby increasing inter-rater reliability and reducing sources of bias introduced to the study. The research team then coded all narrative text from these sources following the coding structure.

Once the data were coded, the team identified the most prominent themes by counting the number of respondents who made a reference to the topic or subtopic. In calculating prevalence for each topic, respondents were counted only once even if they provided multiple comments on the topic. During the analysis phase, the team also identified sub-themes for many issues; these included, for example, the specific components of school turnaround plans and a higher degree of precision in describing members' activities during the school day.

The team then used NVivo query functions to identify patterns in the data. Each member of the analysis team also wrote detailed memos linking coded materials to query output and to draft text, describing patterns they observed in coded and queried data. This memo-writing provided a clear record of the analytic process and a link between raw data and summarized findings.

Partnership agreements and surveys were also subjected to thematic analysis and included mixed-methods analysis of these sources' attributes. For partnership agreements, the team first analyzed the composition of the agreements to determine whether certain features were present or not (e.g., evidence of plans to manage collaboratively). The team also posed three follow-up questions to program staff in 2015 to help describe how they use and how frequently they updated partnership agreements—topics not evident from a content analysis of the documents themselves. The information on both document content and usage was imported to NVivo as a survey so that closed-ended answers could be used to create attributes for documents and open-ended answers could be analyzed by theme. To analyze updated partnership agreements in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016, the research team compared the partnership agreements with the previous iteration using Microsoft Word's document comparison function to identify changed passages of text; these changes were then qualitatively coded. Similarly, the survey data were uploaded so that narrative descriptions of programs were coded and closed-ended questions used to segment the data. This strategy allowed the team to run queries that identified, for example, whether schools following a Turnaround model provided different services than those following a Transformation model.

Frequencies for Qualitative Findings

Given the variety and number of data sources and observations over time, the study team adopted the reporting conventions shown in Exhibit A-11a to summarize findings on qualitative data sources.

Exhibit A-11a: Reporting Conventions by Unit of Analysis

Represents	Grantee Programs (n=13)	All Program Schools (n=41)	Program School Case Studies Only (n=17)	Comparison School Case Studies (n=12)
All/almost all	11-13	35-41	14-17	10-12
Most/majority	8-10	23-34	10-13	7-9
About half	6-7	18-22	8-9	5-6
Some/minority	3-5	6-17	4-7	3-4
Several/few	1-2	1-5	1-3	1-2

Notes: "All Program Schools" includes those schools within which the following data collection activities occurred: case study interviews and focus groups with principals, teachers, and, in Year 2, parents and members, and non-case study interviews with principals. Across both years of the evaluation, stakeholders from 41 unique schools participated in data collection. These data were collected at different points in time so not all 41 schools were observed at the same points in time. Of the 23 schools that participated in Year 2, 18 also participated in Year 1.
Exhibit reads: All/almost all means 11-13, out of n=13 Grantee Programs, reported a theme; 35-41, out of n=41 All Program Schools, reported a theme; 14-17, out of n=17 Program School Case Studies Only, reported a theme; or 10-12, out of n=12 Comparison School Case Studies, reported a theme.

Across both years of the evaluation, the study team gathered qualitative data from 41 unique schools. As shown in Exhibit A-11b, 36 schools participated in Year 1 data collection; 18 of those schools also participated in Year 2 data collection, plus 5 new schools.

Exhibit A-11b: Overlap between Program School Samples, Year 1 to Year 2
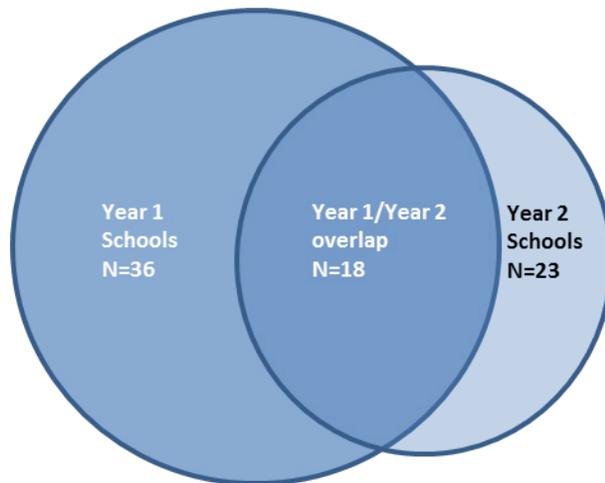
While the relative frequency categories (shown above in Exhibit 11A) were used throughout the text of this report, Exhibit A-12 shows specific frequencies for major themes as well as change over time, organized following the outline of preceding sections of this report. Primary data were collected in 2014–15 and 2015–16; some data included information about 2013–14, the program's first year of implementation (2013–14 end-of-year GPRs, Fall 2014 grantee interviews). The frequencies are broken down by the national evaluation's three units of analysis: grantee programs, program schools, and comparison schools. Each unit of analysis subsumes multiple data sources, as follows:

Grantee programs (13)

- Interviews and focus groups (13 respondents: 4 interviews each with 12 grantees, 3 interviews with 1 grantee, 11 focus group participants)
- Member interviews and focus groups (36 members representing 13 grantee programs)
- GPRs (52; 2013-14 and 2014-15)
- Partnership agreements (12; reviewed at 3 points in time)

Program schools (41)

Year 1 (36)

- Principal interviews (33)
    - 25 one-on-one interviews
    - 8 participants in small-group interviews
- Parent interviews (50 representing 14 program schools that provided family and community engagement services to families of students receiving School Turnaround AmeriCorps services)
- Case study respondents (representing 6 schools)
    - 6 principals
    - 28 relevant teachers (familiar with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program)

Year 2 (23)

- Principals in small group interviews (8)
- Case study respondents (representing 15 schools)
    - 15 principals
    - 52 relevant teachers (familiar with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program)
    - 19 members placed in those case study schools
    - 12 parents of students receiving School Turnaround AmeriCorps services in those case study schools

Comparison schools (12)

- 12 principals
- 62 teachers

The counts above show the total number of interviews and focus group participants in qualitative data collection; the list above includes individuals completing more than one data collection activity.

The counts reported throughout the text of the report and in the table below are based on counts of *unique individuals and schools* even when they were interviewed multiple times, as this let the study team address the evaluation's research question about changes over time. For example, grantee staff were interviewed at multiple time points. The study team was able to analyze the responses at each time point and note changes—for example, a challenge reported by 10 grantees in Fall 2014 that was reported by 6 grantees in Fall 2015. The study team notes changes by school for case study schools. Changes among the broader (non-case study) sample of schools are reported at the cohort level because there is significant but not perfect overlap in the Year 1 and Year 2 samples.

Persistence (change over time) was assessed both by tracking change in prevalence at the level of the appropriate unit of analysis (e.g., increase/decrease in the number of grantees, schools, or stakeholders therein), and by qualitative assessment of changes in the intensity or quality of the theme. The latter was

done for two reasons. First, the number and composition of schools and stakeholders changed from Year 1 to Year 2. Specifically, Year 1 data collection included 114 stakeholders representing 36 schools, while Year 2 included 92 stakeholders representing 23 schools—making it misleading to show growth in a theme purely as a function of an increase in the number of stakeholders or schools reporting it. Showing growth based on the number of stakeholders alone would be highly unlikely given the mixture of schools and stakeholders in Year 2; conversely, it would over-report the number of declines in themes. Where respondents reported different themes in Year 1 versus Year 2, the study team used the most recent observation to arrive at counts for a theme and noted this as a change in the number of stakeholders over time. Second, even in cases where direct comparisons were possible year-over-year, it was important to also gauge the intensity of a theme. For example, several Year 1 case study schools reported using data to tailor interventions in Year 1 and Year 2; however, in Year 2, they also reported having increased teacher professional development about data use, use of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to review data, and increasingly involved members in these data reviews. Year 2 and SIG Exiter case studies also documented more sophisticated uses of data than were reported in Year 1. Grantees also reported qualitatively stronger integration of data (and fewer challenges with accessing and using data). Combining these observations, the team concluded that use of data in 2015–16 improved in both quantity and quality compared with prior years. The same process was used to assess changes in other themes, as shown in Exhibit A-12.

Exhibit A-12: Prevalence of Themes by Unit of Analysis, Stakeholder, and Change over Time

	Unit of Analysis			Theme Persistence or Change by Year
	Grantee Programs	Program Schools	Comparison Schools (all case studies)	
School Context				
School leaders receptive to using external partners	7 grantee programs 9 grantee staff 1 GPRs 3 members	8 schools (all case studies) 8 principals	8 schools 8 principals	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Student populations with socio-emotional or special needs and challenges (attendance or behavioral issues, ELL, etc.)	8 grantee programs 2 grantee staff 3 GPRs 4 members	17 schools (including 15 case studies) 16 principals 17 teachers 9 members 2 parents	12 schools 6 principals 30 teachers	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Distinct challenges of rural areas and rural schools	3 grantee programs 3 grantee staff 3 GPRs 2 members	4 schools (all case studies) 2 principals 3 teachers 2 members	3 schools 2 principals 5 teachers	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Member Recruitment, Matching, Retention, and Management				
Member recruitment and retention	11 grantee programs 7 grantee staff 10 GPRs	3 schools (all case study schools) 1 principal 2 teachers	N/A	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Member preparation and training	13 grantee programs 37 grantee staff 19 GPRs 21 partnership agreements	26 school (including 14 case study schools) 25 principals 18 teachers 6 members	N/A	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2016-16**
On-site supervision	13 grantee programs 36 grantee staff 10 GPRs 20 members 19 partnership agreements	28 schools (including 16 case study schools) 25 Principals 25 Teachers 1 parent	N/A	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Identifying and Targeting Students for Services				
Test scores, performance data, or behavioral data	6 grantee programs 6 grantee staff 1 GPR 1 partnership agreement	14 schools (including 11 case study schools) 10 principals 20 teachers 7 members	N/A	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**
Teacher recommendation	3 grantee programs 3 grantee staff	10 schools (including 9 case study schools) 6 principals 16 teachers 3 members	N/A	⟷ **2014-15** ⟷ **2015-16**

	Unit of Analysis			Theme Persistence or Change by Year
	Grantee Programs	**Program Schools**	**Comparison Schools (all case studies)**	
Grade level	1 grantee program 1 grantee staff	9 schools (including 7 case study schools) 6 principals 4 teachers 2 members	N/A	↔ **2014-15** ↔ **2015-16**
Use of Data to Manage and Monitor Programs and Tailor Instruction	13 grantee programs 19 grantee staff 15 GPRs 14 members 7 partnership agreements	34 schools (including 17 case study schools) 32 principals 30 teachers 2 members	12 schools 11 principals 32 teachers	↔ **2013-14** ↑ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Program Implementation Challenges				
School leader and staff turnover	9 grantee programs 14 grantee staff 1 member	7 schools (all case study schools) 2 principals 7 teachers 2 members 1 parent	8 schools 4 principals 12 teachers	↔ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Lack or loss of resources	13 grantee programs 22 grantee staff 4 GPRs 4 members	12 schools (including 9 case study schools) 13 principals 13 teachers 2 members 1 parents	11 schools 8 principals 23 teachers	↔ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Challenges with school conditions	12 grantee programs 21 grantee staff 15 GPRs 7 members	18 schools (including 13 case study schools) 13 principals 12 teachers 1 member 5 parents	11 schools 8 principals 20 teachers	↔ **2013-14** ↔ **2014-15** ↔ **2015-16**
Challenges with member recruitment and retention	13 grantee programs 28 grantee staff 36 GPRs 1 member	21 schools (including 14 case study schools) 18 principals 21 teachers 3 members 3 parents	N/A	↔ **2014-15** ↓ **2015-16**
Confusion and tension over members' roles	10 grantee programs 19 grantee staff 1 GPR 3 members	13 schools (including 11 case study schools) 6 principals 20 teachers 3 members	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↔ **2014-15** ↓ **2015-16**

	Unit of Analysis			Theme Persistence or Change by Year
	Grantee Programs	**Program Schools**	**Comparison Schools (all case studies)**	
Inconsistencies in AmeriCorps presence	11 grantee programs 7 grantee staff 15 GPRs 1 Member	15 schools (including 12 case study schools) 11 principals 21 teachers 1 Member 3 Parents	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↔ **2014-15** ↓ **2015-16**
Limitations in members' skill sets for direct service delivery	7 grantee programs 6 grantee staff 7 members	15 schools (including 9 case study schools) 12 principals 17 teachers 5 members	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↔ **2014-15** ↓ **2015-16**
Grant administration	12 grantee programs 13 grantee staff 8 GPRs 2 members	N/A	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↓ **2014-15** ↓ **2015-16**
Partnership Findings				
Members' positive relationships with students	13 grantee programs 26 grantee staff 11 GPRs 23 members	29 schools (including 17 case study schools) 26 principals 37 teachers 18 members 6 parents	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↑ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Members' positive relationships with teachers	12 grantee programs 26 grantee staff 6 GPRs 2 partnership agreements	29 schools (including 17 case study schools) 25 principals 44 teachers 12 members	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↑ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Grantees' positive relationships with schools	12 grantee programs 18 grantee staff 8 GPRs 18 members 1 partnership agreement	6 schools (including 3 case study schools) 6 principals	N/A	↔ **2013-14** ↑ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**
Perceived Impacts				
Student academic achievement	12 grantee programs 4 grantee staff 9 GPRs 12 members	16 schools (including 11 case study schools) 13 principals 18 teachers 11 members 4 parents	5 schools 3 principals 14 teachers	↔ **2013-14** ↑ **2014-15** ↑ **2015-16**

	Unit of Analysis			Theme Persistence or Change by Year
	Grantee Programs	Program Schools	Comparison Schools (all case studies)	
Student socio-emotional well-being and academic engagement	13 grantee programs 19 grantee staff 16 GPRs 25 members	27 schools (including 17 case study schools) 24 principals 37 teachers 14 members 12 parents	10 schools 6 principals 15 teachers	⟷ 2013-14 ↑ 2014-15 ↑ 2015-16
School climate	13 grantee program 11 grantee staff 5 GPRs 20 members	21 schools (including 16 case study schools) 15 principals 18 teachers 13 members 1 parent	11 schools 11 principals 15 teachers	⟷ 2013-14 ⟷ 2014-15 ↑ 2015-16
School capacity to reach turnaround goals	12 grantee programs 14 grantee staff 9 GPRs 20 members	21 schools (including 16 case study schools) 21 principals 33 teachers 11 members 5 parents	2 schools 2 principals 3 teachers	⟷ 2013-14 ↑ 2014-15 ↑ 2015-16

Notes:

⟷   Represents a theme that continued at the same prevalence or intensity over time. This arrow is used the first year a theme was observed. In subsequent years, this arrow type means a theme was observed at the same level as the previous year.

↑   Represents a theme that increased in prevalence or intensity compared to the previous year.

↓   Represents a theme that decreased in prevalence or intensity compared to the previous year.

Exhibit reads: Under the major theme of School Context, the sub-theme "School leaders receptive to using external partners" was reported by seven grantee programs, including nine grantee staff, one GPR, and three members; by eight program schools, including eight principals; and by eight comparison schools (all of which were case studies), including eight principals. This theme was observed in 2014–15 and observed at the same prevalence and/or intensity in 2015–16.

A.4. Administrative Data Methodology

Analysis of Member Activity Data

The analysis team completed quantitative analysis of the member activity data in SAS. First, the study team collected data on students, AmeriCorps members, and program services in 2014–15 and 2015–16 using two modes: a standardized online data collection form and a document with detailed instructions and examples. The data form was administered to nine grantee programs, and the instructions were provided to the other four grantee programs.[16] Data submitted by the grantee programs who used the instructions provided were manually coded to match the format of the survey data.

Variables were collected at either the school level or the service/activity level within a school:

School-level variables

- Number of AmeriCorps members

- Number of AmeriCorps service hours

- Number of students who received any AmeriCorps services

- Number of students who completed participation in AmeriCorps services

- Services/activities offered

Service/activity-level variables

- Service/activity description

- Level of service provision (individual students, small groups, large groups, etc.)

- GPR Performance Measures aligned to service/activity

- Number of AmeriCorps members who provided service/activity

- Number of AmeriCorps service hours spent on service/activity

- Number of students who participated in any aspect of the service/activity

- Was a minimum dosage established for the service activity? If yes:

    o What was the minimum dosage?

    o How many students received the minimum dosage?

To produce grantee-level data exhibits, the analysis team summed values across each grantee's schools. Other exhibits show average values across all of the schools that offered a service/activity, regardless of grantee.

Analysis of Performance Measure Data

The analysis team completed quantitative analysis of the GPR data in SAS. First, the team compiled data on enrollment and retention rates, target and actual numbers of AmeriCorps members and Member

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[16]   Grantee programs receiving the survey: grantee program #8, grantee program #7, grantee program #1, grantee program #9, grantee program #13, grantee program #6, grantee program #10, grantee program #11, grantee program #5.

Grantee programs receiving the template: grantee program #4, grantee program #12, grantee program #3, grantee program #2.

Service Years (MSYs), and target and actual performance measures from the 2013–14 and 2014–15 GPRs.[17] Enrollment and retention rates were compared across grantees and program years. Next, the analysis team determined the proportion of the grantee programs that provided each type of activity reported on each performance measure in 2014–15. Several grantee programs (grantee program #4, grantee program #7, grantee program #1, and grantee program #9) reported multiple sets of aligned output and outcome performance measures. For example, grantee program #1 reported ED1, ED2, and ED5 for its Academic Achievement services and ED1, ED2, and ED27 for its Academic Engagement services. To preserve the alignment between output and outcome performance measures, all performance measure values were analyzed within aligned performance measure sets only.[18] Some aligned performance measure names were shortened and standardized in this memo's exhibits to aid comparisons across grantees (see Exhibit A-13).

Exhibit A-13: Grantee Aligned Performance Measure Names

Grantee Program	Aligned Performance Measure Name	Activity Type
Grantee program #1	Academic Achievement	Academic Achievement
Grantee program #1	Academic Engagement	Academic Engagement
Grantee program #2	ED 2 & ED 5	Academic Achievement
Grantee program #3	Improvement in academic engagement	Academic Engagement
Grantee program #4	# Of Students Completing High Dosage Tutoring	Tutoring
Grantee program #4	Ongoing Mechanisms for Family/Community Engagement	Family/Community Engagement
Grantee program #4	Graduation Assistants: Early Warning Systems and Re-engagement	Early Warning System
Grantee program #5	Academic Interventions	Academic Interventions
Grantee program #6	Increased Academic Performance	Academic Performance
Grantee program #7	Classroom Interventions and Extended Learning	Classroom and Extended Learning
Grantee program #7	The whole child	The Whole Child
Grantee program #8	Implementation of Early Warning System	Early Warning System
Grantee program #9	School-based Tutoring	Tutoring
Grantee program #9	Student Mentoring and Wraparound Services	Mentoring and Wraparound Services
Grantee program #10	Improving Attendance & Academic Engagement as Dropout Prevention	Attendance and Academic Engagement
Grantee program #11	Academic Engagement and Achievement	Academic Engagement and Achievement
Grantee program #12	Small group tutoring by math fellows improves math performance by 4th, 6th, and 8th grade students	Tutoring
Grantee program #13	Project Graduation	Project Graduation

ª "ED2 & ED5" refers to grantee Performance Measures ED2 and ED5. The definition of ED2 is "Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K–12 education programs." The definition of ED5 is "Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math."

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[17]   Analyzed GPRs cover evaluation Year 0 (the design year) and Year 1. Since the evaluation Year 2 GPR covered information through September 30, 2016 (the end of the program year), it was not be available for analysis under this contract, which ended in July 2016.

[18]   Aligned output and outcome Performance Measures may not be directly comparable, as an output measure may include students for whom the outcome measure was not applicable.

The analysis team divided each 2014–15 measure and MSY target by the corresponding 2013–14 target to track the proportional change in targets over the two years relative to the change in MSY. The team then investigated the relationship between target and actual output and outcome measures in 2014–15. The output performance measures represent the denominators for the outcome performance measures; only students who received the specified minimum dosage of AmeriCorps services were included in the count of students with improved outcomes. Since ED6 was reported by one grantee program and ED7 was reported by two grantee programs, this report presents outcome-to-output ratios for ED5 and ED27 only.

Finally, the analysis team conducted exploratory linear regression analyses to determine whether a grantee program's outcome-to-output ratio was associated with a range of program characteristics:[19]

- Experience with an AmeriCorps grant

- District urbanicity

- School level (elementary, middle, high school)

- Priority versus SIG schools

- Number of school partners

- Whether Common Core–aligned assessments had been implemented

- Member enrollment and retention rates

- Ratio of actual to target MSY

- Ratio of individuals who applied to be AmeriCorps members to AmeriCorps members

- Number of students completing AmeriCorps services per MSY ("caseload")[20]

- Ratio of actual to target "caseload"

Grantee program #4 reported ED5 for two sets of aligned performance measures (Tutoring and Family/Community Engagement), so the Family/Community Engagement figure was dropped from the exploratory analysis because it seemed to be a secondary outcome for the activity (ED6 and ED7 were also reported). Grantee program #12 was dropped from the exploratory analyses because its academic assessment changed midyear, rendering a calculation of academic improvement impossible. Grantee program #7 was dropped from the exploratory analyses with academic engagement as the outcome measure because it did not administer student-level post-tests.

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[19] Notably, different program characteristics could skew this outcomes-to-outputs ration. Programs that focused on only reading and math interventions (that align with ED5) might be expected to have a higher ratio than programs providing a broader range of services that do not map as well to this outcome, such as parent and community engagement, mentoring, attendance coaching, or socio-emotional health.

[20] It would have been preferable to estimate member caseload as the number of students who participated in any AmeriCorps programming (ED1) per MSY. However, ED1 is an optional Performance Measure, and only about half of the grantees (7 of 13) reported it. To avoid having to drop almost half of the grantees from the analysis, ED2 and ED4A were used as imperfect proxies of number of students served. In addition, grantees reported target and actual MSY for the program overall, but reported only target MSY for each set of aligned Performance Measures (there is a field for actual MSY, but it was always left blank). The analysis team estimated actual MSY for the appropriate aligned performance measure by multiplying the overall ratio of actual to target MSY by the target MSY for the aligned performance measure. For example, if the grantee planned to recruit 10 MSY and assign 5 MSY to tutoring but managed to enroll only 8 MSY, the analysis team imputed an MSY of 4 for tutoring (8/10 = 0.8, 0.8*5 = 4).

Proposed Administrative Data Collection and Analysis Methodology to Improve Measurement of Grantee Performance

This section describes an alternative approach to the collection and analysis of grantee administrative data to improve measurement of grantee performance. Exhibit A-14 shows a more fine-grained and potentially more useful summary than the enrollment, output, and outcome performance measures currently used by grantees. The flowchart-like exhibit categorizes students in the simplified scenario of a grantee that offers a single member-supplied intervention, Math Tutoring, at all of its affiliated schools, and illustrates the difficulty in interpreting performance measure data.[21] Most boxes in the exhibit have an associated count; e.g., box A is associated with the total number of students that attend a grantee school at any time during the school year; box B1 is associated with the number of students who are not eligible to receive tutoring and box B2 is associated with the number of students who are eligible (so the counts associated with B1 and B2 sum to the count for box A).

The exhibit shows that only some students are eligible to receive tutoring, where eligibility may be based on grade level (tutoring might only be offered to select grades) and criteria for determining which students are struggling in math and hence in need of additional assistance. Due to limitations in member availability, as measured by MSY available for tutoring, some eligible students may not be offered the opportunity to receive tutoring. Of the eligible students who do receive tutoring, some will not receive the minimum dose needed to be considered a tutoring program completer. There are a variety of reasons for this. First, some will begin tutoring too late in the school year to receive the minimum dose. For example, some grantees consider 30 hours of tutoring the minimum dose. If students receive two tutoring hours per week and there are 36 weeks of instruction in the school year, then any students who start receiving tutoring during or after Week 23 are unable to receive the minimum dose. Second, some students move away from grantee schools before the end of the school year (referred to as *movers*), and some movers leave after they have started tutoring but before completing the minimum dose. Third, lack of tutoring program completion can also be due to withdrawal from the tutoring program or other reasons (e.g., extended illness or other personal circumstances). These reasons are listed in box D, and each reason has an associated student count.

Of the students who complete the tutoring program, some make demonstrable academic progress, others demonstrably do not make progress, and for other students it is not possible to determine whether or not they made progress. Academic progress is assessed via pretest vs. posttest gain scores on standardized achievement tests. Gain scores cannot be computed for movers who complete tutoring, since by definition they exit grantee schools before the end-of-year testing. Further, other completers may have attended school in a different state during the prior school year, and hence their pretest and posttest scores would be incommensurate, as they are derived from different achievement tests.

Suppose the grantee reports performance measures ED1, ED2, and ED5.[22] Per Exhibit A-14, ED1 equals the sum of the counts associated with boxes C2 and C3. Determinants of ED1 include (but are not limited to) the total number of eligible students, as only they may receive tutoring; the MSY available for

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[21] Grantees often offered more than one kind of member service (e.g., mentoring and tutoring) and may offer a given service in one-on-one, small group, and/or large group sessions. A more complex version of Exhibit A-14 would be needed to reflect these more realistic settings; however, the simplified setting shown in the exhibit makes it easier to illustrate basic ideas.

[22] Recall that ED1 is the number of students who start in a CNCS-supported education program, ED2 is the number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs, and ED5 is the number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math.

tutoring, as this determines the total number of tutoring hours that may be distributed among eligible students; the number of movers who start tutoring but move before completing the program, as the more students who terminate tutoring early, the more additional students who can start tutoring; and the average tutoring dose that completers receive, as the larger this average dose, the fewer additional eligible students who can receive tutoring. Of these determinants, only the last is under the entire control of the grantee and its affiliated schools: Schools teach the students who decide to attend them; the MSY is determined by success at recruitment and retention, which are strongly influenced by local demographic and economic conditions; and students' families decide whether they stay or move.

Per Exhibit A-14, ED2 equals the counts associated with box C3. Determinants of ED2 include ED1; the MSY available for tutoring; the count of movers in box D; and the counts of students in box D who were late-starting tutees or who were non-completers for other reasons. The grantee and its affiliated schools have limited control over these determinants of ED2.

Exhibit A-14: Simplified Example of Classifying Students With Regard to Tutoring Receipt and Completion
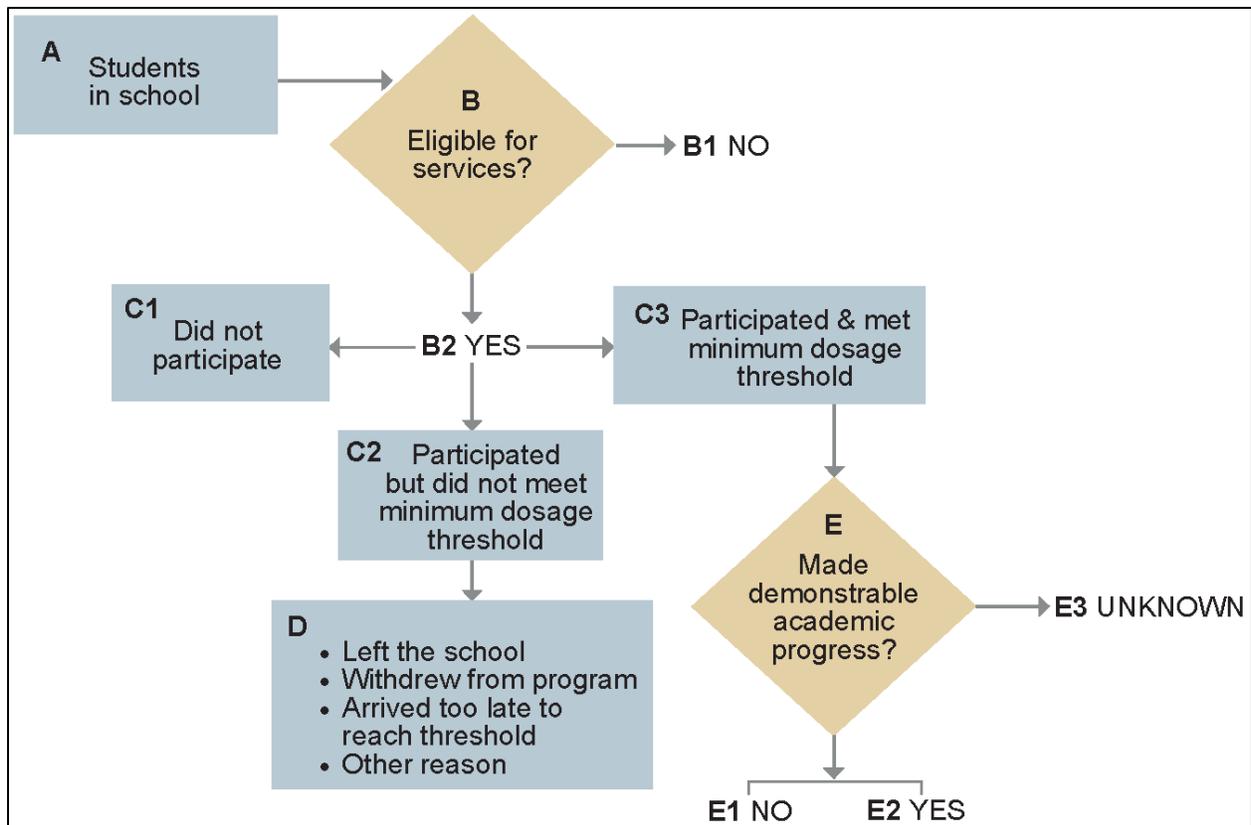
Notes: Rectangle = process step; Diamond = decision

While movers can contribute to ED1 and ED2, they cannot contribute to ED5, since by definition they are no longer in an affiliated school when end-of-school-year achievement is measured. Determinants of ED5 include ED2; the number of mover completers; the number of completers with incommensurate pretests and posttest; and the rigorousness of what constitutes "satisfactory academic progress." The grantee and affiliated schools decide what constitutes "satisfactory progress," but have partial control over these other determinants.

To state some implications of the preceding discussion of Exhibit A-14:

1. Influential determinants of performance measures ED1, ED2, and ED5 include factors that are largely or partially outside the control of the grantee and affiliated schools. Most importantly, these include the number of movers and the MSY available to tutoring. As discussed above, there is a cascading effect of determinants: Factors that influence ED1 in turn influence ED2, and factors that influence ED2 in turn influence ED5.

2. An <u>increase</u> in any of these performance measures from one year of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program to the next does not necessarily represent an <u>improvement</u> in the grantee's tutoring program. For example, a drop in the number of movers from the first year to the second could lead to an increase in the second-year performance measures even with no increase in tutoring program effectiveness.

3. The grantee's performance measure goals are based on its understanding of what constitutes achievable and effective tutoring performance, <u>given</u> (perhaps implicit) <u>predictions</u> about factors beyond or under the partial control of the grantee and its affiliated schools. For instance, the grantee in effect predicts the count of its schools' movers (as well as other counts) in order to formulate goals for ED1, ED2, and ED5. In addition, the grantee is required by CNCS to assume it will meet its recruitment and retention targets, even though (as discussed above) there is strong empirical evidence that this is unlikely to hold. Even if what constitutes achievable and effective tutoring is well understood, either failing to meet a target or meeting a target can result from making inaccurate predictions.

   Setting performance measure targets is useful in and of itself, as it requires grantees to think through how their member-provided services will be implemented and distributed over the course of the coming school year. However, if at the end of the school year a grantee has compiled its various counts in Exhibit A-14 (or in an analogous figure), then summative judgements of the implementation and value of member services can be made without reference to performance measure targets. That is, performance measure targets are based on <u>predicted</u> counts and <u>predicted</u> MSY, so if the <u>actual</u> counts and <u>actual</u> MSY are known, there is no extra value in making summative judgments based on prediction-based targets. The counts in Exhibit A-14 can be compiled from affiliated schools' enrollment records, assessments of eligibility for service receipt, and members' records of student service receipt. The MSY allocated to tutoring (or other services) can be compiled from member supervisor records.

4. Consideration of the counts represented in Exhibit A-14 can be used heuristically to help grantees set realistic performance measure targets. Again, though, all performance measure targets are based on predictions of counts that are knowable at the end of the school year.

In summary, prior to the start of the school year, a figure like Exhibit A-14 can be used to provide guidance in setting more realistic performance measure targets. At the end of the school year, filling in such a figure can help to provide a fine-grained decomposition of how service recipients have fared over the course of the year. This accounts for contingencies (e.g., number of movers) beyond the control of schools and that therefore could not have been reliably accounted for when targets were set. The data needed to fill in such a figure are available to grantees at the end of the school year. A competed figure provides a more detailed and accurate basis for appraising the adequacy of grantee member performance than does the comparison of actual vs. targeted performance measure values

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APPENDIX B.   INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES

This appendix provides supplemental case study material from Year 1 and Year 2 data collection. Year 1 case studies focus on the 2014–15 school year, and Year 2 case studies focus on the 2015–16 school year.

- **Year 1 / Year 2 Case Studies.** Section B.1 presents six comparative case studies (numbered 1 through 6) describing matched pairs of SIG/Priority schools comprising one school *with* School Turnaround AmeriCorps services (*program* schools) and one school *without* School Turnaround AmeriCorps services (*comparison* schools). In each case study, the paired program school and comparison school are designated as "A" and "B," respectively (e.g., in Case Study #1: School 1A, School 1B). All six pairs participated in data collection during Year 1; all but one pair (#4) also participated in a follow-up round of data collection in Year 2.[23]

- **Year 2 Case Studies.** Section B.2 presents another six comparative case studies (numbered 7 through 12), again describing matched pairs of program and comparison schools, plus a program school replacement case study (#13).

- **SIG Exiter Case Studies.** Section B.3 presents four "SIG Exiter" case studies of School Turnaround AmeriCorps schools that had successfully exited SIG status by the third year of the grant period.

All program schools relied on School Turnaround AmeriCorps members to help achieve their turnaround goals, whereas the comparison schools relied on school staff and/or other partners, which could include other (non School Turnaround) AmeriCorps programs.

Data Sources

The case studies variously rely on principal interviews, staff interviews and focus groups, and school climate observations by the research team during site visits, with the specific data sources varying somewhat for different types of schools. For the Year 1 and 2 comparative case studies (#1–#12), the research team interviewed principals and instructional and counseling staff, conducted staff focus groups, and observed school climate in both the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program schools and matched comparison schools.[24] For the replacement case study (#13), the team conducted interviews of the principal, staff, members, and parents.

For all the comparative case studies (#1–13), but from program schools only, the team collected additional data from interviews of and focus groups with AmeriCorps members and parents.

For the SIG Exiter case studies, the team interviewed only principals and selected staff.

Content of Each Case Study

Each comparative case study begins with an overview and summary table of school characteristics, followed by descriptions of strategies used to pursue turnaround goals by the program school and the comparison school. Where appropriate, illustrative quotes help to contextualize the findings. Each case study also describes the perceived impact of the schools' strategies on student academic achievement, student socio-emotional health, school climate, and school capacity to meet turnaround goals.

The replacement and SIG Exiter case studies use this same structure (absent comparison schools).

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[23]   The Year 1 case study from grantee #13 was not included in Year 2 follow-up data collection (grant management issues made it in feasible to include this grantee program). It was replaced with a school from grantee program #5, a program school–only case study (because its potential comparison schools declined to participate).

[24]   Some schools participated in focus groups and climate observations in Year 1 and some participated in Year 2.

B.1. Year 1 / Year 2 Follow-Up Case Studies

Case Study 1: Grantee Program #4

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes two urban high schools' efforts to meet their turnaround plan goals during the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years. One of the schools (School 1A) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in a range of activities related to turnaround goals, while the other (School 1B), which did not have School Turnaround AmeriCorps resources, used internal staff to provide some additional tutoring and college preparation supports. Each school's write-up is based on telephone interviews with the principal and three teachers in 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Schools 1A and 1B are high schools located in an urban district in Texas. The two schools served demographically comparable student populations, although student academic proficiency differed by subject matter. School 1B had higher proficiency rates in reading (65 versus 50 percent), while School 1B's students performed lower than students at School 1A in mathematics (30 versus 35 percent). Both schools served primarily Hispanic student populations, and most students were eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

Exhibit B-1: Case Study at a Glance: (1) Grantee Program #4

Characteristic	Program School 1A	Comparison School 1B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 10 2015–16: 8[a]	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	7 total After-school/tutoring: 1 Behavior and mentorship: 5 College readiness: 1	3 total Behavior and mentorship: 2 Other: 1 partner connects students to community resources
SIG funding	2011–14: $6,000,000	2011–14: $5,992,251
School level	High school	High school
School enrollment	1,358	1,489
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 86,516	Urban / 86,516
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	50% / 35%	65% / 30%
Proportion of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch	89%	90%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	3%	4%
Hispanic	84%	80%
Black	10%	10%
Asian	2%	4%
Other	2%	1%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 1A and 1B: awarded to the school.
Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 1A and 1B reflect end-of-course assessments administered in all grades ("met or exceeded progress").
Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.
[a] The principal and grantee differed in their descriptions of the number of AmeriCorps members serving in the school in 2015–16; while both noted that 10 positions were allocated, the grantee reported four graduate assistants and six tutors, whereas the principal noted that 8 (of 10 positions) were filled at the time of the interview, as one had never been filled and one had remained vacant since a member left in the fall because it was not a good fit with his/her skills.

School 1A: Program School

Local Context

School 1A, a transformation school that partnered with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in 2013, became an early college high school in Spring 2015. School 1A's principal reported that the school faced disadvantages due to its high percentage of low-income students and English language learners. Recruitment of AmeriCorps members posed another challenge in the 2015–16 school year. In 2014–15, School 1A had 10 School Turnaround AmeriCorps members placed by the district, and in 2015–16 there were 8 members because one had left early in the year and another position remained vacant. The principal said that because the urban area in which School 1A was located was an expensive place to live, finding candidates willing and able to manage on the member stipend was difficult: "It's hard enough finding regular teachers for the pay they get in this town, so AmeriCorps, you really have to be dedicated to the cause."

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 1A used a Transformation model and several strategies to address its turnaround goals of supporting special education populations, in particular; improving graduation rates; and improving student performance on assessments. The strategies implemented by School 1A included establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and providing academic support to students in math and English, leveraging AmeriCorps member support.

School 1A worked with a number of partner organizations and programs in addition to School Turnaround AmeriCorps. It had three programs for mentoring or social support, one for discipline support, one for after-school tutoring, one for college readiness, and one organization that provided psychiatric evaluations of students. The program had an on-site School Turnaround AmeriCorps coordinator, an employee from the district.

> **School 1A's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16**
>
> - Professional Learning Communities for teachers
> - Academic supports for students
> - Improved clarity of AmeriCorps roles in 2015–16
> - Stronger relationships between AmeriCorps members and school staff in 2015–16

In 2014–15, the 10 members provided English and math tutoring to students both in the classroom and after school when needed. Some School Turnaround AmeriCorps members offered other activities and supports for parental engagement. At least one member called parents at home in an attempt to prevent students from dropping out, though this appeared to be a small component of the program. Members also participated in after-school activities, including a running club. Although the member activities were the same in 2015–16, there were two fewer members, and having only one math tutor meant that fewer classrooms received math tutoring support.

Professional Learning Communities

Teachers met regularly with small groups of peers in Professional Learning Communities. PLC meetings served as a time for teachers to discuss goals, review student academic performance data, and discuss strategies to approach various challenges or an aspect of teaching. Importantly, in 2015–16, AmeriCorps members were invited to attend PLCs to facilitate better collaboration between school staff and members, representing a change from the previous school year. Teacher interview respondents noted that such participation was helpful in aligning their efforts with AmeriCorps members'. The PLCs also provided an additional opportunity for AmeriCorps members to advocate for the students in their caseload.

Academic support for students

In 2014–15, AmeriCorps members pulled students out of classrooms to administer academic interventions in math and English. Although the school changed the structure of its AmeriCorps academic support in 2015–16, math and English still were addressed, emphasizing classroom push-ins; AmeriCorps members provided consistent in-classroom support to groups of four to five students. Another change was the reduction from four members in 2014–15 who supported math classrooms to one in 2015–16.

> **Teacher and AmeriCorps Member Collaboration**
>
> "We will run through the lesson together, make sure we can anticipate what can happen with the students in our class and how to organize. … [The AmeriCorps member is] basically [an] advocate for the students when we are discussing upcoming lessons."
>
> *–Teacher interview (2016)*

Interviewed teachers reported that the members with whom they worked were adequately prepared to fulfill their duties. One teacher emphasized the value of relevant content knowledge, that members "should have a good understanding of the content so that they are able to rephrase or re-teach" the material that the teacher presents in order to reinforce it. Another teacher said the member who served in her classroom provided crucial support in the classroom: "I don't know what I would do without her."

Each AmeriCorps member's caseload of students was chosen at the beginning of the year during a PLC meeting. Together, the teachers and AmeriCorps members formed caseloads by reviewing student academic, attendance, and behavioral data to identify those students who would most likely benefit from AmeriCorps support. Teachers and members reviewed student data together every three to six weeks. The AmeriCorps members' consistent presence in classrooms in 2015–16 facilitated regular collaboration and communication between teachers and members.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The interviewed stakeholders mentioned a few challenges in implementing School 1A's improvement strategies. The principal and three teachers from School 1A cited confusion and concerns with members' roles and expectations during the 2014–15 school year. Two teachers indicated (in hindsight) that their departments should have offered more specifics to members about what they were allowed to do, so that members would have been better informed about their roles within the departments. One wanted to offer more freedom to members, allowing them to come up with supplemental assignments and create lessons to benefit their tutees. The other teacher spoke specifically about struggling with program restrictions regarding the amount of hours members had to work with specific students in their caseload, noting that members could not shift their attention to students who were not specifically assigned to them, even when the teacher observed that support would be helpful. She wished there had been more flexibility in the program to accommodate more students' needs. One teacher and the principal reported similar frustrations with inflexible AmeriCorps caseloads in 2015–16, as well.

The first teacher, who commented on giving members supplemental assignments, also said, however, that on some occasions the AmeriCorps member's caseload was light (e.g., when students on the member's caseload had been pulled out for socio-emotional interventions). In such cases, the member provided more general classroom support and was not necessarily restricted to her caseload.

That said, the clarity of the AmeriCorps members' roles improved in 2015–16 over 2014–15, according to the principal: "The relationship amongst tutors and staff members is much better than last year. … For

the most part, the campus now knows what the tutors are here for, they're used to the [AmeriCorps] name, so there's much more collegiality amongst everybody."

School 1B: Comparison School

Local Context

Stakeholders described the School 1B community as a diverse and economically disadvantaged population. The high school was 96 percent non-White and diverse both ethnically and linguistically. More than 65 different nationalities were represented, with high proportions of English learners, including Spanish-speaking and Asian immigrants. Stakeholders also noted that 30 years ago, the community had been primarily White, affluent, and suburban. The school recently had emerged from a long period of instability and gang violence. In 2008, for example, barely half of incoming freshmen graduated.

The school achieved a graduation rate of 91.7 percent in 2014 due to reform efforts. The principal cited as key Title I funding, other grants, improving pedagogy, staff training on strategies for managing challenges faced by students, and developing and retaining staff. The principal, who had joined the school as a teacher several years ago, reported in a 2015 interview that School 1B was currently "not where we want to be, but we're a far, far cry from where we were when I started teaching."

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

In 2010, School 1B restructured into smaller learning communities; and in 2011, it was awarded SIG funding as a Transformation school. School 1B also hired an educational consulting company to provide professional development for every teacher. Overall, School 1B seemed to function successfully by using grants, investing in professional development for its staff, recalibrating teacher hiring practices, and offering teacher-led support services for students. These strategies continued in the 2015–16 school year, along with a new twice-weekly socio-emotional learning curriculum supported by the school district.

Professional Learning Communities

Teachers at School 1B participated in Professional Learning Communities, in which they discussed instructional best practices, curriculum redesigns based on evidence-based practices, and student performance and behavioral data. As part of implementing PLCs, the whole school was separated into smaller learning communities, each with its own leadership team that included department chairs and literacy coaches. Coaches assisted teachers by mentoring them in their content area, helping with lesson planning, and suggesting strategies teachers could use to help students improve their academic performance.

Literacy curriculum

One of the main focuses of the school's turnaround efforts was its literacy curriculum. The school used multiple resources to inform its redesign and used PLCs as forums to discuss aspects of the curriculum, lesson planning, and effective instructional strategies. The principal reported that the coaches "spend a lot of time in PLCs supporting teachers and finding ways to authentically engage their kids."

Teachers used tools such as interactive notebooks to help students increase their state standardized test scores in English language arts (ELA). Interactive notebooks were described as composition notebooks that became a student's textbook and allowed for interaction with the material. According to one teacher, the notebooks typically had course material on the right side, and space for students to interpret on the left side:

On the right side of it might be notes or stuff that we work on together in class. So if they're studying what a cell looks like, they might have a diagram of a cell on the right side, and then on the left side, the students take the information that they've learned that day and they interpret it in their own way.

The interactive notebook approach was more easily applied to some subjects than others, but in general, it helped students to become actively engaged in the material they discussed in class and it reinforced reading and writing skills.

Positive behavior Interventions and supports

As part of a broader effort to improve student behavior and increase engagement, the school implemented a new behavioral management system, Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS), which rewarded students for positive behavior and engagement in school. The PBIS program emphasized positive rewards and presented a clear set of behavior expectations to everyone in the school. These expectations embodied the school's "Viking values," named after the school mascot: pride, respect, and responsibility. Students earned rewards by "asking good questions in class," "extending their learning," or "showing up on time" (2016 principal interview). Students could spend their reward money earned on small items at the school store or save for a larger item such as their cap and gown for graduation. The principal explained that PBIS "keeps kids engaged and then it gives us a positive language and a common set of behavior expectations."

As a parallel strategy to PBIS, teachers who had referred the greatest number of students for behavioral issues received additional professional development on classroom management and building a classroom community through "book studies" beginning in the 2015–16 school year (2016 teacher interview).

Support for students' non-academic needs

Three organizations provided on-site support for students and families, thanks to the school's increased capacity to engage with partners in 2015–16. Two organizations were present in both 2014–15 and 2015–16. One provided mentorship and after-school activities and services for students; the second connected students with community services. A third partner new in 2015–16 was a family resource center that provided resources and referrals to families. The supports targeted any challenges faced by the parents that could affect student academic performance. School staff and staff at the family resource center communicated regularly about possible concerns. Teachers alerted the center staff if they had any concerns about parents of students at the school or if they suspected the families could benefit from additional support, including employment assistance, help in landlord disputes, learning English, or career advancement. The resource center had three full-time staff from an outside organization and was funded separately through a federal grant.

In addition, the school began implementing a new district-supported socio-emotional curriculum for students during the 2015–16 school year. The program included lessons integrated into the school curriculum twice per week. School 1B was the last school in the district to be able to adopt this program, and the principal said staff were eager to integrate it into the school day.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The principal reported in both years that the school experienced challenges in trying to meet the needs of its ethnically and linguistically diverse student body. This included two very different school populations: high achievers who aimed to attend college and students who had only recently immigrated to the United States and were still learning English. In 2014–15, the principal described 70 percent of the student body as not college bound. The school worked on addressing this challenge by creating smaller

learning communities, redesigning the curriculum, PLCs, and teacher professional development specifically around teaching English learners, and providing opportunities for more advanced students to attend college-level classes at a nearby university. The principal reported in 2015 that he thought School 1B was doing a good job of supporting both groups of students so far. One teacher reported that more targeted interventions "creating classes to meet the specific needs of our students" were working well.

Another reported challenge was trying to engage parents. The principal and one teacher reported that parent engagement was an ongoing challenge for School 1B in 2014–15 and 2015–16. The teacher commented during a 2016 interview that "we struggle having parents participate in the school setting just because they are working and things like that. We always struggle to get parents involved." In 2015–16, the school began new initiatives to engage parents, including a monthly Family Fun night and "Coffee with the Principal" every month with translators present.

The principal speculated that increases in the cost of living in the metropolitan area and competition from nearby suburban schools might cause problems with staff retention in the near future. In addition, the 2015–16 school year was the last year of another grant that had been providing additional funds to teachers for their work on specific turnaround initiatives. Loss of that supplemental funding, the principal feared, would only intensify these problems. The principal commented,

I'm afraid with continuing escalation of costs, without anything else—the district is supposed to be coming in with some compensation—but until that gets here, it's going to be a real challenge for me to hold onto the staff I've put so much capital into. We've done so much hard work together. I'd hate to lose them to a suburban district.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

The principal and two teachers from School 1A reported in 2016 that they had observed success in student academic engagement and achievement, particularly in literacy, and support for students' socio-emotional health—all areas in which AmeriCorps members were involved.

All interviewed stakeholders at School 1B reported in 2016 that the school had come a long way, but there was still room for improvement. The gains stakeholders reported were in the areas of academic achievement, student behavior and engagement, school climate, and the school's capacity to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of its students. One teacher and the principal also reported that a high proportion of students were planning to enter four-year colleges after graduation.

Student academic achievement

The principal of School 1A reported some gains in student academic achievement. In 2015, the principal reported that there was "absolutely" an improvement in student academic achievement in math and ELA, and that AmeriCorps members contributed to helping their assigned students improve their academic performance. Specifically, the principal and three teachers noted that the most effective AmeriCorps activities were small-group work and building quality relationships with students. In 2016, the principal reported that the AmeriCorps program helped address the school's goals, especially with students in freshman English classes. The principal reported that while there were enough AmeriCorps members to support math gains in 2014–15, those gains were difficult to sustain in 2015–16, given there was only one math tutor that year.

At School 1B, the principal and three teachers reported steadily improving standardized test scores. The principal and one of the teachers reported higher numbers of students engaged in advanced work, indicated by improved scores on the Calculus Advanced Placement (AP) Exam. The teacher added that

more students matriculated into four-year colleges each year. Many of the School 1B students were the first generation of college-goers in their family.

One teacher reported that the school was successful in using literacy across content areas. The literacy curriculum helped teachers leverage strategies that specifically helped English learners meet ELA proficiency standards. Interactive notebooks helped keep students actively engaged in the material, according to an English teacher who also served as a literacy coach. The literacy curriculum boosted students' written communication skills; according to the principal, "We're finding that students are writing with good use of fluency, not just in ELA, but across the board." School 1B graduation rates had also increased in the last nine years, from 54.8 percent to 91.7 percent in 2014–15, while more rigorous academic standards were implemented.

Student socio-emotional health

All three teachers from School 1A reported that the AmeriCorps members contributed to students' socio-emotional health by building meaningful relationships with them. This, in turn, allowed students to feel comfortable asking for additional attention and support from tutors. As one teacher described in 2015, "They're able to build relationships with a certain number of students that they do work with … they're able to influence them positively, able to encourage them to act right; and I've even seen the kids come up to them and ask them for advice." AmeriCorps members' positive contributions to these areas were also reported in the 2015–16 school year.

The School 1B principal reported that the staff's ability to refer students and families to the family resource center starting in 2015–16 provided valuable help to support the non-academic needs of students and their families. Furthermore, School 1B's 2015–16 implementation of the new district-supported socio-emotional curriculum two days a week, as well as the PBIS system, helped create positive behavioral expectations and a positive learning environment. The principal and a teacher said that socio-emotional support was part of the bigger picture of supporting academic achievement, getting students and teachers engaged in the learning process. "You can give rigorous lesson plans, but if you don't have the positive culture and the growth mindset in place, then growing is really hard" (2016 principal interview).

School climate

School 1A stakeholders reported improved relationships and more effective collaboration between AmeriCorps members and school staff in 2015–16, which stakeholders perceived as contributing to more positive classroom environments and overall school climate.

All stakeholders from School 1B reported increased rates of student graduation and attendance, in part due to the PBIS system, which in turn contributed to a better school climate. The principal saw the PBIS program as contributing not only to school climate, but also in supporting academic gains and increasing student engagement: "By keeping the dialogue among staff and with students positive, we find that we have had greater traction with academic gains."

School capacity

AmeriCorps members enhanced School 1A's capacity to support students in the classroom, particularly the school's struggling students. One teacher commented that the AmeriCorps program "gives [classrooms] the ability to have small groups, which [provides] the attention that especially at-risk kids need."

School 1B increased its capacity to work with partner organizations by figuring out the best ways to communicate with partners about the schools' needs. This, in turn, helped the school to meet its students' non-academic needs. The family resource center also allowed the school to reach families through

behavioral and mentorship support. Although it only began offering support to the school community in 2015–16, the principal reported that it had already become "part of our campus culture." The principal said the school was working on ways to sustain the family resource center after the federal funding runs out: "Sustainability is our focus moving forward."

Case Study 2: Grantee Program #1

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes two elementary schools' efforts to meet their school turnaround plan goals during the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years, focusing specifically on the roles of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and/or other volunteers, external support staff, and other external partners who helped to support school turnaround strategies. The case study also examines changes interviewees reported at the schools between the two years.[25] The write-up on School 2A is based on telephone interviews with one vice principal in January 2015, with two vice principals and two teachers in May 2015, follow-up interviews with both vice principals and one of the same teachers in February 2016, and an interview with a teacher who served as an AmeriCorps member at the school many years ago. Relevant information from grantee interviews and progress reports is also included. The write-up on School 2B is based on telephone interviews with a vice principal in May 2015 and with a principal and three teachers in May 2015 and February 2016.

Schools 2A and 2B are in the same urban district in the Mid-Atlantic part of the country. Both schools served comparable student populations with respect to enrollment, demographics, and academic performance (98 percent Black). Approximately 80 percent of students were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. School 2A received about double the amount of SIG funding of School 2B. In addition, School 2A had one of the largest populations of homeless and transitional students in the district, according to the vice principal.

School 2A had a long-standing relationship with its School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee program, even before entering Turnaround status, though the partnership deepened afterwards and it received School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. In 2015–16, the school had a cohort of 16 members, a decrease from 18 members the previous year. In both years, there were two team leaders and a site coordinator, all of whom worked for the grantee program. In addition, the school hired at least eight former AmeriCorps members as teachers to work in the school in recent years, one of whom was interviewed in 2016. The members worked primarily with middle-performing students in small-group intervention blocks.

School 2B's relationship with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee organization began in the 2015–16 school year when it received eight members. The principal reported that the school had not worked with the organization previously.

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25   The focus of the Year 1 interviews was on the partnership with its School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee and members rather than all school-wide strategies. The following analysis is limited mostly to strategies involving School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and may not capture all of School 2A's turnaround strategies.

Exhibit B-2: Case Study at a Glance: (2) Grantee Program #1

Characteristic	Program School 2A	Comparison School 2B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 18 + 2 team leads 2015–16: 16 + 2 team leads	2014–15: 3 2015–16: 8 + 2 team leads
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	8 total: After-school/extended learning: 1 Attendance: 1 Behavior and mentorship: 4 Tutoring: 1 Other: 1	6 total: Tutoring: 2 Mentoring: 2 Professional development: 2
SIG funding	2011–14: $1,279,599	2011–14: $550,387
School level	Elementary school	Elementary school
School enrollment	391	387
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 44,179	Urban / 44,179
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	19% / 28%	19% / 16%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	84%	78%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	0%	0%
Hispanic	1%	0%
Black	98%	99%
Asian	0%	0%
Other	0%	1%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 2A and 2B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Schools 2A and 2B: grades 2–6.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 2A: Program School

Local Context

When School 2A was placed in Turnaround status six years ago, it was the second lowest achieving school in the district and, to facilitate its turnaround plan, was partnered with a dedicated turnaround organization (not the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee). To boost reading and math scores, students received twice as much instructional time in reading and math, in addition to science, social studies, art, and music. Despite improvements in academic performance, all four interviewees (two vice principals and two teachers) explained that the school still faced significant challenges during the 2015–16 school year.

School 2A implemented significant structural change in the 2015–16 school year by separating into a lower and upper elementary school with separate leadership teams (i.e., one overall principal, with vice principals for the lower and upper schools). The lower school served prekindergarten through grade 2, and the upper school served students in grades 3–5. In 2015–16, School 2A's 16 School Turnaround AmeriCorps members were more concentrated in its lower school than its upper school.

Two goals defined School 2A's turnaround plan during 2014–15 and 2015–16: improving its students' reading and math capabilities and engaging the surrounding community. In previous years, School 2A

focused on improving students' behavior. In April 2015, the vice principal reported three main academic goals: to increase math proficiency on state standardized testing, to increase reading proficiency on the Text Reading and Comprehension literacy assessment, and to decrease the percentage of students classified at the lowest performance level, Tier III. In 2015–16, the school maintained its goals but dropped a test used to measure math proficiency. As one teacher explained, School 2A focused more on "sweating the small things" such as family engagement, as well as continuing to emphasize moving its students toward increasing academic proficiency in both reading and math.

School 2A engaged nine partners to help meet students' needs and, over both years, continued to engage in multiple partnerships with outside organizations, including its dedicated turnaround organization and School Turnaround AmeriCorps. External partners other than School Turnaround AmeriCorps provided support services such as access to healthy food, including a program specifically for homeless children, those in transitional housing, and others who are food insecure. Other services provided by partners included parental engagement, youth mentorship, and tutoring.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 2A used three strategies to support its students and staff while in Turnaround status and to increase students' proficiency: (1) behavior management, (2) increasing family engagement, and (3) supporting teachers. The school tried to use its School Turnaround AmeriCorps members strategically to address each of these strategies.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members were "an integral part of our day-to-day academics" serving in varied roles, according to one vice principal. In 2014–15, each member was assigned to work with students in one or more classrooms, as well as with different students in intervention blocks and students with behavior or attendance issues. In 2016, the vice principal reported that members served the same function and in addition were more involved in test administration and progress monitoring than they had been the prior year.

The school matched members to students based on its analysis of student data, matching members with students in the middle tier who needed some support but did not have the greatest needs. In 2014–15, members were matched to classroom teachers based on what one teacher described as a "speed dating" event at the beginning of the year where members and teachers met and rated one another on how strongly they would like to work together. The school placed members at the highest match level between member and teacher ratings (e.g., each rated the other a 4 out of 5). However, in 2015–16, School 2A did not have time to go through the matching process and this resulted in challenges for both members and teachers (see more detail in the **Implementation Conditions and Challenges** section).

Behavioral management

In 2014–15, all the interviewed school staff emphasized that members played a highly valuable role in supporting the school culture. Members used their relationships with students to learn what additional supports they needed, generate ideas about effective strategies to reach them, and broker smoother

> **AmeriCorps Members Effective in Increasing Proficiency**
>
> "I think that a lot of our students thrive in small group teaching: They need the attention, they need … the repeated redirection, their guidance. So I think that students that are able to have those consistent small groups from a Corps member are going to have more gains at the end of the year, both in math and in reading. And that's our goal, right, is to get more kids to be proficient, to get more kids … up through the tiers."
>
> *—Teacher Interview (2016)*

relationships with teachers. Several staff members specifically mentioned that members de-escalated situations when students became upset.

Each member was assigned to a classroom for much of the day where he or she had a small caseload of students pulled out for math and reading groups. Simply by being in the classroom, members were reported to play a key role in providing more adult attention, which helped prevent students from acting out for attention.

In the 2014–15 school year, members at School 2A generally contributed to making the school a "fun" environment for students and were closely involved in the school's behavioral interventions, which were based on the school's values. At the classroom and school levels, members hosted biweekly behavior reward parties that recognized students who exhibited the school's core values. A former member turned teacher interviewed in 2016 noted that the school had fewer behavior issues than it did the previous year and that the members were able to focus more on academics and less on behavior management.

In 2016, one teacher reported that high-performing members had become even more effective in terms of managing behavior. She stated, "[Members provide] in-class support, generally [and] with mentoring specific kids, … relationship building with specific kids. … I would say that they may be a bit stronger at that this year." Even though this teacher reported that member quality was "worse in general" this year, she believed they were "more effective with behavior response."

Increasing family engagement

In 2014–15 and 2015–16, parental engagement was a significant part of School 2A's overall turnaround strategy and was another component of the plan in which School Turnaround AmeriCorps members played a role. The school worked with another outside partner to increase parental engagement, including home visits. Members participated in and led several activities to engage parents, including participating in home visits with teachers. Members were an integral part of Parent Nights throughout the year, at which they discussed children's progress with families. Members also hosted events designed to engage parents in specific school initiatives, including a night where parents and students worked together toward students' home reading goals. By March 2016, one teacher noted that members had organized four after-school events to which they invited parents. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members also ran the after-school program in 2014–15, which a vice principal noted was "a huge help to parents in the community," presumably because the children had supervised activities while parents were still at work. Members also participated in other activities for families, such as monthly distributions of healthy food.

Supporting teachers

In the 2014–15 school year, School Turnaround AmeriCorps members supported teachers by building relationships with students in their classrooms and with parents outside of the classroom. Two vice principals reported that members' work with students on behavioral management supported teachers' efforts in the classroom. By being in classrooms with teachers much of the day, members contributed to reducing the stress levels for students in classroom environments. Students reportedly received more individual attention, acted out less frequently, and members de-escalated disruptions, helping teachers remain calmer and more effective in their teaching.

Likewise, members built relationships with parents, which helped to motivate parents to be more involved in their children's schoolwork and also supported teachers' efforts in the classroom. In 2016, teachers and the vice principal mentioned that high-performing members continued to build strong relationships with students and support teachers. As one teacher explained, "[Members] who are good at

it are really good at [bonding with] tough kids and building that relationship so those kids can be more successful."

In 2015, a vice principal and teacher noted that teachers played key roles in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps partnership as mentors and managers of the member in their classrooms. As one teacher put it, "The [Ameri]Corps member is going to be as effective as the teacher allows him or her to be," highlighting the additional responsibility teachers assume in coaching members, most of whom had no prior classroom experience.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

While School 2A's relationship with the grantee organization appeared to be very strong in the 2014–15 school year, with only minor issues at the administrative level, the 2015–16 school year proved to be more difficult for integrating the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members into the school community and classrooms. Two challenges emerged from the interviews: (1) the quality and retention of members and (2) communication between teachers and members.

The 2015–16 partnership agreement between School 2A and its School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee program outlined the necessities of preparation and training, including an orientation for both the school staff and the grantee team. As designed, the grantee would participate in the school's staff orientation

> **Losing an AmeriCorps Member Is Like Losing a Staff Member**
>
> "I think for the classrooms with [members], where they are present, we will see gains in growth. For the members who did what they were asked, they will. But where they left, we won't see the gains they need to see. We consider them teammates and valuable members of [the] school's staff. It's like losing a staff member in the middle of the year. And you can't pull as many small groups."
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

"during which the [GRANTEE] team will … introduce the teachers and school staff to the [GRANTEE] corps members, build team and share a plan for the year."

In previous years, members and classroom teachers were matched at the "speed dating" event at the beginning of the year. In 2015–16, however, School 2A did not have time to go through the matching process outlined in its partnership agreement, because the school's summer professional development had already happened and the school building was under renovation. As the vice principal explained, "In the past, [the relationship between teacher and member] was a lot stronger. This year, not so much." One teacher echoed this sentiment: "At a teacher level, there wasn't really time to give for that pre-management before the school year starts … because of time and just prioritizing other things like curriculum."

School 2A hoped to reinstitute the speed dating event in the next year, according to the vice principal, as it seemed have been a promising practice that had facilitated strong relationships and understanding between teachers and members.

This issue with matching members and teachers was not the only challenge School 2A's leaders and staff had with the training and timing of members' service. A vice principal also noted in 2014–15 that there was not much coordination between the school and grantee about members' professional development. This made it difficult for the school to know what trainings members were receiving or which school-wide trainings were most appropriate for members. Moreover, members' term of service ended before the end of the school year, which a vice principal described as "jarring for the kids, and it's difficult for teachers who have become reliant on their [Ameri]Corps member."

Challenges with the quality, maturity, and retention of members also intensified in the 2015–16 school year. In 2014–15, one teacher noted the school's heavy reliance on AmeriCorps members, which imposed a real burden on the school when problems arose. "It was a really tough school year," according to another teacher. As that teacher and others mentioned, the 2014–15 AmeriCorps cohort was not as strong as the prior year's, leading to frustration among teachers whose members were less committed and less effective. In 2015–16, School 2A continued to struggle with the quality and retention of its School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. At the beginning of 2015–16, the school received 16 members, 2 fewer than the previous year. The vice principal explained that 18 members "would have been preferred," and the reduction of members was "felt more in third through fifth grades," which received fewer members than the lower grades did.

School 2A also lost three members who quit in the middle of the 2015–16 school year, including one team leader. The vice principal and two teachers discussed the resulting challenges, including the stress put on teachers in whose classrooms the members had worked and the tension the loss created between teachers and remaining members. As one teacher explained, "If [the relationship between teachers and members] was really positive, if we all were united, then we wouldn't have people quitting."

> **Members Quitting**
>
> "I think … the barrier with the program [is] … if a Corps member is assigned to a classroom and then that Corps member quits, what happens to that classroom? ...There's no replacement [Corps member]."
>
> *—Teacher Interview (2016)*

A second teacher discussed in 2015–16 how one member was dismissed by the grantee for being "really disrespectful to people in our building" and another member quit when a family member fell ill. The same teacher believed there was an inherent "accountability" issue with the members that year, and another teacher said they had a "consistency" issue, with some AmeriCorps members arriving late or being in classrooms "but not really doing anything."

School 2B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 2B is located in the same high-poverty area as School 2A and served a similar student population from prekindergarten (as young as 3 years old) through grade 5. At the time of the study, its student population was almost entirely Black (98 percent), with 1 percent of students reporting Hispanic ethnicity and 1 percent of students English learners. The majority of School 2B's students (78 percent) were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch in 2012–13 and that increased to 99 percent in 2013–14. In the 2015–16 school year, School 2B extended its school day from 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. for students in grades 1 and 2 to address some of the academic challenges those students faced. During the extra hour, some teachers from other grades worked in their classrooms as co-interventionists, providing additional support.

Substantial numbers of students experienced growth in their math and reading performance in 2013–14 over 2012–13 (54 percent and 40 percent, respectively).[26] Over the same time, however, student truancy rose (from 5 percent to 9 percent) and student satisfaction decreased (from 90 percent to 82 percent).

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[26]   *Growth* in student performance shows how a student performed relative to other students who started out with the same level of proficiency. This is a measure that can be used to show academic progress even for students who have not yet achieved proficiency or increased their proficiency rating.

Retention of teachers rated "highly effective" also declined from 2012–13 to 2013–14, from 100 percent to 71 percent, according to performance data collected by the district and posted on the school's website.[27]

School 2B had a school-wide emphasis on the arts, and in 2012 it received the *President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround: Arts* designation. It had a diverse set of partners and programs for arts, academic support, and wellness, including an AmeriCorps program.[28] In the 2015–16 school year, the school received 10 AmeriCorps members from the same grantee that served School 2A, a grantee with which the school had not worked previously. School 2B's turnaround plan emphasized seven principles: (1) strong principal leadership, (2) formal and informal teacher evaluation, (3) professional development for teachers through an instructional coach and external partners, (4) transformation of the school culture to focus on increasing student academic performance, (5) visibility of its arts-integration programs, (6) effective use of data, and (7) parental engagement. In the 2015–16 school year, the school dropped its formal attendance goal (while continuing to work toward improving it) in order to prioritize increasing student satisfaction with school.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

Investing in teachers

School 2B relied on internal strategies as well as many partners to provide professional development for its teachers. These included, in both 2014–15 and 2015–16, district- and school-level professional development for teachers and professional development opportunities offered through external consultants and other partners. One vice principal had focused on literacy instruction since 2014–15, and the school added a second vice principal in the 2015–16 school year to focus on mathematics instruction.

In 2015–2016, the school principal cited teacher competency as School 2B's biggest challenge. Consequently, professional development activities for pedagogy in both core subjects and arts-integrated teaching were provided by a number of partners and were closely tailored to the school's standards. External partners included arts organizations that taught teachers how to integrate material from the fine arts into core academic

> **School 2B's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16**
>
> - Hired a second vice principal focused on mathematics
> - Added an extended school day for grades 1 and 2
> - Hired 13 new teachers in 2015
> - Continued to struggle with teacher competency and turnover

subjects. As one teacher who "loves" the approach explained, she learned how to teach students "to read a book by learning how to read a painting." The school also provided ongoing instructional coaching through the vice principal, who continually reviewed data with teachers and, with the help of an external partner, emphasized the importance of flexible small-group strategies to tailor instruction. Stakeholders also reported that in 2015–16, School 2B did not have an art teacher.

Putting school culture first

One of the main tenets of School 2B's turnaround strategies was to focus on improving its school culture. In an interview in 2015, a gym teacher detailed a school-wide program to be implemented in the 2015–16 school-year that had three facets to improve school culture: respect, responsibility, and safety. This

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[27] At the time of this report, 2014–15 data were not available.

[28] In 2014–15, School 2B had a small AmeriCorps presence; it remained eligible to be a comparison school because its number of members (3) was below the study's threshold for making comparisons with the program school, which had 18 members.

teacher explained that he would spend half of his time on school culture improvements and half on his physical education classes in the 2015–16 school year. In the summer of 2015, a school culture and climate team was organized to develop "a really beautiful matrix" that rewarded positive behavior. During the school year, the team met weekly to monitor progress.

Though the same gym teacher was not interviewed in 2016, other teachers reported that School 2B received a perfect score from the district on school culture measures for the 2015–16 school year. Two teachers agreed that their school's "culture has improved a lot this year." One teacher explained that this was in large part due to investments in teachers and cultivating a teaching staff that is "trying to work hard and getting everything that's needed so that these children can succeed."

The principal echoed the school's "huge shift in culture and climate" and explained that one of her biggest lessons learned was to "toot your own horn in the midst of turnaround." She elaborated, "That's probably one of the biggest lessons that I've learned … to really focus and reflect on the successes … so that I can gain the momentum to really tackle the next challenge."

Leveraging partners to improve instruction

Several of School 2B's partners provided additional academic content tailored to the school's instructional standards. In cases reported to be effective by teachers, partners delivered the content in different but complementary ways to supplement teachers' regular classroom materials. In the 2014–15 school year, one partner program, for example, worked with older elementary grades presenting several units throughout the school year, each of which was aligned to specific academic standards. Each unit included a pre- and post-test surrounding an enrichment trip led by the external partner for the students and teacher. Another partner, Reading Corps, an AmeriCorps program with two members that was present both school years, targeted younger grades, and was also commended for its tailored instructional strategies that complemented the school's curriculum.

Interviewed School 2B staff agreed that external partners played large roles in increasing engagement and enthusiasm among both students and parents; the partners' contributions were highly valued. One external partner helped forge connections between parents and the school by communicating the importance of attendance, homework completion, and curriculum standards in student work. Teachers and administrators also believed that students were very excited about most of the programming offered by external partners, especially physical activities, field trips to historic sites or cultural institutions, and Reading Corps (not associated with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program partnering with School 2A).

> **Challenges with AmeriCorps Partner**
>
> "We had a lot of young people [from GRANTEE] that didn't understand the professionalism that's required when you work on a school site and some attitudes, and some definite challenges. … We had three of them quit, I think."
>
> *–Principal Interview (2016)*

Teachers perceived the Reading Corps program as being more effective than a similar academic intervention because the members were present all the time, which allowed them to both build relationships with students and "make a connection between what was going on in the classroom and what they were doing with their intervention." In 2015–16, with the addition of 10 AmeriCorps members from the same grantee partnering with School 2A, School 2B had more AmeriCorps members working in

classrooms and supporting student instruction.[29] However, School 2B had a more complicated relationship with these AmeriCorps members. The principal noted that three of the members were especially effective: "Students really come to them and want to eat lunch with them, want to engage with them, want to be near them, and want to work with them, because they really value and trust them as co-leaders in the classroom." However, not all members performed at that level, and the partnership with the grantee experienced challenges with member retention and quality similar to School 2A's experience in 2015–16.[30]

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

School 2B experienced turnover in its leadership in 2014–15; a new principal arrived in Fall and a vice principal left midway through the school year, which interview respondents noted made the school year challenging. The principal tried, with mixed success, to continue existing partnerships in 2014–15. The vice principal's departure led to other challenges, as her responsibilities then had to be reassigned.

> **Teacher Retention Challenges**
>
> "Change is hard. It's challenging. It's uncomfortable, and … it takes a really determined and reflective person to want to do that kind of work."
>
> –*Principal Interview (2016)*

The principal and a few teachers mentioned teacher turnover had a negative impact on the school in both school years, as did high absenteeism and low morale among some other teachers. The principal explained that there were not many people who could change and had the ability to turnaround a school. However, the she felt "really confident" about most of the 13 new teachers the school hired and expected them to stay at the school in the 2016–17 school year.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

School 2A supported its goal of increasing academic proficiency by building relationships between students and members and having AmeriCorps members support teachers. Interviewed school staff perceived that AmeriCorps members' presence in classrooms, especially with small-group work, continued to help improve students' academic engagement; they hypothesized that this improved engagement would also increase academic proficiency. The previous year, a vice principal and teacher noted that many students showed marked improvement in their performance, particularly in literacy. One teacher commented that "the [members who] have worked with me, their kids grew—whether it was their math or reading interventions. … The kids in the small groups really do learn and benefit."

For School 2B, two teachers and one vice principal expected that classrooms in which members were present all year would see growth in 2015–16. According to two teachers at School 2B, the strategies of investing in teachers and leveraging partners to improve instruction improved academic achievement.

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[29]   These AmeriCorps members were not School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. This additional cohort was provided through the same grantee that had a School Turnaround AmeriCorps grant with School 2A, but members at School 2B were serving in a different AmeriCorps program.

[30]   It is unclear whether there were changes at the grantee level or in its processes that could explain the challenges with members in these two schools. The research team was not able to discuss member quality and retention with a grantee staff member knowledgeable about these schools.

Student socio-emotional health

In 2015, administrators and teachers at School 2A reported that members were very effective at building relationships with students and improving their behavior, and this was another area where School 2A continued to experience gains in 2015–16. Both interviewed teachers commented that they noticed remarkably more behavioral challenges in the classroom when their members were not present. A vice principal noted, however, the school had not done a good job documenting the impact of School Turnaround AmeriCorps on behavior: "I just don't think that anybody's really quantified how that's impacted socio-emotional development." In 2016, one teacher reported that, even with programmatic challenges with member matching, quality, and retention, members had become even better at forming and maintaining strong relationships with "tough" students.

School climate

In the 2014–15 school year, members at School 2A generally contributed to making school a fun environment for students and were closely involved in the school's behavioral interventions. At the classroom and school levels, members hosted biweekly behavior reward parties. Because of members' contributions to building a positive school climate in 2014–15, a former member turned teacher noted that the school had fewer behavior issues than it had previously, and this meant that in 2015–16 members could focus more on academics.

School 2B received a perfect score from its district on school climate measures in the 2014–15 school year, and its investment in teachers created a climate (in the next year) in which teachers were "trying to work hard and getting everything that's needed so that these children can succeed."

School capacity

School 2A's partnership with School Turnaround AmeriCorps increased its capacity for teachers to deliver instruction and for the school to meet the individualized needs of its middle-performing students, via small groups with AmeriCorps members. Since its partnership with its AmeriCorps grantee began (before the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program), School 2A hired at least eight former AmeriCorps members as teachers to work in the school, a testament to the value the school perceived in those members' effectiveness in the classroom.

In comparison, School 2B worked to increase its school capacity by investing in significant professional development for teachers and creating teams to lead reform efforts on school climate. The school also continued to deliver an arts curriculum and arts-focused professional development to integrate arts into its school community and culture.

Case Study 3: Grantee Program #12

Overview

This case study describes two urban elementary schools' efforts to meet their turnaround plan goals during the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years. One school (School 3A) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in diverse activities, while School 3B, which did not have School Turnaround AmeriCorps support, used internal staff and had some external partners engaged in various support activities. This case study is based on a site visit to Schools 3A and 3B in May 2015 and telephone interviews conducted in January and February 2016. During the 2015 visits to both schools, the study team conducted interviews with the principal and two teachers, a teacher focus group with four teachers, and a structured observation of the school environment. For the 2015–16 school year, interviews were conducted with the principal and three teachers at each school. For School 3A, the three teachers interviewed in 2016 were part of the 2015 site visit, although the principal was new. For School 3B, the

principal and two teachers interviewed in 2016 were also interviewed in 2015; the third teacher had not been interviewed previously.

Schools 3A and 3B are in the same city in the western United States, 11 miles apart, and in two separate school districts. School 3A is in an urban district and School 3B is in a dense area within a neighboring suburban district. They serve comparable student populations with similar academic proficiencies in reading and mathematics, racial/ethnic backgrounds (a majority of Hispanic students), and income levels (the vast majority eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch), although School 3B is in a considerably smaller school district. The two schools received significantly different SIG funding amounts; School 3A received nearly $1.5 million more than School 3B.

Exhibit B-3:   Case Study at a Glance: (3) Grantee Program #12

Characteristic	Program School 3A	Comparison School 3B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 4[a] 2015–16: 5	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	4 total Tutoring/academic support: 3 Teacher support: 1	7 total Tutoring/academic support: 2 Teacher support: 3 Community building: 2
SIG funding	2010–13: $2,136,713	2011–14: $760,200
School level	Elementary school	Elementary school
School enrollment	395	384
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 83,377	Urban/Suburban / 10,069
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	41% / 38%	40% / 45%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	85%	91%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	6%	9%
Hispanic	64%	82%
Black	25%	2%
Asian	2%	5%
Other	3%	2%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 3A and 3B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 3A and 3B: average of grades 3, 4, and 5.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] The grantee reported four members, but the school reported having six members in 2014–15. Two members quit the program at some point in 2014–15 but were replaced, which may explain the discrepancy.

School 3A: Program School

Local Context

School 3A entered Turnaround status in 2010 and had a new principal in the 2015–16 school year. The new principal reported that many staff were also new to the school that year. In 2014–15, six School Turnaround AmeriCorps members served in the building, as did a coordinator who split her time between three schools. Two of the original six members left and were replaced early in that year. In the

2015–16 school year, there were five new School Turnaround AmeriCorps members serving at School 3A with no reported turnover. The coordinator continued to split her time among multiple schools.

According to the teachers and principal at School 3A, the student population in general had a high need for socio-emotional support. The school had a full-time counselor and a part-time social worker, yet several staff members commented that the school's limited resources meant it was unable to meet students' socio-emotional needs adequately. In the 2014–15 school year, three teachers expressed frustration with the lack of a district-wide mathematics curriculum, which they noted created additional work and challenges for teachers, such as needing to align the curriculum across multiple grades.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The principal and teachers of School 3A reported using internal capacity to address their school's turnaround goals, as well as drawing on external partners. Stakeholders in 2015 and 2016 discussed the school's use of a school data tracking system to monitor students' progress on various assessments throughout the year. Teachers, administrators, and School Turnaround AmeriCorps and other external partners met regularly to discuss individual students' needs and plan interventions accordingly. Additionally, the principal in the 2014–15 school year explained, because there was a high need for socio-emotional support for students, School 3A hired a full-time counselor and a part-time social worker.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps was one of several external partnerships supporting School 3A in its turnaround efforts in both 2014–15 and 2015–16. These partnerships included a lunchtime reading volunteer program, a philanthropic organization supporting participation in the Accelerated Reader program, and a data consultant who visited the school 8 to 10 times per year. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members served primarily as math tutors and small-group instructors. Teachers commented in 2014–15 that their school would benefit from a literacy tutoring program similar to the School Turnaround AmeriCorps math tutoring that they were already receiving; starting in the 2015–16 school year, the school added a partnership with a literacy tutoring program.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided the same type of math intervention in both years; however, it targeted a different group of students in each year. In 2014–15, members worked primarily with fourth-grade students and a handful of third- and fifth-grade students. Most students were reported to be performing below grade-level. In 2015–16, the principal and teachers explained that they made some changes to their strategies for supporting students below grade-level because the principal and teachers realized they wanted their lowest-performing students to spend most of their time with their classroom teacher. Members instead worked with students from second through fifth grade who were close to or at grade-level in math.

While AmeriCorps members' roles were focused primarily on math tutoring, the principals and teachers commented in both years that the members took on additional responsibilities and activities beyond their academic intervention. These additional roles included relationship building with students and supporting school events.

School 3A's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16

- New principal and majority of staff were new in 2015–16 school year
- Focus of AmeriCorps members shifted from working with students significantly below grade-level to working with students at or close to grade-level
- Greater principal and teacher satisfaction with AmeriCorps members reported in 2015–16

Individualized academic support

One strategy that emerged in the 2015–16 school year under the new principal was ensuring that struggling students spend more time with their classroom teacher rather than being pulled out for small-group sessions

with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and other external partners. The principal explained that this practice allowed for the students at grade-level to receive more individualized and targeted instruction in the small-group tutoring sessions and that it also "frees up the classroom teacher to have time for smaller group instruction with students that struggle the most." The AmeriCorps members and other partners then started working mostly with students at or close to grade-level in math.

Small-group math tutoring

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members focused primarily on math tutoring. All members were assigned small groups of students to meet with every day. In 2014–15, members spent 50 minutes with each small group of students, starting on grade-level material for 10 to 15 minutes and then working with the students on their level, which was often below grade-level. In 2015–16, members met with groups for 50 minutes and spent more time on grade-level material since most students served were already on or close to grade-level in math. Teachers reported that members used many strategies for engaging their students and checking for their understanding, such as games, contests, and exit tickets (a school-wide strategy teachers used to check for student understanding). One teacher in 2015–16 commented that the small-group sessions might be more effective if they used a research-based instruction program rather than district-provided lessons and the members doing their own planning.

Mentoring and relationship building

The principal and teachers commented that members worked hard to build relationships with their students, which they noted helped keep students engaged in their small-group tutoring sessions. Members regularly ate lunch with students, attended school events, and spent time outside their required tutoring time with the students in their caseload.

Staff at School 3A noted that the student population at their school had many socio-emotional needs and not enough school resources to support all of them. In 2014–15, the principal and the school counselor commented that the mentoring provided by the members added to the school's efforts to meet those needs. These sentiments were reiterated in 2015–16. Further, the principal and teachers reported in 2015–16 that members were more cohesively integrated into the school culture and that this led to stronger and more productive relationships between members and their students, as well as between the members and school staff.

> **Key Member Activity: Mentoring and Relationship Building**
>
> "[The members] have a lot of really strong relationships built with students. ... They get to have that personal time with them. A lot of our students come from big families or traumatic home lives. To have someone who is there every day and is consistent with them is huge."
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Two challenges cited by School 3A teachers during the 2014–15 school year were school staff and member collaboration and member support and training. Some teachers perceived members as separate from the rest of the school community. Teachers reported that their contact with members was limited to when members picked up and dropped off students. While members frequently attended school events, some teachers believed that the members could have played a larger role in planning or executing the events. However, teachers reported they did not encounter these same challenges with the group of 2015–16 members. Multiple teachers commented that the members and classroom teachers had formed a strong relationship early on and frequently communicated about student progress, which was mutually beneficial. The principal and teachers were not sure what was behind the 2015–16 group's success in

overcoming some of the prior year's challenges. They speculated it could be that the grantee organization recruited members with more education or tutoring experience.

One challenge reported in both 2014–15 and 2015–16 was the lack of formal progress monitoring of tutoring groups. Apparently, in earlier years, the members assessed their students' progress frequently and shared data and insights with the teachers. The School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee organization discontinued use of the progress monitoring system, which disappointed those teachers who were interviewed, who had found progress monitoring data useful both for assessing the impact of members' tutoring and for providing additional data on their students' math performance. Three teachers in 2014–15 and one teacher in 2015–16 were somewhat hesitant to say that the tutoring definitely had an impact on their students' academic performance, noting they had no data or information to back up such a claim.

Two teachers reported that scheduling group pull-outs was a challenge in 2015–16. One teacher specifically commented that it was sometimes difficult to coordinate the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members' small-group sessions for students who received Special Education services, as those students were pulled out of their classrooms often.

School 3B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 3B had been in Transformation status since 2011. School 3B was a competency-based school, meaning that students were grouped by level rather than age or grade. For example, a student may have been the age appropriate for a third grade class in a typical school, but he or she might be at a range of levels, such as level 2 or 5, depending on how he or she was performing in each subject. The principal reported concern that the competency-based groupings would negatively affect students' scores on standardized tests, as it was possible to have a child appropriate in age for third grade who had never seen third-grade material.

In 2014–15, the principal at School 3B explained that the school was unique in its level of parent engagement. The principal commented that members of the school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) frequently came together to plan school events, participate in parent education classes, and assist in after-school activities. However, teachers in 2015–16 commented that parent engagement had decreased overall from the previous year.

In 2015–16, the principal reported that changes were made to the unified improvement plan that guided the school in its goals for the year; he or she also observed that the state's departments of Education and Justice had

> **School 3B's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16**
>
> - Structural changes to the school likely to take place in the next school year due to increased visits and attention from the state departments of Education and Justice
> - Two after-school tutoring programs were not continued in the 2015–16 school year
> - A continued focus on internal staff development rather than on engaging external partners
> - Overall decrease in the level of parent engagement

been more heavily involved in the school activities that year. The school had frequent visits from both agencies. The principal and one teacher commented that changes for the next school year would likely be made at the school level as a result of these visits, but neither interviewee elaborated further.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 3B had several partnerships with external organizations, some of which supported the school in addressing its turnaround goals. In 2014–15, these partnerships included a philanthropic organization

that funded an off-site field trip and learning experience, a local business that hosted a day-long educational event, the city's Museum of Science, a data coach, and two 10-week after-school tutoring programs, as well as the active PTO mentioned above. The data coach and both after-school tutoring programs were not continued in the 2015–16 school year. The other organizations continued their involvement, though one teacher reported the PTO was not as active in the school community that year.

School 3B's main academic focus was on students' literacy skills. Math interventions or supports were rarely discussed in the interviews from either year. The school's external partners and the teacher professional development opportunities discussed in the interviews seemed to primarily be focused on supporting students' literacy skill growth. Literacy coaches from the state Department of Education began working about half-time in School 3B during the 2015–16 school year.

Teacher professional development

In both 2014–15 and 2015–16, the principal and teachers reported that a primary strategy for addressing school turnaround goals was increasing professional development opportunities for teachers. In the 2014–15 interviews, four of six teachers stated that building the capacity of school staff, rather than extensively involving external partners, was the best method for supporting their students' needs. The principal reported in the 2016 interview that additional time was set aside for teacher professional development, including more non-contact days with students, sending teachers to a week-long literacy training, and weekly teacher meetings to increase teacher collaboration. The principal and teachers all indicated that the literacy coaches had been very beneficial to helping them meet their students' needs. One teacher commented that the coach from the state Department of Education "has made a great impact on some teachers who need a lot of guidance. Teachers are getting more feedback and support through her."

> **Key Turnaround Strategy: Internal Staff Capacity Building**
>
> "[Our focus is on] helping teachers to collaborate and work together to improve classroom practices, because no matter how many interventionists you have, it really comes down to the instruction the general education teacher is providing."
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

External partnership support

While the main turnaround strategy School 3B used was building internal staff capacity, it used external partnership support as a secondary strategy. In 2014–2015, the school partnered with two tutoring companies; the companies worked with students from level 1 (first-grade material) to level 5 (fifth-grade material) for 10 weeks of the school year. Each tutoring company provided reading intervention tutoring twice per week for the 10-week period. The tutors of Company One were all teachers at School 3B who had received training and were additionally compensated to tutor students in the reading intervention after school. Company Two employed some teachers and staff from School 3B but mostly hired its own part-time tutors. Company Two trained teachers and the external tutors on the program, which followed a phonics-based method that teachers said was very prescribed and detailed. Neither after-school tutoring program was continued in the 2015–16 school year. The principal attributed the discontinuation to a lack of funding, but a few teachers had commented in 2014–15 that the programs were not effective.

In both the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years, School 3B invited a local business to the school for a day-long event in which employees conducted lessons and activities based in their company's industry. In a similar experience, the whole school attended the field trip to the local Museum of Science, and students were engaged in different hands-on science activities throughout the day.

School 3B formed a partnership with a data coach who visited the school five times each year. The coach met with teachers individually to discuss student data and how to use the data to better target academic interventions.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Staff at School 3B reported in 2014–15 that some of the interventions and teacher professional development opportunities were too short to have a meaningful impact. Specifically, teachers reported that the literacy data coaching sessions could have been more effective if staff had more time to work with the consultant. One teacher mentioned that earlier the school had had a dedicated literacy consultant whom teachers were able to meet with consistently, as opposed to the data consultant, who was available only a few times over the year. The teachers described the support of the full-time literacy consultant as extremely helpful to them and ultimately very beneficial to students. Some teachers questioned how much impact a 10-week program from a tutoring company or one-day event from a local business could achieve. While the tutoring programs did not continue in the 2015–16 school year, the school's literacy coaches from the state Department of Education were more available to the teachers of School 3B.

Stakeholders at School 3B reported encountering various challenges in their efforts to meet school turnaround goals, including issues with students' low English proficiency and high staff turnover. The principal and one teacher both highlighted the difficulties the school faced because of the large amount of testing in the 2015–16 school year, commenting that time spent on testing was time lost for instruction. The principal noted, "Sometimes [as a result of so much testing] it feels like you really only have half of the year to really put in place those solid foundations with students. That has really been a challenge. … How do we become faster and more efficient teachers?"

One teacher described an apparent lack of communication between teachers and the administration about the school's improvement plan. In previous years, she said teachers had been more involved, but in the 2015–16 year, the principal wrote most of the plan without them.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Overall, School 3A respondents reported the school was moving in the right direction. In particular, the principal was hopeful that some of the changes that had been made to staffing and the school's approach to turnaround efforts would prove successful in the future.

In comparison, the stakeholders interviewed at School 3B said that many changes were implemented in the 2015–16 school year. The principal expressed optimism that their improvement efforts would be successful, but all respondents commented on the increased visits from the state Departments of Justice and Education, and speculated that significant changes would occur in the upcoming school year as a result.

Student academic achievement

While the strategies School 3A and School 3B used to support student academic achievement were different, their state assessment academic proficiency scores from the 2013–14 school year were similar (see Exhibit B-3). Staff from both schools also provided anecdotal evidence that they believed their strategies for addressing their turnaround goals were at least somewhat successful.

In both the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years, the stakeholders at School 3A said they believed the academic support AmeriCorps members provided was beneficial to students' academic performance. However, a few teachers in 2014–15 and one teacher in 2015–16 reported that lack of formal progress

monitoring limited their ability to attribute members' contributions to any improvements in students' academic performance.

The principal and teachers at School 3A reported feeling hopeful that their new strategy of directing School Turnaround AmeriCorps support to the students performing close to or at grade-level in math and letting classroom teachers focus on struggling students would be beneficial to both groups of students. However, the interviews were conducted too early in the year to draw conclusions about the academic impact of that practice. One teacher mentioned that she believed their students were improving academically and specifically mentioned that the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members were "definitely an integral part of that."

The principal and teachers of School 3B echoed those sentiments on their efforts to affect academic achievement. Teacher professional development and coaching were consistently cited as the most effective strategies for improving students' academic performance. One teacher reported that she felt the practice was helping and that "with everybody getting on the same page … and the same training, it's going to create sustainability."

Student socio-emotional health

While affecting students' socio-emotional health was not one of the formal activities of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members at School 3A, it was mentioned by all stakeholders as one area in which members had an impact. The principals and teachers interviewed reported that in both school years, members went above and beyond their role as academic tutors to form relationships with their students and spend time with them outside of their tutoring sessions. One teacher said, "[The School Turnaround AmeriCorps members] work as mentors to students. They take time … to establish positive relationships. They are really so much more than just math instructors."

Supporting students' socio-emotional health was not discussed by staff from School 3B in the 2014–15 and 2015–16 interviews.

School climate

Stakeholders at School 3A reported that the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members helped to create a positive school climate. One teacher said in her 2014–15 interview that the members' consistency and positive attitudes contributed to creating a healthy and productive school culture. Another teacher commented in 2015–16 that the members had "a lot of conversations with the students on an individual level around goal setting. This helps a lot with [building our] school culture."

The principal and teachers of School 3B reported that some external partnerships positively influenced their school culture. In the 2014–15 school year, one teacher mentioned that she believed that the outside tutoring companies positively contributed to the school's culture because they added to efforts to empower the school's students. However, neither company provided tutoring in 2015–16. Another teacher highlighted the effect of the partnership with the local business that hosted the day-long event at the school. She said that while the event was held only one day during the school year, having "one unified day where everyone is doing the same thing" created positive energy in the school. However, both of these partnerships offered single-day events, and teachers commented that such short-term events probably had relatively small effects.

School capacity

Stakeholders at School 3A reported that the small-group tutoring and mentorship that the AmeriCorps members engaged in enhanced the school's capacity to meet the academic and socio-emotional needs of its students. One teacher specifically said in the 2015–16 interview that the members were "completely

full-fledged members of the school community. At a small school like this where we have a very small staff, there are only 10 grade-level teachers in the building … and [the members' work] is extremely important." The principal also discussed in his interview that shifting members to work with students near or at grade-level (as opposed to those struggling most) allowed the school to increase its capacity to meet students' individual academic needs.

Four School 3B stakeholders in 2014–15 and two in 2015–16 conveyed a commitment to building their school's capacity through investing resources in the professional growth of its staff. The principal and one teacher highlighted the positive impact of the coaching and other professional development opportunities the staff engaged in during the 2015–16 school year.

Case Study 4: Grantee Program #13

Information for a case study of the grantee program #13 was collected in Year 1 but not in Year 2 because struggles by the grantee with grant management issues made participation in the study in Year 2 not feasible. Thus only Year 1 results for the grantee program #13 from the Year 1 Final Report are provided in this section. In Year 2, the grantee program #13 was replaced with grantee organization #5, whose Year 2 results are reported in Case Study #13 later in this appendix.

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes two urban high schools' efforts to meet their turnaround plan goals during the 2014–15 school year, focusing specifically on the roles of AmeriCorps members and/or other volunteers, external support staff, and other external partners that helped to support school turnaround activities. One of the schools (School 4A) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in a range of activities, while School 4B (which did not have School Turnaround AmeriCorps resources) had small volunteer efforts that were not able to fill School B's needs. In School 4A, one principal, one assistant principal, and two guidance counselors were interviewed. In School 4B, the principal and three teachers were interviewed. All interviews were conducted by telephone. Findings from the grantee staff program (#13) were used to supplement findings on supervision.

Schools 4A and 4B are high schools located in different urban districts a little than an hour apart in the Midwest. The two schools served generally comparable student populations with similar racial/ethnic backgrounds (almost 100 percent Black) and income levels (85 percent eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch). As of the 2014–15 school year, School 4B was no longer receiving Title I funding, as the district made multiple funding cuts.

Exhibit B-4: Case Study at a Glance: (4) Grantee Program #13

Characteristic	School 4A	School 4B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 4	2014–15: 0
SIG funding	2009–2014: $5,788,125	2009-2014: $1,034,512
School level	High school	High school
School enrollment	724	975
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 8,625	Urban / 8,485
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	86%	82%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	0.1%	6.0%
Hispanic	0.1%	2.0%
Black	97.2%	89.0%
Asian	2.2%	0.0%
Other	0.0%	3.0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Note that proficiency data refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Schools 4A and 4B: awarded to the school.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 4A: Program School

Local Context

School 4A began receiving SIG funding in 2001 and became a college readiness school at the beginning of the 2014–15 school year. Its new principal and assistant principal had been the driving forces behind the college readiness agenda. According to the principal, the school had a high percentage of students at risk of having academic challenges and attendance problems. Creating a college-going culture at the school was a major focus of School 4A's turnaround efforts and of the initiative served by AmeriCorps members.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps was one of several partnerships supporting School 4A; it provided college readiness and mentoring supports to the school and its students. In 2014–15, four members began the year in the building, although due to retention issues, only one remained by Spring 2015. The program's on-site coordinator, one of School 4A's guidance counselors, supported the members in providing college readiness and parent engagement activities. School 4A also had a new partnership with an organization that provided coaching and training for teachers, an existing partnership with a local college for tutoring, and an existing partnership with another AmeriCorps program that placed teachers in low-income schools.

College readiness was the major focus of School 4A's AmeriCorps program. One member was assigned to each grade, and each grade had a specific set of focus areas. In 12th grade, the focus was on financial aid literacy, college applications and essays, and scholarship completion. In 11th grade, the focus was on the ACT, resume writing, and job readiness. For 10th grade, the focus was on school and career awareness, and 9th grade focused on understanding high school and the high school mindset. All members were assigned caseloads of students based on which grade they were in; however, not all students received a member's assistance. No one interviewed, including the coordinator, seemed to understand how members were assigned their caseloads, which suggests that assignment occurred outside the school.

Some members offered other activities and supports for parent engagement. At least one member provided workshops for parents on college readiness, called parents at home to check in on their child's

progress, and helped to establish a support room for parents where they could ask questions and find resources.

Effective Strategies and Promising Practices for Partners

School 4A administrators and staff overall perceived members to be effective in the following areas.

Student mentorship and motivation

The principal, assistant principal, and both guidance counselors spoke about the importance of member relationships with students. Both guidance counselors commented that having another positive adult role model available to students was crucial for their success. The on-site coordinator/guidance counselor stressed as particularly important members' ability to motivate students and beneficially affect attendance and academics. The assistant principal noted that he had heard positive feedback about members from students, who seemed enthusiastic about working with them.

College readiness and climate

Interviewees also commented on members' positive impact on students' college readiness and school climate. One guidance counselor indicated that members could speak the same language and convey the same college readiness mindset that School 4A's staff did and that this alone contributed to School 4A's culture.

Parent engagement

Another perceived benefit came from member responsibilities related to engaging parents by conducting workshops about college readiness, calling parents at home to check in on their child's progress, and helping establish a support room parents could visit to ask questions and find resources. Member relations with parents, in some cases, smoothed teacher-parent relations. One guidance counselor noted, "If a teacher has been contacting a student [at home] forever and they are not able to get through, an AmeriCorps member can say, 'Hey, well, I talked to that parent. Let me call,' and use that connection to a teacher's advantage."

Implementation Conditions and Challenges in Working with Partners

Although members were perceived to have expanded the school's capacity in some important areas, school leadership and staff acknowledged some implementation challenges.

School staff and member collaboration

School staff and member collaboration was minimal and was limited to the members' on-site coordinator, who was the only interviewee who could provide a full account of members' activities. Another guidance counselor and the assistant principal reported knowing very little about the program. No teachers were interviewed because they knew so little about the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

All three interviewed staff members explained that there was a wide disconnect between teachers and members, which was problematic for the program. The assistant principal believed that member training should have included "spending time with teachers" and "knowing what type of support teachers need." For example, when members entered a classroom to present a college readiness workshop, their workshop "wasn't necessarily communicated to the teachers" beforehand. As a result, teachers felt members interrupted their classes.

Member roles and visibility

Interviews highlighted the lack of clarity within the school about members' roles and that members did not maintain a strong, visible presence on-site. As one guidance counselor noted, teachers were generally

unaware of exactly what members were there to do and apparently had not been provided updates on student progress after members began working with them. The principal noted the program also had issues with "accessibility," explaining that the program served multiple schools, which limited its ability to focus and attend to School 4A's needs specifically. As a result, "there [were] certain things that still fall through the cracks." As one guidance counselor explained, "I think it would have been helpful to have had them more present in the building … just more visible throughout the building." The same guidance counselor also wished that members were able to more widely disseminate the college readiness culture, explaining that she thought the hallways could have used some "boards or posters or some kind of information throughout the building" that highlighted support systems and student successes.

Member-school alignment

All three interviewed staff members reported that the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program was not well integrated into School 4A's operations and goals. The assistant principal (new to the role in 2014–15), explained that he was told, "these people are going to be in your building, in this room, doing X, Y, and Z, rather than here's a partnership that we have." His perception was corroborated by the guidance counselors; they described the program as not being integrated into the school. Instead, their perception was that the program operated as a separate entity. The assistant principal described the program as "self-serving" instead of pitching in when the school needed all hands on deck. The counselor who acted as on-site coordinator noted in hindsight that it would have been helpful to have had an orientation for members and guidance counselors at the start of the school year to align goals and priorities. The counselor recommended that members communicate with their school's principal early in the year to specifically tailor their plans and to help School 4A where it needs it the most. She recommended that they create a calendar "to structure them in the building" and to increase member-school alignment.

Member retention

The principal, assistant principal, and one of the guidance counselors characterized member retention as a challenge and a disappointment, reflecting the departure of three of four members before the school year's end. The principal explained that with such low wages there is no "incentive to retain or stay or to matriculate with the students," so at least one member left to pursue another opportunity. Members' unanticipated exits from the school meant that the school had to adjust midstream to continue its college readiness programming absent the level of support it had been promised. In an ideal world, the principal would have had members start working with students in the ninth grade and continue to work with them as they progressed through high school. The grantee, in response to members leaving midyear, explained that they asked the remaining members either to pick up another grade or to work together to service all grades.

On-site coordinator

While school staff and administrators focused on the issue of member retention, grantee staff also mentioned that they struggled (across all their partner schools) with retention of on-site coordinators because of turnover in school faculty, specifically guidance counselors. Grantee staff noted that if a site coordinator decided to leave, they worked with the principal to identify someone else; if no one else took the position, the principal sometimes had to take on that role and responsibility.

Relationships with students

While their relationships with students were listed as one of the members' strengths, the supervising guidance counselor also noted that it took time for members to build relationships with students. She explained that members' training taught them certain strategies that did not apply to all students and "saying hello, hi, my name is this, may not develop that relationship," so members needed to be more

creative and persistent. However, once the coordinator provided relationship-building supports to members, they were able to effectively implement those strategies with students.

School 4B: Comparison School

Local Context

According to School 4B's principal and staff, School 4B faced multiple challenges stemming from a high percentage of at-risk students, an impoverished population, and a district in considerable debt. School 4B had suffered from recent and repeated funding cuts and high staff turnover. As one teacher noted, "We service probably the most oppressed, marginalized kids in the city. And with that comes everything else."

With so much district debt, School 4B had struggled with its transformation school status. As the principal explained, "They're doing some things that transformational schools do, but they have no resources to back it." The school struggled with staff turnover, which adversely affected its capacity to carry out turnaround plans and activities. Safety was another concern that negatively affected the school's capacity to attract and retain volunteers. On the day of the interview with one teacher, for example, School 4B was still reeling from a riot and three resulting fights that occurred on school property the day before.

The school's challenges were compounded by the district's elimination of Title I funding for all of its high schools in 2014–15, which meant School 4B lost its behavioral specialist and lost some of its security guards. One teacher noted that even if people wanted to volunteer and support the school, the school did not offer a safe environment for them. Morale was also an issue, as teachers typically worked for seven hours each day without a break. Severe negative impacts from funding cuts as reported by the principal and teachers, however, meant that the funding would be restored for the 2015–16 school year.

Partnership strategies

In spite of these challenges, there were multiple volunteer organizations and programs at School 4B, including an after-school tutoring program, a meditation program, a student-parent exchange program with another high school, and partnerships with local colleges that supported students in math and, in one case, college readiness. Volunteers ranged from community members to members of religious organizations, from parents to security guards and a former principal. All four interview respondents (three staff members and the principal), however, struggled to name the different organizations and could not recall whether given partners were active or had withdrawn from the building.

Challenges with partnerships

Staff members disagreed about whether the multitude of programs and volunteers were beneficial or detrimental. One observed, "Any program that you can get in to help students prepare them to improve their academic performance or to help them move onto college or if it's just to help them at being a better person and citizen in the community, any of those programs are good. I think all schools could use any program like that." Another commented that having multiple organizations in the building was counterproductive, because the school had no plan about how to use the partners or volunteers. A third wished there were more tutoring, parental engagement, and in-classroom support services.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

School 4A respondents perceived School Turnaround AmeriCorps as contributing to success in meeting key school turnaround outcomes. At School 4B, staff expressed hopelessness about the school and its students and deep concern about having insufficient numbers of teachers, interventionists, parent facilitators, and security advocates, as well as inadequate supplies.

Socio-emotional support

At School 4A, the principal and guidance counselors described the School Turnaround members' main contribution as on the socio-emotional front, through building relationships with students and motivating students to be engaged in school.

College readiness and school climate

School 4A's staff observed that members contributed to fostering a strong college readiness climate. Although they also commented that the members (or the program) could have done more to advertise and communicate about their mission, school staff concluded that members' presence in School 4A enhanced the school's college readiness environment.

Parental engagement

School leaders and staff at School 4A perceived members to be helpful in engaging parents by including them in workshops and communicating with them about available resources.

At School 4B, staff noted a desperate need for more parent engagement, explaining that the school did not have a Parent Teacher Association nor did it have an effective way or program to assist with engagement. As one staff member concluded, the changes in School 4B's city had taken the school from a "model for community schools" to its current struggles to provide services and safety:

It used to be a community. We used to be the model for community schools for the nation. You know, I mean, there were people that looked at us, that looked at our district on a national platform as being what you should do with community schools. And I think that if we went back to things to engage our community, after-school programs that supported not just kids but parents as well and adults … I think that we would, we would go really far toward improving our district.

This teacher explained that once factories and other employers left their city, jobs left with them, as well as the community grants and education opportunities they provided. The same teacher, who had been teaching in the district for 12 years and lived in the community, explained that "this year has been the most dysfunctional year and place that I've ever worked."

Case Study 5: Grantee Program #8

Overview

This case study describes the efforts of two rural high schools in the Southeast to meet their turnaround plan goals during 2014–15 and 2015–16. School 5A (the program school) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in a range of activities, while School 5B (the comparison school, which did not have School Turnaround AmeriCorps resources) incentivized teachers to provide additional academic supports. Data sources included site visits during the 2014–15 school year—including principal and teacher interviews, a teacher focus group, and structured observations of the school environments—and phone interviews during the 2015–16 school year. During 2015–16, follow-up interviews were conducted with principals and teachers at both schools and with the grantee of the program school.

Both School 5A and 5B had predominantly White student populations (97 percent and 99 percent, respectively) and approximately the same proportion were eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch (FRPL) 62 percent and 58 percent). Students' academic proficiency levels varied across ELA and math in both schools, although in the opposite directions: 11 and 43 percent were proficient in ELA and math for School 5A, and 59 and 16 percent in ELA and math for School 5B. Between 2010 and 2013, School 5B received almost four times the SIG funding ($1,324,949) of School 5A ($308,417).

School 5A had 24 AmeriCorps members in 2014–15; however, the number decreased to 14 in 2015–16 due to retention challenges. The members primarily worked on mentoring and building relationships with students, monitoring attendance, and promoting a college and career readiness culture at the school. School 5B did not have any School Turnaround AmeriCorps members or other external partners, although two retired teachers worked at the school part-time to support student learning during the school day.

Exhibit B-5: Case Study at a Glance: (5) Grantee Program #8

Characteristic	Program School 5A	Comparison School 5B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 24 2015–16: 15[a]	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	None	None
SIG funding	2010–13: $308,417	2010–13: $1,324,949
School level	High school	High school
School enrollment	874	602
District urbanicity / enrollment	Town / 4,538	Town / 2,525
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	43% / 11%	59% / 16%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	62%	58%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	97%	99%
Hispanic	1%	0%
Black	2%	1%
Asian	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 5A and 5B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 5A and 5B: reflect end-of-course assessments ("proficient or above").

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] The principal and grantee reported a slightly different breakdown of the number of AmeriCorps members serving in the school in 2015–16. The grantee reported 14 member positions at School 5A, while the principal reported having a total of 15 members at the time of the interview.

School 5A: Program School

Local Context

The local community for School 5A was described as poor by both the principal and teachers. The area did not have a major industry. Although the school was close to a city, two teachers noted that some students lacked phone and internet access. A general concern echoed by the teachers and the principal was that students were not exposed to opportunities that might be available to them outside their local area. Interviews in the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years revealed that students typically remained in the local

> **Local Context**
>
> "Our students don't see any economic sustainability in our area, so it's really hard for them to understand the need for education. That's a major issue that we face."
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

area after high school rather than seek college or employment opportunities elsewhere.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 5A used multiple strategies to support its school turnaround efforts in both 2014–15 and 2015–16. Members supported turnaround at the school through mentoring and building trusting relationships with students, monitoring student attendance, and promoting a college and career readiness culture. School staff also used individualized learning plans and worked closely with student data to continuously assess student progress and improvement.

Mentoring and building trusting relationships with students

One major focus of School 5A's AmeriCorps members was mentoring. During 2014–15, all members were assigned caseloads of students with whom they met regularly, sometimes even pulling students out of class for one-on-one meetings. During the follow-up interviews in 2016, the principal stated that instead of pulling students out of class that year, members were placed in pathway classes, such as engineering and ROTC, where they worked with students in their caseloads in class on a daily basis. The principal noted that because students were more engaged in pathway classes than they were in core subject classes such as math and science, members could engage students more deeply in content areas in which they had shown interest. Also because students had these classes daily, members saw the students regularly.

> **School 5A's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16**
>
> - Struggled to recruit members, dropping from 24 to15
> - During 2015–16, members supported students in pathway classes instead of pulling them out of class for one-on-one mentoring
> - Communication of member roles and responsibilities at the school remained an issue for some teachers during 2015–16
> - Monitoring attendance and promoting college and career readiness continued to be the major focus in 2015–16

The change from one-on-one mentoring to in-class mentoring during 2015–16 reportedly provided members with more opportunity to build trusting relationships with students. Commenting on the changes, one teacher mentioned "the experiences from last year to this year are night and day." While working closely with a member in class that year, the teacher witnessed the member growing closer to the students in the class and become someone with whom students were comfortable sharing questions or concerns. Assisting in pathway classes enabled the members to form more personal connections with students, so much so that the students referred to the members individually by name rather than collectively as the AmeriCorps members.

Monitoring student attendance

Perhaps members' most important role in School 5A during both years was to monitor student attendance. Chronic absenteeism was a problem at School 5A. The grantee mentioned that part of the problem was due to weather-related school cancelations in winter when roads, particularly the back roads, made it difficult to travel. This coupled with flu outbreaks led students to miss a lot of school.

> **School Attendance**
>
> "So we've had a lot of low school days, and any time school is cancelled, the message gets out there that it's not so important. It's not explicit, but it's the belief system."
>
> *–Grantee Interview (2015)*

During the 2015–16 year, the grantee incorporated several strategies to improve student attendance monitoring. The members participated in a training sponsored by the National Attendance Works group, which helped them track and analyze data more effectively around chronic absenteeism. These workshops inspired the program to organize attendance committees at schools to help members develop

ideas to increase student attendance. These strategies focused on building better connections with students, which included greeting students in the hallway or expressing gratitude that they attended school that day. These simple strategies, as reported by the grantee, had a significant impact on student attendance.

The members also tracked student absences, called parents when students were not in school, and helped students make up any work they missed while they were out. One teacher noted that the support members provided with attendance was effective. Describing his experience with the member in his classroom, he said, "Students are putting more emphasis on being here, and you know just someone there outside of myself that has conversations with the students about their work, their performance in class, their coming to class [and] being at school, that's been the biggest thing."

Promoting a college and career readiness culture

Both the principal and teachers at School 5A reported that students resided in communities and homes where they were not expected to attend college or succeed academically. Most would be the first in their family to attend college. The principal and teachers perceived that another major contribution by the members was inspiring students to attend college. In 2014–15, members conducted "mission transition trips" with students, which provided students the opportunity to visit college campuses and

> **Promoting a College and Career Readiness Culture**
>
> "Some of the students that I have in [class] are students [whose] parents didn't go to college. They're not necessarily on the college track. They need that little extra push and [the member] has been good about that."
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

learn about programs outside of the immediate geographic area. During 2015–16, the members did not offer the mission transition trips; instead they worked to inform students in their pathway classes of the different opportunities available to them within the particular fields about which students expressed interest. One teacher described a member in his classroom collecting information on different college majors and working with students to help them learn about the different programs that might be available to them in college. According to the principal and one of the teachers, the members' presence at the school had been instrumental in inspiring and motivating students to think about college and postsecondary careers.

Using Individual Learning Plans

One of School 5A's turnaround goals was to ensure that its students were college and career ready. In an effort to plan and track each student's progress toward graduation and postsecondary success, the school used Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for all students. Teachers and members worked with students to assess their goals as they transitioned into high school. They made sure students met the goals set in their ILPs and were on track to graduate and plan their lives beyond high school.

Using data to analyze student progress

During both school years, the principal stressed the need to meet students where they were, and tailor support to each student's specific target areas. Teachers in School 5A reported they were constantly discussing the school's turnaround process in their PLC meetings. They shared data and progress toward meeting the school's achievement goals. Specifically, teachers looked at data and talked about students who were not achieving, why, and what they could do to improve students' performance.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

School 5A faced three challenges in implementing the program and incorporating members into the school culture and operations, including: 1) recruiting and retention, 2) member roles and focus, and 3) hiring an on-site coordinator.

Recruiting and retention

School 5A experienced difficulties with School Turnaround AmeriCorps member recruitment and retention and was not able to reach full capacity. In 2014–15, it started with 24 members. The principal reported that the school had difficulties either because members had to be let go or because they left for other jobs. During the 2015–16 year, however, School 5A had only 15 members and was in the process of recruiting additional ones. These challenges with member recruitment made it more difficult for students to bond with the members. The 15 members in 2015–16 had bigger caseloads, about 60 students each, compared with 35 students each for the 24 members in the previous year. The principal expressed concerns that the decrease in members led to less frequent interactions between the members and their students, minimizing opportunities for the members to build meaningful relationships with them.

Member roles and focus

During both years, teachers expressed confusion about the roles and responsibilities of members at the school. Two teachers who taught math and science reported that they vaguely understood that members were supposed to assist with attendance, but were unsure about members' specific responsibilities within this task. In both years, they indicated having had little to no interaction with the members and not being informed about member roles and responsibilities. However, one teacher teaching a pathway courses (engineering) was more familiar with members' responsibilities in the school and in classrooms, since he worked directly with members in his classroom daily.

Hiring on-site coordinators

Two challenges emerged from the grantee interview during 2014–15 about the lack of a full-time on-site structure to monitor members and to help communicate with school staff on their behalf. One, the Project Director oversaw members at two schools served by the grantee, including School 5A, and traveled extensively between both schools. However, teachers in 2014–15 reported they were unable to communicate regularly with him since they were unaware of his schedule. Two, the grantee arranged for school staff to help oversee AmeriCorps members at School 5A. However, school staff were not able to focus on their primary job at the school and also effectively supervise the members. To address these challenges, in 2015–16, the grantee employed a school service coordinator as the on-site coordinator at two of three schools (School 5A included). The on-site coordinator worked at the school at least four days a week. As the grantee described, "That's made a big impact, making sure that what is supposed to be happening is happening."

School 5B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 5B is located in a rural setting. Similar to School 5A, the school encountered disadvantages because of its rural location. For instance, some students had to travel significant distances from home and could not stay for after-school activities or extended-learning-time programming. While the school had struggled with massive population decline in the past, the student population had dramatically increased by 2014–15.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 5B recently exited Persistently Low Achieving (PLA) status and was continuing to find ways to maintain and improve its recent achievement. Four key strategies used to support the school's turnaround efforts are discussed below.

Increasing academic support

In both 2014–15 and 2015–16, School 5B offered supplemental tutoring to students through its own staff who put in additional hours, as well as by having retired teachers come into the school. The school administration also offered an extended tutoring program (called Extended School Services, or ESS) in which regular teachers tutored students who were referred or opted to participate for an hour or two per week in core subject areas in which students needed help. Teachers applied to be part of the tutoring program and, if selected, were compensated with stipends. Teachers tutored in the same general subject area in which they taught, with one tutor each for reading, math, history, and science.

The school also had a Daytime Waiver program during both years studied, which provided students additional support in math and reading. The program was run by two retired teachers who were in the school 10 hours a week during the regular school day. Through the program, students identified as falling behind were pulled out of the classroom in small groups and received targeted tutoring instead of regular classroom instruction, with the goal of improving their academic proficiency. The school principal indicated that they also added "intersession classes" at the end of the school year (i.e., summer) to provide struggling students with increased academic support in 2015–16.

Using data to monitor student performance

More frequently accessing and using data—such as formative and summative assessments and grades—was critical in helping School 5B to improve academic achievement in 2015–16. The school principal mentioned in 2016 that teachers worked in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze common assessments and monitor student performance on classroom assignments. Another teacher indicated that they spent considerable time tracking student progress to determine whether additional support was needed.

> **Using Data to Monitor Student Performance**
>
> "Well, it's added a whole lot more work, a whole lot more work. We now do data tracking of our students individually as to where they are, and achievement-wise, and where they need to be. We have all that on Excel spreadsheets. We track them, we call them by name, we take ownership of them and of their progress."
>
> *—Teacher Interview (2016)*

Providing opportunities for teacher professional development

During the 2015–16 school year, the school principal indicated that they incorporated more professional development opportunities for teachers to receive ongoing training throughout the year. Some professional development trainings focused on helping teachers access and use technology such as the internet and bridge gaps in student learning. Moreover, the school reorganized their professional development meetings. They developed the School Instructional Leadership Team (SILT), which consisted of a lead teacher from each department. SILT teachers not only participated in professional development meetings, but also met at least once a week with the other teachers within their departments. Teachers credited the school's success in analyzing and communicating student data and performance to their Professional Learning Communities meetings.

Aligning curricula across grades in mathematics

The school principal indicated that the district had purchased new math textbooks for students. As the principal described in the 2015–16 interview, "Everybody across the district is aligned with what they are teaching." This is especially critical in coordinating with feeder schools. By using similar textbooks, the district and schools aligned the curriculum to ensure that students were adequately prepared once they entered high school.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Respondents reported two main challenges to address turnaround goals: (1) sustaining a positive school climate and (2) retaining teachers.

Sustaining a positive school culture

One of the biggest factors that helped School 5B address its turnaround goals, particularly in promoting a college-ready school environment, involved changes to school culture. A central component of its turnaround plan had involved increasing school staff expectations of student performance given cultural expectations living in a rural area or small community. However, as one teacher described, changing students' perceptions of themselves and their expectations was challenging.

> **Sustaining a Positive School Culture**
>
> "Since we came out of PLA status, I think last year we finally found out what worked for our building, and we utilized that, and we're continuing to do that… And I think the challenging thing is that we're trying to change the way students perceive themselves"
>
> *–Teacher Interview (2016)*

Teacher retention

The school principal reported that teacher turnover was a challenge. In previous years, they had difficulty retaining teachers. They hired a number of new teachers to address staff capacity challenges, and as a result they were compelled to spend considerable time each year retraining teachers and staff. Despite these challenges, the principal remained optimistic: "I think [in the past two years] we've got teachers who are here to stay."

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

Interviews with the principal, teachers, and the grantee staff at School 5A in both years suggested that members' main contributions were in helping students become more college and career ready. Members at School 5A exposed students to college environments and introduced them to different college programs available within and beyond their local area. In an area where students are not exposed to many opportunities, the members encouraged students to see and reach beyond their local circumstances.

Similarly, School 5B also found ways to promote college and career readiness at the school. The two Daytime Waiver teachers specifically targeted students who had not met the school's College and Career Readiness (CCR) status. They also worked with students who had not reached the ACT benchmark. One teacher reported that in 2014–15, the school's CCR rate reached 88 percent, the highest that it had ever been. The school's success was attributed to the staff targeting and working with students who needed extra support and also incentivizing students with the opportunity to go off campus for lunch if they made CCR.

School 5B exited its PLA status and was now considered a distinguished school in the state, as reported by the principal. In previous years, they found that students who participated in ESS and the Daytime Waiver program improved their performance in the specific units for which they had received tutoring.

Students' grades on tests and quizzes improved, they had better performance on written assignments, and they had higher assessment scores. They had also improved student attendance by almost 2 percentage points this year, which the principal reported was a contributing factor in boosting student achievement.

Student socio-emotional health

The school principal at School 5A perceived a connection between attendance and student achievement and used AmeriCorps members to monitor student attendance and build trusting relationships with students. As the principal noted, the members served as extra bodies in the school to assist students in being successful. This was confirmed by the pathway teacher interviewed during the 2015–16 year who noticed that attendance had begun to improve, which he attributed to the member's presence in his classroom, because there was now an added body in the classroom to hold students accountable for their absence.

School capacity

In 2015–16, School 5A still continued to work toward exiting its Turnaround status. The grantee staff stated that the school was on the brink of exiting Turnaround SIG status and hoped that the continued support of AmeriCorps members would allow it to make the changes needed to exit. School 5B made considerable progress in boosting academic achievement, which enabled the school to apply for additional grants to support math interventions and technology.

Case Study 6: Grantee Program #10

Overview

This case study describes the key strategies used by two high schools in the upper Midwest to meet their turnaround plan goals during the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years. These included the use of AmeriCorps members and/or other volunteers, external support staff, and other external partners who helped to support school turnaround activities. One of the schools (School 6A) engaged one School Turnaround AmeriCorps member in 2014–15 in activities focused on attendance and truancy, while the other (School 6B) had no School Turnaround AmeriCorps presence but used support from external partners beginning in the 2015–16 school year. The case study is based on telephone interviews with the principal, a guidance counselor, and two teachers at each school and follow-up interviews with the same individuals at School 6B in 2015–16. School 6A, the program school, had no AmeriCorps members in 2015–16 and declined to participate in the follow-up data collection.

School 6A is a high school and School 6B is a combined middle/high school located in the Midwestern United States. School 6A is located in a suburban district and School 6B is located in a rural district about a third the size of School 6A's district. The two schools, approximately 90 miles apart, are in different districts and counties. Although the two schools are quite different (see Exhibit B-5), the study team could not find a stronger match.[31]

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[31] In general, the process for selecting potential comparison schools was restricted to SIG and Priority schools within the same state and covering the same grade range as the treatment school. Potential comparisons also were selected from among those schools that had math and reading proficiency rates reasonably close to those of the treatment school (i.e., within 15 percentage points). Comparison schools in the same urbanicity category were preferred in the matching procedure, but only when the preceding criteria were met. In this case, there was only one SIG or Priority potential comparison school in an urban district, but it was elementary and the average of its math and reading proficiency rates was much lower than that of School 6A (15 percent versus 50 percent). Therefore, it was dropped from the list of potential matches, leaving only schools in rural settings as potential

School 6A served more than twice the number of students as School 6B and served a largely non-White student population, while School 6B served a predominantly White student population. According to the school principal at School 6B, Native American students were the predominant minority, accounting for around 15 percent of the student body.[32] School 6A's academic proficiency was generally lower than School 6B's. The socioeconomic makeup of the student body also differed, with a greater percentage of School 6A's student qualifying for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch.

Exhibit B-6: Case Study at a Glance: (6) Grantee Program #10

Characteristic	Program School 6A	Comparison School 6B
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 1 2015–16: n/a	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	3 total After-school and extended learning: 1 Other (mental health services): 2	2 total Other (mental health services): 1 Mentorship, tutoring, and college readiness: 1[a]
SIG funding	2010–13: $1,400,000	2010–13: $1,000,473
School level	High school	Middle/high school
School enrollment	741	338
District urbanicity / enrollment	Suburb / 2,177	Rural / 783
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	30% / 27%	48% / 37%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	80%	50%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	19%	85%
Hispanic	19%	4%
Black	43%	4%
Asian	16%	1%
Other	3%	7%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 6A and 6B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 6A: reading: grades 6, 7, 8, 11; math: grades 6, 7, 8, 10. School 6B: reading: grades 7, 8, 10; math: grades 7, 8, 11.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] Provided to Native American students only.

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matches. As a result, the characteristics of School 6A and School 6B differed more compared with other treatment and comparison school pairings in this study.

[32]   This statistic is for the 2015–16 school year. It is possible that Native American students identified as "White" or "Other" and so would be represented in those racial/ethnic categories in the table.

School 6A: Program School

Local Context

School 6A is located in a suburban community with a rising poverty rate. The principal explained that the community had yet to recover from the 2008 recession and housing crisis. The principal also noted that a high percentage of students had entered the school multiple grade levels behind in both math and reading. School 6A also was in the midst of a number of changes, including implementing an updated curriculum and a new teacher evaluation system.

According to an interview in the fall of 2015 with a key staff member of the grantee program, there were substantial challenges working with School 6A during the two years the School Turnaround AmeriCorps was implemented in the school (2013–14 and 2014–15). From the grantee program's perspective, School 6A had limited capacity to support the work of AmeriCorps members in the school. The program decided not to partner with the school in 2015–16 due to lack of buy-in from school leadership and inadequate support for AmeriCorps members and because the school had not seen improvements: "We had tried for a couple years, and I think over those two years, didn't see any improvements. If anything with them, things got worse." The staff member reported that if the school offered more internal support for the program in the future, it would be open to partnering with the school again, but for now was focused on other high-needs schools.

> **School 6A's Key Issues from 2014–15**
>
> - Community school with academic and non-academic supports
> - AmeriCorps member provided tutoring during and after school and tracked student attendance
> - School connected students to medical and social service resources
> - Did not participate in 2015–16 data collection

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 6A is a community school that provided socio-emotional supports, including mental health and medical services, to students and families on site. These resources included a health clinic open to students two days a week for doctor and/or dentist visits. In addition, two mental health organizations provided on-site licensed family therapists and social workers who offered therapy sessions for both students, and for their families, if appropriate. The school also had a partnership with a local nonprofit that provided after-school activities and extended-learning-time support for students.

School 6A relied on School Turnaround AmeriCorps members to assist with its turnaround strategies. The school had one School Turnaround AmeriCorps member during the 2014–15 school year, down from two members in 2013–14. School 6A's program had the smallest School Turnaround AmeriCorps cohort in 2014–15. The member's focus was on attendance monitoring and truancy outreach for about 30 students.

Systematic attendance tracking

School 6A's School Turnaround AmeriCorps member focused on addressing one important issue for the school: attendance. The member reviewed attendance records daily and systematically tracked students' absences and tardiness, flagging students whose absences were approaching a designated threshold and compiling a list of those who had to be reported to the state for educational neglect. The member also advised the attendance team—comprising counselors, social workers, a vice principal, and other staff—about which students needed additional support.

Based on information gathered from the attendance monitoring, the member intervened frequently with truant students. The intervention included reaching out to parents and regularly meeting with these students. Through these meetings, the member would determine why students were missing school and

refer them to supportive resources. The member also used the meetings to talk to students about their academic performance, explain how truancy negatively affects academics, and offer students an opportunity to discuss out-of-school issues with which they were struggling.

The member was supervised by a vice principal who also served as the school's truancy officer. The supervisor held daily check-ins with the member, reviewed timesheets, and handled any questions or concerns. Although not originally a part of the program's design, the member also worked closely with a school counselor who provided guidance on working with high-risk students and on which local resources to refer to students. If necessary, the member shared with the counselor questions and concerns beyond her capacity and informed the counselor when a student was struggling with something the member did not feel equipped to handle.

Both the principal of School 6A and all interviewed school staff reported that having a person dedicated to systematically tracking attendance led to more effective identification of students at high risk for falling far behind academically or dropping out. While the school had other resources to handle truancy concerns, the member's presence provided the capacity for daily monitoring and follow-up on attendance issues. The principal commented that having the member focused on attendance "[took] a ton off of the social worker's plate, the school counselor's plate, the dean's plate, and helped us get to the reason why they're not coming to school, [which was] a huge support for all of us."

Attention to high-risk students

The targeted attention to high-risk students was identified as a valuable contribution by leadership and staff. The principal noted that the school's administration "looks at attendance as probably the biggest indicator of success at schools," but that frequently truant students often still "fall through the cracks." Staff reported that by meeting with such students, the member was also often helping those most in need of academic assistance. The member often went "above and beyond just the attendance piece" (2015 school counselor interview) and helped these students with homework, organization, and identifying what else they needed to do to raise their grades.

Staff also reported that frequently truant students often benefited from having another adult who was available to talk with them as well as advocate for them. As the guidance counselor explained, the member was able to "build a relationship and establish that rapport, so when kids were struggling they [had] another person outside the classroom to go to."

Connecting students to resources

The member's role in connecting students to resources both in and out of the school also was perceived as helpful. Staff reported that because of trust built during regular meetings, students often opened up to the member about issues that affected their ability to attend school. The member encouraged students to talk to the administration and other faculty and partners about these issues so they could provide the necessary guidance and support. The guidance counselor explained that "even if [the member] did not know what to do, [she] would at least talk to me and we would come up with an additional problem-solving plan and I would take it from there to access additional supports for those kids."

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Interviewed staff at School 6A reported a few challenges that were encountered in 2014–15 when working with partners to implement turnaround strategies. Three School 6A staff and the principal reported issues stemming from a perceived lack of clarity about the member's role. The principal explained that while the member's attendance monitoring responsibilities were clear, responsibilities for the mentoring component were not as well defined by the grantee program, which led to the member's engagement in activities perceived by school leaders as outside the appropriate scope. Specific examples included

repeatedly taking students out of classrooms for long periods of time, sitting in on classes to observe when students had disagreements with teachers, and counseling students on issues that should have been referred to the behavior dean.

Leadership and staff believed that these issues arose because the member's mentoring responsibilities were not well defined by either the school or the program. One staff member commented that such problems could be addressed by conducting "a training before school starts with the person who is going to be supervising them, establishing the ground rules for how they will be working in our school, including the process for pulling kids." The grantee staff member echoed that confusion about the member's role was a persistent challenge that School 6A had experienced in the prior year (2013–14), as well. The principal mentioned that the assigned coordinator did not have much time to supervise the AmeriCorps member. At times during the 2014–15 school year, the program relied on the partnership agreement to help remind the school leadership about what responsibilities for the AmeriCorps member they had agreed to.[33]

Second, the principal and all interviewed staff noted in 2014–15 interviews that a stronger connection among the member, teachers, and other staff would have enhanced the effectiveness of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. Staff mentioned that this problem could be addressed by trainings for staff before the program began and also regular relationship-building time throughout the year. Third, interviewed school leadership and staff were concerned about students losing instructional time when the AmeriCorps member pulled students out of the classroom for interventions.

School 6B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 6B serves a small population in a small district (enrollment below 1,000 students) situated in a large rural area. The school's staff included fewer than 25 full-time teachers, most of whom were from the area. The principal reported that the limited number of staff members made it difficult to implement new ideas because "if you have one or two outliers, it has a significant impact on things." The principal reported in 2014–15 that the faculty size also meant that individual teachers were less comfortable sharing either successful strategies or struggles, which prevented the school from identifying where assistance or improvement was needed. The principal mentioned in 2015–16 that teachers worked collaboratively in PLCs on approaches to "maintain the standards of the curriculum." This indicated a shift in School 6B from challenges in 2014–15 about teacher sharing and collaboration to a more collaborative approach among teachers in 2015–16.

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[33]   The partnership agreement between the grantee organization and School 6A's district defines the member's role as working with the host site on capacity building and service activities with the goal of impacting student attendance, behavior, and academic performance, particularly for a "Focus List" of youth who, based on indicators in those areas, could benefit from support. According to the partnership agreement, the host site is responsible for supporting the member's efforts by providing training and support from a supervisor, who attends a training to understand the member's role. The program provides ongoing support through trainings and visits the site twice a year to "check in with the member and Host Site in relation to their AmeriCorps Service." It is unclear whether the initial training of the member's coordinator occurred. Evidently, School 6A struggled to work with the member to clearly define and communicate expectations and guidelines about interventions beyond attendance monitoring.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 6B implemented multiple strategies to address its academic and non-academic turnaround goals, including a focus on math and reading achievement, particularly a new literacy initiative. Along with academic gains, the school also focused on enhancing the services available to students to meet their socio-emotional health needs. The following were the key strategies implemented by School 6B to address its turnaround goals: (1) Professional Learning Communities for teachers (2014–15 and 2015–16); (2) internal and external strategies to address student socio-emotional needs beginning in 2015–16; and (3) parent engagement in 2014–15 and the engagement of other external partners in 2015–16 to provide mentoring, tutoring, and food to high-needs students.

School 6B's Key Strategies and Changes from 2014–15 to 2015–16

- PLCs and focus on literacy persist with more staff collaboration

- Teachers use student data to inform standards-based instructional practices

- More partners in 2015–16 provide mentorship, school supplies, and socio-emotional support

Professional Learning Communities

School 6B implemented PLCs for its teaching staff in 2014–15 and 2015–16, according to principal interviews. Weekly PLC meetings provided teachers with opportunities to work with other teachers, review school goals and academic standards, and discuss strategies for how to integrate the goals into instructional practices or school climate initiatives. The school incorporated a staff member dedicated to the analysis of student data. All three interviewed staff (two teachers, one counselor) mentioned in 2015–16 that they discussed student data in PLCs; however, this practice was not mentioned in 2014–15 teacher interviews. One teacher commented in 2015–16 that she found it helpful to draw on research-based reading strategies often discussed in PLCs to inform her lesson planning, integrating them into her own lessons that she presented to students: "I've just been doing a lot of research-based reading strategies being passed on to the students … taking what our turnaround goals are and just looping that right into the curriculum … meshing it into our day-to-day routine in the classroom."

External and internal supports for students' socio-emotional needs

According to the principal and school counselor, School 6B improved its capacity to address students' socio-emotional health needs in 2015–16. The school hired a full-time school psychologist and partnered with a mental health services agency to have two mental health professionals on-site to meet with students about socio-emotional health. Student access to mental health services while at school was particularly important because the county mental health service agencies were far from where School 6B's students lived and were inaccessible to many of the families because most of the parents did not drive, according to the school counselor. The school counselor explained that having mental health professionals in the building facilitated a "fluid referral process" that made it easy to refer students and families to the on-site mental health professionals. That way, students had access to the care they needed and families did not have to drive to receive services.

Engaging community partners

The only outside support School 6B had in 2014–15 was through its Parent Teacher Organization. The principal noted that the school's size, rural location, and dearth of resources limited the opportunities offered to students: "It would be fabulous if we could fund a fab lab or a robotics team or vocational trainings" but that was "not feasible in the community that we live in." During the 2014–15 school year, members of the school's PTO organized service trips, book fairs, athletic events, school fundraisers, and

opportunities for students to shadow local business owners. However, in 2015–16, parental engagement declined; engaging parents was cited as one of the toughest challenges to implementing the turnaround strategies.

School 6B expanded its number of partnerships with community organizations in 2015–16 to provide more socio-emotional support for students, school supplies, and targeted support for Native American students, who made up 15 percent of the student population. It was able to successfully engage more partners, despite what the principal characterized as some resistance from those community members who did not agree that it was the "school's job to provide those services." School 6B began work with a full-time advocate for Native American students, and it implemented a weekend backpack food program in partnership with a volunteer from the local grocery store to provide food for students on the weekends. The advocate provided targeted supports to Native American students at School 6B: activities such as homework catch-up sessions during lunch, recess, and study halls; student mentoring; support for students in the transition from secondary school to high school; and financial aid search assistance for high school seniors. One teacher reported that the advocate identified students who were not in school as expected and brought them to school.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The principal and one teacher explained that the school struggled to establish effective ways for external partners to help the school in 2014–15, even though there was interest from community organizations to help with the school's turnaround efforts. One teacher mentioned "our biggest struggle is we have a lot of community members that want to come in, want to help, want to tutor and do all of those things, but we don't have the systems set up in our own building for them to do that."

Staff explained that the first step in developing effective partnerships would be "starting from the inside and figuring out where our needs are," because right now they "don't know how to utilize [volunteers]."

In 2015–16, School 6B successfully engaged with community partners, including a mental health provider and an advocate for Native American students. The principal and a teacher who were familiar with the work done in the school by these partners were pleased with it. The principal said the biggest challenges that persisted in the 2015–16 school year were trying to meet the needs of a high-poverty student body and to engage family members who were disengaged from the school.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

School 6A respondents reported successes and that the school was moving in the right direction. In particular, stakeholders talked about improvements in student attendance and in providing supports for students' socio-emotional health. School counselors and the AmeriCorps member both contributed to supporting the socio-emotional health of high-risk students. The school's capacity to track and understand attendance patterns was also reported as a success that was supported in large part by the AmeriCorps member, according to the principal and two teachers.

School 6B's principal and teachers reported success in progressing toward their turnaround goals, which focused on improving student literacy and math scores. Multiple stakeholders reported improved attendance and school climate, better math and reading performance, and strong supports for students' socio-emotional health. School 6B's attempts to work with community partners were perceived as more successful in the 2015–16 school year than in previous years.

Student academic achievement

School 6A's stakeholders did not discuss achievement gains in 2014–15 but rather focused more on the gains in other areas that were supported by AmeriCorps members, such as socio-emotional health and school climate.

All stakeholders from School 6B reported some gains in student math and reading state test scores in 2014–15 and 2015–16. In addition, two teachers commented on the rise in the school's graduation rate, but one teacher commented that graduation rates had been difficult to maintain for the school. Recently the school reported success in this area; one teacher reported that School 6B's graduation rate was higher than the state average (94percent compared with 84 percent).

Student socio-emotional health

Counselors and guidance staff at School 6A reported that the AmeriCorps member helped to support student socio-emotional heath by developing meaningful, trusting relationships with students. According to School 6A's teachers, the member reinforced the idea that someone cared about them and was there to help them succeed. One teacher said that this kind of mentorship was valuable and supported students academically because students had another adult to talk to and there was someone there to check in with them and cared about them staying on track.

A full-time school psychologist joined School 6B's staff in 2015–16, and two mental health workers from an outside agency began working in the school building each day. These strategies increased School 6B's capacity to address its students' socio-emotional health needs through offering therapy sessions to students and families who otherwise might not have received the care they needed, according to the principal and school counselor.

School climate

The principal at School 6A reported that the AmeriCorps member's attendance monitoring efforts in 2014–15 gave the school staff a much better understanding of attendance patterns, so that the barriers to student attendance could be addressed. The principal explained that the member's system helped them "put together trend data around attendance and truancy patterns in our building," which helped them see "where issues clustered at grade level and certain times of year." Having this information allowed the administration and guidance staff to identify and intervene more effectively with students at risk of becoming chronic truants. Parent volunteers also helped with school climate by engaging students in field trips and other enrichment activities.

One teacher at School 6B reported that communication from the administration about turnaround goals and strategies improved in 2015–16 compared with previous years: "Everyone understands a lot better this year what exactly we are trying to achieve, as opposed to other years." Another teacher mentioned that the school had become a safer place for students who come from difficult living situations, because of the school's increased capacity to address socio-emotional needs: "We're addressing mental health things … so kids are coming here and feeling good and wanting to escape [difficult living situations] and see that they need to graduate in order to do that."

School capacity

Stakeholders from both schools reported increased capacity to address academic and behavior goals through engaging with partners. School 6A worked with the AmeriCorps program and other external partners, while School 6B in 2015–16 overcame challenges from previous years. School 6B successfully worked with external partners to support the socio-emotional health of students by providing after-

school and counseling services and by adding a staff person responsible for data analysis so the school counselor could focus on counseling duties.

B.2. Year 2 Case Studies

Case Study 7: Grantee Program #9

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes the efforts of two urban elementary schools in the South to meet their turnaround plan goals. It examines the specific strategies the schools implemented as well as the roles of AmeriCorps members, other volunteers and external support staff, and school staff to support school turnaround activities. The AmeriCorps school (School 7A) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in diverse activities and had multiple school volunteer and support programs. The comparison school (School 7B) used a variety of partners to meet its students' basic health and emotional (and educational) needs.

School 7A's write-up is based on in-person interviews with the principal and teachers, focus groups with teachers, parents, and AmeriCorps members, and evaluator observations during a school tour, plus a telephone interview with the grantee staff. School 7B's write-up is based on in-person interviews with the principal and two teachers, a teacher focus group, and observations made during a school tour.

Both elementary schools serve low-income populations, with high percentages of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. Whereas School 7A serves predominantly Black and Hispanic populations, School 7B is predominantly Black. Both schools received substantial SIG funding in the 2010–11 school year.

Exhibit B-7: Case Study at a Glance: (7) Grantee Program #9

Characteristic	Program School 7A	Comparison School 7B
Number of AmeriCorps members	11	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	9	17
SIG funding	2010–11: $2,696,299	2010–11: $1,343,612
School level	Elementary school	Elementary school
School enrollment	249	368
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 354,262 students	Urban / 260,226 students
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	96%	99%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	1%	1%
Hispanic	20%	2%
Black	79%	94%
Asian	0%	0%
Other	0%	2%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 7A and 7B: awarded to the district.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 7A and 7B: grades 3, 4, 5.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 7A: Program School

Local Context

School 7A recently relocated to share space with another elementary school in its district while its old school building was being renovated. The temporary building, divided in half, was situated in a visibly poor and unsafe neighborhood where "Drug Free Zone" signs were prominent. Arrangements between the two schools allowed them to comfortably share the large school building without crowding. Once inside the school, posters and decorations in the hallways and in classrooms made it apparent that this was an elementary school. The school building surrounded a well-kept courtyard garden that the students walked by as they transitioned from class to class. School guards were stationed at all school entrances. Behind the building was a fenced-in field the students used for their outdoor activities. The field and area surrounding School A were juxtaposed with an architectural rendering of the soon-to-be school building inside the main office. With a construction budget of $5,153,187, the prototype stood in sharp contrast with School 7A's existing condition. The estimated move-in date was December 2016, according to district communications.

Even with the new school building in its future, School 7A faced multiple contextual and social challenges. Its district is the second-largest minority-majority school district in the United States. At School 7A, nearly 80 percent of students are Black and 20 percent are Hispanic. School 7A also faces issues of poverty and homelessness. As a teacher explained, "Ninety-six percent of students live in poverty and receive reduced meals and typically are performing subpar." She added that parents in the community want to see their kids change their circumstances through education.

The positivity of School 7A's teaching staff and principal pervaded the school. Every morning, the students recited a daily affirmation along with the principal:

I will work hard to be the best I can be for I am the future and the bright hope for my family, friends, and community. I strive to be consistently excellent, responsible, and act with integrity as a student and a leader. I am brilliant! I am confident! I will graduate from college! I will achieve my dreams!

To help realize those goals and address the needs of her school community, the principal of School 7A self-identified as a "big proponent of partners." Partners and partnership activities at School 7A ranged from reading buddies and music programs to a local university program and a Big Brother/Big Sister program. School 7A had three staff from another education program that provided in-classroom support to students at Level 5 schools two in the fifth grade and one in first grade. The school relied heavily on incentives to motivate students to achieve attendance and academic goals. The school partnered with an organization that provided pizza and ice cream parties for students so that it did not have to dip into its own funds to incentivize students. The principal explained that this organization in particular made "a huge difference" by providing students with "immediate gratification."

While all external partners were important to School 7A's work and goals, its partnership with School Turnaround AmeriCorps members ran deeper. Other partners were reported to be present at the school less frequently and more sporadically, whereas the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members were at School 7A every day. This allowed them to have "the opportunity to know the kids on a one-on-one basis" and they were treated by the school community "almost like staff members," according to the principal.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

Providing personalized academic support

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members' roles at School 7A focused primarily on providing individualized, personalized academic support to struggling students. The members did this through pull out tutoring, by reinforcing what had been taught in the classroom to students who needed help understanding literacy and certain mathematical concepts. Members also worked in classrooms to help students stay on task and to provide general academic support. The principal also described the members as the "extra eyes and ears" of the school, providing support to teachers, mentoring students during lunch, and participating in important events at the school including literacy, math, and science nights and field days.

> **Support from AmeriCorps Members**
>
> "Whatever activity we have, they come and support us, even though they don't have to."
>
> *–Principal Interview*

One member explained that School 7A's state had recently lowered the student-teacher ratio and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members further lowered the ratio, allowing teachers to have multiple small groups working together in their classrooms. Parents also found this extra academic support beneficial for their children, because the teacher did not "have to stop to work with one child" and the students had "other adults to help break down the material" for them.

Student mentoring

> **Members' Relationships with Students**
>
> "Now I have kids that want to speak to Corps members about certain things, more so than the teachers."
>
> *–Principal Interview*

Members mentored and provided dedicated attention to students, which allowed them to build strong and caring relationships with them. One member mentioned that during lunchtime she read "character-building books" with struggling students and discussed "different character virtues" with students. Another explained that while their focus is to reinforce classroom lessons, they also work on "personal care, a little bit of babying, and being kind [to students.]" The same member elaborated on the bond formed between students and members by describing an instance in which she read a story with a student about a homeless child that allowed the student to speak about an incarcerated parent. The relationships that mentors built with students allowed students to feel comfortable revealing personal details that helped the members to better understand the students and how to support them.

Teachers and parents echoed the importance of providing individualized mentorship to students. One parent elaborated, "[Members] reassure them that they're not stupid or slow, they help them build their confidence." Another parent chimed in, "They allow students to express themselves."

One of School 7A's main goals was to increase attendance, and members supported this goal by building strong and caring relationships with students. These relationships helped to encourage students to come to school. Parents explained that members also called parents when students were misbehaving. As a teacher explained, "A lot of the students look forward to coming in the next day just to see her. The positivity helps a lot."

Facilitating communication / site coordinator

Relationships between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and the school staff were generally positive, and they benefitted from the support of a site coordinator—a grantee staff person who served at School 7A daily, collecting data for the grantee program and making sure members arrived on time and "are where they need to be." The principal of School 7A described the coordinator as the person "who

supports me in any way that I ask" as long as it does not go "above and beyond" what her program required her to do. The School Turnaround AmeriCorps members explained that the coordinator was integral to communication with the school: "Any correspondences from the main office go through her" and "[she provided] all the information about training." Teachers in a focus group had suggestions for improving the site coordination by expanding the role to include a co–site coordinator, so that someone can observe members in the classroom and direct them if need be to more trainings or different techniques.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Lack of continuity in member service

Overall, School 7A staff and community members voiced satisfaction with their School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and their influence on the school environment. However, parents voiced concerns about the members "changing … year after year" and worried that their children were not experiencing enough continuity in the program. As one parent explained, "Kids don't like change." Another parent elaborated that this continuity issue extends beyond AmeriCorps members to the school staff: "It takes too long to figure how teachers work, and once [children] get used to them, the teachers leave and they don't have that support anymore." The study team learned in the grantee staff member's Spring 2016 interview that School 7A's school district would not be receiving School Turnaround AmeriCorps funding next year, as the district declined to meet the match-funding required by the program. Consequently, the program decided to withdraw its support to district schools in the 2016–17 school year. This may cause a possibly permanent setback in member service for School 7A.

Insufficient member training and preparation

Members and school staff reported that member training was an issue. Members in a focus group explained that they received orientation and a month of training prior to arriving at the school, but that their training focused on HIV and AIDS awareness, CPR and public safety, and sexual and domestic abuse. Members noted that these content areas are important but not directly related to the work they do in the classroom. Although members received some training from the school board on curriculum, members desired training on classroom management, behavior issues, and literacy interventions. One member also wanted to know whether the school's professional development was free, and could members attend. She said she felt stunned when she arrived at School 7A and the district administration visited and had "high expectations" of her.

Both members and teachers agreed that members should receive training and/or an early introduction to the class material that they would be supporting so that they would be better prepared to help teachers in the classrooms. The members arrived at School 7A in October, long after the school's summer professional development had ended and school had started. The principal wished members could have been included in the training and first month of school. Teachers echoed this sentiment. As one explained, "They should have training on the specific curriculum they are going to be teaching because we are all coming in at the same time, so it would be helpful if I didn't have to teach the member and then teach the kids."

Members' demographics and career aspirations

Teachers reported that members' career ambitions were an important factor in their work with students. One teacher stated that she believed they were more engaged in their work if they wanted to be teachers because then "this really applies [to them]." Both teachers and members also reported that they needed male members (they currently had none). One teacher noticed that when students heard a man speaking "they sit up straight." Members echoed this and reported "students need a male role model."

Perhaps the biggest barrier School 7A faced was not in its partnerships or interventions, but in its upcoming move to a new location. Parents voiced their worries about a delay in the move, and teachers reported having heard whispers that they would not be returning to the new, state-of-the-art building in December. The recent influx of city residents of a higher socioeconomic status to the school area had begun to push community members out, and rumors circulated that the district did not plan to return the school to its original (now gentrified) location. As one teacher explained, "I am not confident that the school is being built for our students, but a different population of students all together. I pray I am wrong. It's not that I've heard about gentrification … basically [I am] witnessing it." Meanwhile the mock-up of the new building continued to sit in the main office.

School 7B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 7B recently transitioned from a marine science magnet school to a STEM school with a marine science concentration to bring more mathematics, engineering, and technology to its students. Inside the school building, marine life was painted on its walls along with motivating quotes and poems. A large garden in the center of the school allowed children to get fresh air as they transitioned between classes, and three playgrounds surrounded the school, one specifically designed for kindergartners. Classrooms were equipped with smartboards and computers.

> **Student Social and Emotional Health**
>
> "Some students need to eat all three meals at school."
>
> *–Teacher Interview*

Ninety-nine percent of School 7B's students received Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, and one teacher noted that School 7B feeds more than two hundred students dinner every day. Many students have single parents or are in foster homes. As one teacher explained, his students "see a lot of crime," including drug use and violence. School staff recognized that their student population was exposed to hardships at home that made it difficult to focus on academics, and therefore placed a strong emphasis on student socio-emotional health as well as their academic needs. School 7B also struggled with parent engagement. Teachers at the school commented that the students' home life, coupled with a lack of parent engagement, often affected student attendance.

> **Recruiting External Partners**
>
> "Don't be afraid to ask. A lot of people are willing to help, they just need the invitation. We just ask."
>
> *–Teacher Focus Group*

Like School 7A, School 7B used a multitude of partners to help its students. On a fence outside the school, banners lined up next to each other, each representing a school partner. Partners and grantors at School 7B ranged from an after-school tutoring program and a farming program supporting the school garden to a local law firm and a neighborhood church food bank. The school counselor, who had been at the school for more than 17 years, was constantly striving to engage more partners. Recently, she had specifically focused on increasing the number of male volunteers at the school to give students exposure to strong and dependable male role models. As she explained, the school currently had 22 male volunteers who read with students, and "my goal for next year is 50 volunteers." The school leader and staff had strong relationships with their partners and continued to work toward welcoming more partners to the school because they believed that partners offered students opportunities and exposure that they otherwise would not have.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 7B used two primary strategies to foster students' growth. The first involved supporting students' basic needs through school partnerships and the second arose from the cultivation of strong relationships and a deep understanding of their students.

Supporting students' basic needs

School 7B used partners and grants to provide for the basic needs of its student population. The prevailing philosophy at School 7B was that when students' basic needs were met, they could learn more. As the principal explained, "We try to write at least one grant per month in order to provide the necessary things for the students to be successful." School 7B offered breakfast, lunch, and dinner to students who needed it, along with jackets and socks; they also did students' laundry, through a combination of grants and partnerships. Overall, School 7B had more than 15 partnerships and grants and also partnered with organizations that provided incentives, delivered employee coaching and mentoring, and encouraged student attendance.

School 7B closely monitored the results of its partnerships. For every student who participated in an activity with a school partner, the school administered a pre- and post-test. The principal explained, "We see an increase on two levels—not only academically when we see an increase and they want to go spend time, for lack of a better word, with their mentors, but their social skills are better. … So we're not only working on the academic skills, but we're working on their social skills." This finding from the pre- and post-test data supported the school's belief that meeting basic needs of students benefitted them academically.

Understanding the whole child

School leaders and teachers from School 7B echoed the importance of understanding the whole child. As one teacher emphasized, "I don't believe that a student's testing scores determine what they can and will do in life." The principal agreed: "If you look at the measurement that the

> **Assessing Students**
>
> "We meet the children where they are … and we measure their success individually."
>
> *–Principal Interview*

state uses for our school [grade-levels], then it looks like we are not being successful. … But if you come and you do a visit and you see where the kids come from … then that's how we're measuring success." The principal described a scenario in which "a usually nice boy" was brought into the office for swearing. When she asked around to teachers about the student's home life, she discovered he was one of eight siblings in foster care and that understanding the child's "backstory" was critical in assessing behavior and choosing the correct disciplinary action. This devotion to understanding and meeting School 7B's students "where they are" was a key strategy to the school's success.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Lack of parent engagement

One challenge that the school continued to face was how to engage parents to become more involved in their children's academic lives. Both of the teachers interviewed stated that parent engagement had been difficult and that they were constantly working to "find ways to bridge the gap between school and home so that students aren't being exposed to things at school for the first time." This continued to be a challenge for the school given that a number of students lived in foster care or were transient students who often enrolled in and unenrolled due to changes in their home life. Through the programs and partnerships it introduced, School 7B worked to help students overcome these challenges.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

The school leaders, teachers, parents, and members who were interviewed at School 7A all agreed that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members had a positive influence on student academic achievement. As one member explained, "I don't know how the teachers would do it without our help. There is no way that a teacher would make impact without our program." The member added that they need "more people like us to be in those classrooms" to build students up academically and to support them behaviorally. School 7A's principal also noted that tutoring received from School Turnaround AmeriCorps members helped improve student reading scores.

School 7B reported that its partnerships facilitated academic achievement by meeting students' basic and emotional needs.

Student socio-emotional health

The school leaders, teachers, parents, and members from School 7A seemed to agree that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members had a positive influence on students' socio-emotional health by building strong and caring relationships with students in and outside the classroom.

School 7B staff consistently reported that partners helped meet the socio-emotional needs of their students. Overall, the principal reported that students who were referred to programs because of behavior issues generally had fewer behavioral instances after working with volunteers.

School climate

Both School 7A and School 7B used partners and grants to create a school climate that fostered student learning. One of School 7A's main goals was to increase attendance, and members supported this goal by building strong and caring relationships with students. These relationships helped to encourage students to come to school. Parents explained that members also called them when their children were misbehaving.

School capacity

Both School 7A and School 7B used partners and grants to leverage and increase their schools' capacities to meet students' needs by increasing the services and opportunities available to students.

Case Study 8: Grantee Program #5

Overview

This case study describes the efforts of two urban high schools located in the South to meet their turnaround plan goals, examining the effectiveness of AmeriCorps members, other volunteers, and school staff who helped support these turnaround activities. School 8A relied on the support of AmeriCorps members, while School 8B had no major external partners and focused mainly on internal interventions led by school staff. In both schools, interviews were conducted in person with the principal, two teachers, and a focus group with three teachers. In School 8A, there was also a member focus group conducted with three AmeriCorps members and a phone interview with the AmeriCorps grantee staff member.

In the halls of both schools, there were displays of school spirit. In School 8A, there was information about the school's strategic plan near the school entrance. On the second floor, there was student artwork displayed outside the art room. In School 8B, the school's mascot was prominently displayed. There were bulletin boards with the names and pictures of graduating seniors and information about class scores on

internal tests organized by teacher name. There were also photos of students working in a math class displayed in the halls of the math classrooms.

Both School 8A and 8B served students who were primarily Black and from low-income families. Both schools had a major challenge with their graduation rates because their students came to them under grade-level. Both schools served students who had failed at other schools or who continued to perform poorly while higher performing students left to enroll in other schools in the district. School 8A had AmeriCorps members and two other partners, while School 8B had no partners. School 8B received more than three times the amount of SIG funding

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School-Level Challenges

"This school is the dumping ground for under-accredited or late enrollment."

–Teacher Interview

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from 2011 to 2014 compared with the funding School 8A received during the same time period. The ages of students served also differed; School 8A served over-age and under-accredited students, ranging from ages 16 to 22; School 8B served students of traditional high school age.

Exhibit B-8:   Case Study at a Glance: (8) Grantee Program #5

Characteristic	Program School 8A	Comparison School 8B
Number of AmeriCorps members	6	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	2 total Counseling: 1 Support for electives: 1	0
SIG funding	2011–14: $267,000	2011–14: $938,707
School level	High school	High school
School enrollment	369	985
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 2,431	Urban / 41,323
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	91%	84%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	1%	1%
Hispanic	0%	0%
Black	98%	98%
Asian	0%	0%
Other	1%	0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 8A and 8B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 8A and 8B: reflect end-of-course assessments administered in all grades ("good" and "excellent").

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 8A: Program School

Local Context

The 2015–16 school year was the fifth year that School 8A had been open. Originally, the school had had two campuses, but those were combined into one campus serving 16- to 22-year-olds, primarily over-age and under-credited students who had fallen behind at other schools. With an accelerated structure, students were not expected to attend School 8A for four full years. Students could graduate in two years, with 24 credits, if they maintained 60 to 80 percent attendance. They took four classes every quarter, 16 credits a year. Many students were parents, which made attendance and graduation rates a challenge for this school. School 8A had a highly transient student population, as well as substantial teacher turnover. At the time of the interview, the most senior teacher had five years of experience. The school used a shared lab structure in which several small classes were conducted in the same room so as to rotate use of available technology.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

AmeriCorps members conducted academic intervention in classrooms or labs, and they were responsible for providing additional attention and support to students. Member intervention was driven by close collaboration with school staff and students. The on-site coordinator role had just been assumed by another school staff member a week before the interviews were conducted, and that role was still being reorganized. The previous coordinator helped manage relationships between members and staff by managing member caseloads through weekly meetings and observing and providing feedback on member interventions. The previous coordinator helped manage student placements and monitor school culture by helping members examine student data, including behavioral data, to determine which students needed help and to "make sure that the AmeriCorps are keeping up the positive culture that we're trying to have across the school."

Two other organizations sent service providers. A social worker from one worked with students who had individual education plans (IEPs) or other students who needed counseling; another was an individual from an organization that provided grant support to School 8A to help them with elective classes, like art and music production.

Monitoring student data to guide member intervention

All School 8A stakeholders described the school's use of diagnostic tests during orientation to target high-need students. If students were identified as high need, the school assessed them every two weeks to measure growth, specifically related to literacy. The prior on-site coordinator had disseminated the students' scores and assisted members in analyzing the data to target their interventions more specifically. School 8A's principal said:

I think being really data driven with the intervention groups rather than just trying to go off anecdotal, like, "Oh, he seems to be growing" or like, "He's doing well." … I think that has been really important for us, and we're spending a lot of time now looking at, say, the Achieve3000 scores or those MAP scores and figuring out exactly what intervention [to do].

Increased personalized attention to students

Nearly all stakeholders at School 8A observed that member relationships with students were integral to student success. Members said students were shocked to be asked what they wanted to do after leaving school, because it was so unusual for students to be asked by the school staff. Members also expressed the importance of advocating for their students in developing relationships with them. One teacher noticed an increase in student investment in their test scores as a result of members conducting Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing for students and communicating scores to students.

Members also indicated that the increased number of people available to help students, give them individualized attention, or answer questions made them feel more supported. This support led to increased academic success or increased attendance, in some cases, particularly for the students of one member who worked with English learners. These students knew very little or no English and this member followed them to their classes and assisted them with coursework. There was no mention of other help these students could have received in the absence of this member.

One teacher also attributed the relationship building to the fact that members did not serve as disciplinarians. Students continued to view the teacher as the disciplinarian, and saw the members as a helpful resource.

Member collaboration with school staff

All stakeholders agreed that members were very well integrated within School 8A. Members participated in School 8A's professional development. Members and school staff also worked together to provide student intervention. Teachers often helped match members to students who needed intervention. Members asked teachers where they could be the most effective in the classroom. One teacher observed that members were often the first to notice students not understanding something and then recommended that teachers re-teach the topic. Members and teachers generally seemed well integrated; one teacher referred to their school as a family and commented that AmeriCorps members had made him love teaching again.

One exception was a teacher who had had a negative experience with her AmeriCorps member, who had apparently not pulled out the students who were to be tested and who also pulled students out for testing in ways that embarrassed students, which meant that students were less invested in participating in the members' intervention. This teacher also perceived that there had not been adequate communication between them about the students' academic growth as a result of the intervention.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

With its population of older and oftentimes parenting students, School 8A consistently faced challenges with student attendance. Students also had large gaps in literacy and math at grade-level, so it was a challenge to get students prepared for their statewide end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The high rate of staff turnover was also challenging because of the lack of pre-set expectations for AmeriCorps members.

> **Support from AmeriCorps Members**
>
> "To have somebody that's able to sit down with you and spend specific time with you in a classroom where you might not have gotten that attention actually has a broader effect than just how much am I learning. It also has an emotional effect and investment in school effect. And so I think those are potentially even more important than the academic growth that we're seeing, which we are seeing. But I think we couldn't see that academic growth without the AmeriCorps because we'd have a whole group of kids that were checking out and potentially dropping out because they weren't getting the kind of targeted intervention that they needed."
>
> *–Principal Interview*

Though it was framed positively, a teacher said, "We change our entire school model almost every year. The wheel is reinvented every year, so we can reinvent the AC experience."

The challenges discussed by School 8A's stakeholders reflected tension between the AmeriCorps program's design and school needs. The principal reported that there were challenges in forming the partnership agreement with the grantee program around defining the role of AmeriCorps members. The program staff member highlighted originally having a challenge getting school leader buy-in and resources, such as space, for members.[34] The principal reported they were able to resolve most of these issues because he had previous experience interacting with another AmeriCorps program. School 8A's principal and teachers also highlighted grant restrictions they believed limited the program's potential effectiveness in their school, such as AmeriCorps members not being able to give tests, grade, create lesson plans, or serve as disciplinarians. In many cases, this limited not only the school staff, but also the professional growth of members who wanted to go into teaching. Teachers appreciated flexibility of members; in one case, in particular, a member did not like his placement in math, and they worked together to get the member placed in English, where he was more interested in supporting students.

The principal also mentioned that caseload structures for AmeriCorps members could be challenging, particularly with such a highly transient student population. Students who arrived mid-year, for example, were unlikely to be on site long enough for members to provide the targeted amount of intervention hours.

The teachers were generally very satisfied with the AmeriCorps members training, although the teachers in the focus group noted that it would be helpful to have more training for AmeriCorps members, specifically for intervening with students in the school with disabilities and special education needs. The grantee staff member stated the training of members had improved for 2015–16 compared with prior years, but focused on the members' preparation for their tutoring intervention, not trainings tailored to the school context.

School 8B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 8B served grades 9 to 12. This school had received an "F" from the state for the 2014–15 school year, primarily as a result of its low graduation rate the previous year. The current principal had served in that role at School 8B for 11 years, left, and then returned in 2014–15 after a six-year period in which five different principals cycled through the school. The student population was very transient, and students were significantly below grade level overall. According to the principal and interviewed teachers, School 8B had a negative reputation in the community.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 8B had no significant partnerships, reflecting negative perceptions in the community. As a result, school staff focused their intervention internally. This assumed the form of increased professional development for teachers and an emphasis on student achievement through regular testing and incentives.

During the interviews, the principal and one teacher mentioned a few community organizations that provided resources, including food for teacher professional development days or gift cards to incentivize good student behavior. An extracurricular club was also partnering with a local art gallery to put on a

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[34] In a telephone interview in Fall 2015, the grantee program did not report on any challenges with getting "principal sign-off" on the partnership agreement.

play. However, partnerships seemed to be in the process of being formed with the return of the principal, who was perceived by teachers as a community leader with a positive reputation.

All stakeholders interviewed believed that their school was improving under new leadership and expressed extreme school pride, regardless of community perception. The principal of School 8B seemed to be a major symbol of positive energy. All stakeholders praised the principal as a source of consistency and leadership. One teacher mentioned the principal "has the right people in the right positions." In fact, the administrators the principal had hired were so effective that the principal worried they would be reassigned to other struggling schools: "I'm worried about the district seeing how good my administrators are and making them a principal at another school. Then I will have to start from scratch. I'm worried about losing my good people to another school."

The major barrier stakeholders discussed was being penalized for the previous year's low graduation rate, which was a major factor in its state School Performance Score (SPS). That score, which interviewed staff believed they could not control, kept School 8B from improving at the state-desired rate, even though the school had improved in every other area measured in the SPS, rising 8 points from 2013–14 to 2014–15.

Emphasis on professional development for teachers

School 8B had two main forms of professional development for teachers. The first was district wide, built into the school calendar twice a year. During that professional development, one teacher explained, School 8B's school turnaround goals were laid out. The other type of professional development occurred with a partnering university from a different state twice a year for two to three days. One teacher talked about how this professional development was not only rejuvenating for the staff but also very informative on interpreting student data. Teachers described the teaching staff as having been unclear before this intervention about how to use the student data they had collected.

One teacher requested even more professional development be implemented, particularly Kagan workshops that emphasized research-based instructional strategies to boost student engagement and learning, to learn concepts such as group projects versus cooperative thinking.

Data-driven interventions/curriculums emphasizing EOC test

Student data were heavily emphasized by all School 8B's stakeholders. To prepare for the EOC tests in English, math, science, and history, School 8B conducted regular, school-wide student assessments. The data from these assessments were used by teachers to target topics that needed to be re-taught and to help identify specific students who were struggling. Target scores were very clearly communicated to students and teachers by School 8B's administration, with the phrase "65 Stay Alive" posted around the school, to emphasize the school's goal benchmark score.

The administration had also used scores to make school-wide changes to curricula. Math was the lowest-scoring subject area, so School 8B implemented a math fundamentals course before placing students in Algebra 1, a testing subject. This allowed students to catch up and fill any gaps in their math education.

One teacher observed that School 8B's turnaround status had influenced teachers to teach to the test: "I am much more focused on what skills they need to know for the test, and I think that's a little unfortunate, but our kids are so behind, I teach them what they need to know for the test."

Increasing student buy-in through incentives

Student academic achievement and good behavior were often accompanied by some type of incentive at School 8B. The school placed students into "tribes" based on their GPA, and students with the highest GPA were able to go off campus with school staff for lunch.

Teachers also incentivized students to perform well on the regular, school-wide assessments by buying pizza for their highest-performing class periods.

These efforts seemed to generate student pride in their academic performance. The principal and a few teachers noticed students displaying stickers with their tribe's name on them. One teacher mentioned a need for even more incentives, because it was such an effective strategy at gaining student buy-in.

Student engagement and behavior may also have been influenced by these incentives. One teacher explained that there had been increases in graduation and decreases in expulsions. The principal referenced increased attendance. Another teacher, in contrast, spoke about the behavior of students being a major barrier in implementing strategies, particularly how students had never been failed and did not recognize that would be a real consequence of their actions. However, other stakeholders explained that student behavior required understanding of their situations. One teacher said, "Our kids are not bad or rude without a reason."

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

A major challenge School 8B faced was the graduation rate of the previous year, which lowered its SPS. Another barrier mentioned by multiple teachers was the tension between teachers who taught tested and non-tested subjects/grades. Apparently, the teachers responsible for teaching non-tested subjects were largely unwilling to implement strategies to help improve EOC scores, such as reading and writing more in class.

When asked what unmet needs School 8B had, one teacher essentially described an AmeriCorps-like program with younger interventionists. He said, "I think that it would be beneficial for people in a younger age group to come tutor, would be more relatable to students. There is a disconnect, where I am so much older than the kids. But if the people are right out of college, it would be better."

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

School 8A's partnership with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program seemed to contribute to positive outcomes simply by having another invested party working with students. School 8B seemed to excel in motivating students to want to behave appropriately and succeed academically.

Student academic achievement

Stakeholders from both School 8A and School 8B mentioned test score improvement indirectly during interviews. School 8A's principal and teachers mentioned that student EOC scores had improved more than 30 percent, to a proficiency rate in the high 50s. Three teachers explained that having AmeriCorps members contributed to this improvement, in both EOC scores and School Performance Scores, particularly in English, where most of their students struggled. One teacher said, "In English, we saw our EOC scores rise significantly; a large part is because there is another dedicated person that is constantly reinforcing what we're teaching." All three members in the focus group also specified the majority of their students had grown at least a grade level in approximately five months.

In School 8B, the principal discussed improvement of 8 percentage points in the School Performance Score, even with a low graduation cohort from the previous year. The teachers knew there had been improvement but were not familiar with the specific scores. Both School 8A and School 8B seemed to believe that student academic achievement was on an upward trend, though the schools had not met their targets yet.

Student socio-emotional health

AmeriCorps members in School 8A provided support for students' socio-emotional health. Members built relationships with students by paying attention to what students were interested in, learning what they aspired to do after graduating, and allowing them to vent about their personal lives. This relationship building supported students' socio-emotional health because it kept students engaged and returning to school.

As mentioned, School 8B had started to experience improvements in student behavior, particularly in the form of attendance and activity in the halls. When behavioral issues arose, teachers emphasized the importance of understanding the causes behind the behavior.

School climate

In School 8A, teachers emphasized the importance of having AmeriCorps members as another person supporting students in the classroom. One teacher attributed AmeriCorps support to making students "act better and [be] more receptive to learning."

School 8B's stakeholders readily discussed improving school climate as one of their goals. The principal and most of the interviewed teachers believed that this improvement had begun through the incentives and pride in their GPAs. Only one of five teachers believed that students had not bought into their efforts.

School capacity

Both schools mentioned the value of having a specific staff member responsible for analyzing student data. In School 8A, the AmeriCorps on-site coordinator was responsible for the data. The principal believed this was beneficial because the teachers would probably not have the capacity to manage that responsibility. In School 8B, the data was managed by two data leaders, who were school staff members. A teacher commented that this allowed teachers to focus on teaching, without having to worry about interpreting data.

In School 8A, AmeriCorps members also increased capacity in classrooms. The ability to provide more small-group and one-on-one interventions to students increased their academic engagement and achievement.

Case Study 9: Grantee Program #7

Overview

This case study describes the successes and challenges of two rural schools' efforts to address school turnaround goals during the 2015–16 school year. One school (School 9A) used School Turnaround AmeriCorps members to increase academic and socio-emotional support as well as enrichment opportunities for students. The other school (School 9B) focused on enhancing professional development opportunities for teachers to improve the quality of instruction. School 9A's write-up is based on telephone interviews with the principal, three teachers, two members, and the grantee staff member; School 9B's is based on telephone interviews with the principal and three teachers.

Exhibit B-9 presents demographics for Schools 9A and 9B. School 9A (program school) served 287 middle school students while School 9B served 378 students. Both schools had a predominantly white student population (75 percent at School 9A and 80 percent at School 9B, and approximately the same proportion of Hispanic students (22 percent at School 9A and 17 percent at School 9B). The proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced Price lunch was also similar; 45 percent at School 9A and 51 percent at

School 9B, and received similar amount of SIG funding during the 2009-2010 academic year. School 9A received $500,000 and School 9B received $530,970 in SIG funding.

Exhibit B-9: Case Study at a Glance: (9) Grantee Program #7

Characteristic	Program School 9A	Comparison School 9B
Number of AmeriCorps members	4[a]	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	2	2
SIG funding	2009–10: $500,000	2009–10: $530,970
School level	Middle school	Middle/high school
School enrollment	287	378
District urbanicity / enrollment	Rural / 1,738	Rural / 778
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	45%	51%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	75%	80%
Hispanic	22%	17%
Black	1%	1%
Asian	0%	1%
Other	3%	1%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 9A and 9B: awarded to the district.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2011–12 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 9A: grades 7, 8; School 9B: grades 7, 8, 10.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] Program School 9A had eight members at the beginning of its grant. Four members left during the 2015–16 school year. At the time the stakeholder interviews took place, four AmeriCorps members were available to support students.

School 9A: Program School

Local Context

School 9A is in an area largely defined as a rural, farming community. The district included approximately 1,700 students, and the school served 230 students in grades 7 and 8. The school principal estimated that 50 percent of students were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch and 20 percent identified as Latino or Hispanic. Most Latino and Hispanic families were considered "long-time" residents, and they comprised a significant portion of the city's demographic landscape. However, the school community had experienced significant decreases in the population of seasonal, migrant farmworkers given changes in the agricultural economy.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

Four strategies emerged from interviews about the role of AmeriCorps members in helping to address School 9A's turnaround goals: (1) increased academic support for struggling students; (2) enhanced support for classroom teachers; (3) expanded opportunities for enrichment activities for students; and (4) improved efforts to engage families.

Increasing support for struggling students

A central component of School 9A's turnaround plan involved the use of Response to Intervention (RtI) to address learning gaps, provide increased academic support, and improve academic achievement. RtI consists of a three-tiered system of strategies to address student academic achievement: teaching and regularly assessing students (Tier 1); providing additional supports to struggling students, often in the form of small-group instruction (Tier 2); and providing individualized academic supports to students at the greatest risk of academic failure (Tier 3). To achieve these goals, School 9A placed members in core classrooms, such as English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science, to improve the academic success of struggling learners.

The school principal and all three teachers reported that AmeriCorps members worked with students individually or in small groups. For example, one teacher noted that AmeriCorps members "gave the students more time to understand a learning goal or a target." In a district with limited resources for teacher aides, AmeriCorps members could work with students who struggled academically to learn an important concept without falling behind. Additionally, both AmeriCorps members reported that increased learning support was critical in helping School 9A to meet its turnaround goals. By providing "one-on-one attention" to struggling students, they could ensure students understood the basic skills needed to excel academically without scaffolded support from adults.

Supporting classroom teachers

All three interviewed teachers believed that AmeriCorps members supported teachers to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. Two teachers explained that large class sizes prevented them from effectively tracking student progress, especially reviewing homework assignments. As one teacher described,

I'm in the classroom with 26 seventh-graders and we're struggling through a really hard math concept; I'm focused on that math learning. I'm not focused on who did their homework and who didn't. [AmeriCorps members] are the ones that see—they see things that we do not.

Both AmeriCorps members believed it was important to monitor students' progress and keep teachers informed. For example, one member mentioned, "We walk up and down the aisles checking every student, we look for signs of distress like laying their head down, pulling their hair, not writing." Two teachers and the AmeriCorps members believed relationships with students were instrumental in support of teachers. Most students felt comfortable speaking with the AmeriCorps members if they did not understand an important concept discussed during class time.

Enhancing opportunities for enrichment activities

The school principal and two teachers reported that the AmeriCorps members provided students with more opportunities to participate in enrichment activities through the after-school program, which assisted students with homework and provided a range of enrichment activities such as swimming, bowling, hunting, cooking, and robotics. Both AmeriCorps members believed the after-school program made learning fun for students who opted into the program and provided them with a "safe place" to engage other students. The school principal also reported that the after-school programming had a "positive effect" on students; "some kids that otherwise aren't too excited about school are excited to be here just because of the after-school program."

However, one teacher believed the afterschool program, which was geared to provide activities and supports to any student who signed up, was not effective in addressing the school's turnaround goals.

Most of the activities were centered on enrichment programming as opposed to academic support. For example, she described, "I had a student who was a discipline problem for me, and when I called to talk to his mom, she said, "Oh, he may not get to go to after-school then." Another interviewed teacher reported concerns about program enrollment; he predicted that 10 to 30 students regularly participated in the after-school program.

Encouraging family engagement

Parental engagement was a significant part of School 9A's overall turnaround strategy. The school principal and one teacher indicated that members led and participated in several activities to engage students' families, including parent-teacher conferences and parent nights. Members also hosted events designed to increase parent involvement in the school. For example, one member organized Halloween and Christmas parties for families and was in the process of planning a dinner for a parent-teacher conference night later in the semester.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Three primary factors facilitated the success of these strategies used to support school turnaround efforts: (1) increasing time for academic interventions, (2) using data-driven approaches to identify struggling students, and (3) providing opportunities for teacher collaboration.

Prioritizing time for interventions

To facilitate increased learning support for struggling students, the school principal increased time to implement interventions. All schools in the district implemented a four-day week schedule. While some high schools used Fridays solely for teacher professional development or detention, School 9A provided additional instruction every Friday to bridge gaps in learning for "targeted students." Targeted students were identified by the school to participate in interventions based on student assessment scores or classroom performance in core subjects.

Data-driven support

Accessing and more frequently using data such as formative and summative assessments and grades was critical in helping School 9A improve achievement among lower-performing students. Two teachers and the school principal reported they frequently tracked and monitored student performance. One teacher reported they used the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) assessments at the beginning of the year to identify struggling students. They also monitored student behavior in classrooms to determine whether additional support was needed.

Teacher collaboration

Teachers worked collaboratively to develop an individualized development plan for those students at risk or in need of additional intervention services. For example, one teacher reported that teachers (two seventh- and eighth-grade ELA and two additional seventh- and eighth-grade math teachers) participated in "weekly faculty meetings and Professional Learning Communities to discuss what is needed to improve the curriculum and student success." Additionally, they monitored how well the individualized development plan improved student performance. Another teacher described, "We look for red flags consistently over time to say that this child needs more support to be successful academically or socially."

Respondents reported three main challenges in using AmeriCorps members to address turnaround goals: (1) training and experience of AmeriCorps members, (2) member turnover and retention, and (3) confusion regarding members' roles and expectations.

Member training and experience

The school principal and all three teachers were not aware of trainings and professional development offered to AmeriCorps members. One teacher indicated that some members lacked important soft skills (e.g., work ethic, maturity, intuition, etc.) that are necessary to work with students. She described, "I feel they don't function any higher than our seventh- and eighth-grade students. … It's a lot more like an eighth-grade girl tattling on somebody she doesn't like" in discussions about student behavior. However, two teachers indicated the additional training in advance of school placement would help members become more effective in turnaround schools.

The grantee staff member also noted challenges with member quality. As the staff member explained, "I really felt that I was working with people that would not keep a job any place else." In one instance, a team leader was chosen who was new to a leadership position and who did "not [see] his role as smoothing the waters between the members and the supervisor and our director."

Member turnover and retention

Two AmeriCorps members interviewed reported member retention was a major hurdle in helping to address School 9A's turnaround goals. One member reported that they were unable "to reach every single student" as desired. While the school initially began in 2015–16 with eight members, four members left during the 2015–16 school year. Another member noted that "stress" contributed to member staff turnover; there was "too much for them to handle, so they're just kind of moving to other ventures." The staff member also noted in a Spring 2016 interview that retention had been a persistent challenge for the past two years.

Member roles and expectations

The principal and three teachers reported considerable variation among the teachers in how well they understand members' roles at the school. One teacher indicated that the school leadership did not provide new teachers with information on how best to use members in the classroom or school. Another teacher mentioned that secondary teachers have less experience working with volunteers and fail to delegate. He indicated that some members complained that they were "sitting in the corner" the entire class period. To address these challenges, he helped develop a checklist that provided examples of how teachers could use members to support them: to monitor student performance, work directly with struggling students, grade assignments, or simply make copies of handouts. These challenges did not reflect the experiences of the AmeriCorps members interviewed. One member reported that "about 99 percent of the teachers use [them] constantly throughout the day."

School 9B: Comparison School

Local Context

The community surrounding School 9B is primarily rural and agricultural. The school principal estimated that "50 percent of students' families are involved in the agricultural industry." Some families owned their own farms or worked in service industries that supported farming or agriculture. The district served approximately 400 students in grades 7 through 12, approximately 80 percent of whom were White and 17 percent were Latino/Hispanic. The Latino/Hispanic population mostly included seasonal migrant workers, recent arrivals, or first-generation students. Because the farming industry was largely seasonal, migrant workers generally relocated throughout the year. However, the school principal reported they made considerable progress communicating with parents about the importance of their children remaining in school the entire academic year.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

Discussions with the school principal and three teachers brought to the surface three primary strategies to address turnaround goals: (1) improving the quality of instruction, (2) using data regularly to monitor student progress, and (3) providing increased academic support to bridge gaps in student proficiency.

Improving the quality of instruction

A major focus of School 9B's improvement plan allocated additional time in the school week for teachers to collaborate on instructional planning and participate in professional development learning opportunities. All three interviewed teachers, and the school principal, described how increased collaboration provided them with "more time" to improve the quality of instruction and address turnaround goals. Similar to School 9A, School 9B implemented a four-day week schedule where teachers used Fridays for professional development and collaboration. During this time, teachers reviewed the latest research and instructional practices. They also had opportunities to observe their peers during preparation periods and visit other schools to learn about innovative instructional strategies to improve academic achievement.

Using data to monitor student progress

The school principal and two teachers reported they "pay more attention to data" and how to use formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress regularly. For example, one teacher described, "We are more aware of different learning styles in our classroom. We pay attention to the level of questions we are asking when we give quizzes and tests" to effectively address students' needs. They also implemented an "RtI watch team" that examined data throughout the school year and identified students who consistently scored lower on assessments.

Providing increased academic support

The school principal and all three teachers interviewed discussed the success of their ELA strategies in improving academic achievement. All students enrolled in a literature class in addition to English. As one teacher described, "We now have students taking writing, grammar and sentence structure, and a class on literature … [where] we focus on the analysis of text, as well." Additionally, they created ELA labs for students who consistently scored low on standardized assessments. These students received specialized instruction focusing on specific English skills such as sentence structure or grammar.

They also used interventions to help close the achievement gap between White and Hispanic students. English learners were "pulled out of class to participate in interventions" that targeted specific learning gaps in ELA and math. For example, School 9B implemented the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), which helped English learners acquire the academic skills needed to succeed in secondary coursework. One teacher participated in a professional development workshop in Texas on the SIOP and then trained the other teachers in the school. In past years, a council of teachers and administrators met periodically to discuss SIOP implementation and ongoing training of teachers in working with English learners.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Despite remarkable success in improving ELA scores, respondents reported several challenges to increasing proficiency in mathematics and closing the achievement gap between White and Hispanic students. Discussions with the school principal and teachers revealed that insufficient resources to retain teachers, recruit bilingual teachers, hire support staff, and recruit volunteers impeded school turnaround efforts.

Math proficiency

Mathematics proficiency was a big concern for the school principal and all three interviewed teachers. According to the school principal, School 9B was only "18 percent proficient in mathematics"—12 percentage points below the state average. Two teachers and the school principal indicated they created math labs for students who scored lower on standardized assessments in math. They also used online instructional guides, where the teacher served as a "facilitator" in helping students to master basic skills. However, they had not achieved significant gains in math in the past five years. Another teacher reported that in 2015–16, the school leadership had transitioned from using a "traditional math sequence" (e.g., pre-algebra, algebra, geometry) to an "integrated math system." However, it was not clear yet whether such changes had led to remarkable improvements in math.

Teacher retention

The school principal and all three teachers reported they had limited resources as a rural school to retain teachers. For example, the school principal reported they lost a number of teachers to other larger school districts that offered better compensation packages. They had hired a number of new teachers to address building staff capacity. However, they were compelled to spend considerable time each year teaching components of their turnaround plan on an ongoing basis.

Hiring support and bilingual staff

The lack of sufficient resources also prevented School 9B from hiring math tutors and bilingual teachers to improve achievement in mathematics. One teacher reported that teacher aides were available only to "students with IEPs because of limited funds available" in the district. The same teacher reported that they were unable to hire math tutors to provide students with individualized math instruction. Another teacher reported difficulties hiring bilingual teachers. They did not have sufficient staff capacity to effectively address the needs of these students. Students were placed in a classroom with a teacher who spoke very little Spanish.

Volunteer recruitment

Geographic constraints as a rural district also prevented school leaders from recruiting volunteers. For example, one teacher mentioned, "a lot of volunteers don't necessarily want to come all the way out here. We are kind of secluded as a school." While all the teachers mentioned that volunteers would be effective in helping them address turnaround goals, it was important that volunteers understand their challenges as a rural school district to address student needs. As one teacher described, "We wear so many hats at this school, so we need consultants who understand those particular challenges."

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

School principals, teachers, and AmeriCorps members suggested that AmeriCorps members had a positive influence on academic achievement. One teacher indicated that AmeriCorps members "gave the students more time to understand a learning goal or a target to improve the test scores." Moreover, the school principal expected considerable gains in ELA given increased efforts by teachers and AmeriCorps members to support students in this area 2014–15 and 2015–16.

The school principal and teachers at School 9B suggested that the successful implementation of ELA strategies increased student achievement in ELA. The school principal reported that according to state standardized assessments, the school's students were "77 percent proficient in reading and language arts, which is far above the state average." Moreover, he reported ELA and math achievement scores increased among English learners as compared with 2014–15last year.

Student socio-emotional health

Interviews with teachers at School 9A suggested that AmeriCorps members support improved students' socio-emotional learning. One teacher explained how AmeriCorps members helped to fill a void at the school, which enabled faculty and staff to target more comprehensive services for students experiencing barriers outside of school. AmeriCorps members helped teachers and counselors identify students who were bullied, experienced unstable housing, or were homeless. Two members suggested socio-emotional support positively influenced behavior outcomes; they "have fewer students missing days, less tardies … and students wanting to go to class now."

One teacher at School 9B also reported positive changes in the socio-emotional health of students. He spent considerable time engaging parents in his class to ensure his students arrived to class prepared to learn. After speaking with a parent about a student's behavior, he found that "she's been a whole lot better in class." Overall, parental engagement and communication had been instrumental to improving student behavior.

School capacity

Interviews with the school principal and three teachers indicated that AmeriCorps members also improved the capacity to address their turnaround goals. As a poor, rural district with limited resources and staff, the principal indicated that members enabled them to comprehensively address the needs of students, both academically and socially. One teacher corroborated these findings, suggesting that members had been instrumental in building the school's capacity to address contextual barriers outside of school that impeded student achievement (see textbox).

> **Building Human Capital Capacity**
>
> "It's people that make the difference. It's that person that meets with Johnny every morning to make sure that he's got socks in his shoes and that he's got school supplies and that he had breakfast. It's not a fancy reading program, it's not a fancy testing program. It's people that make the difference."
>
> *–Teacher Interview*

Case Study 10: Grantee Program #3

Overview

This case study describes two elementary schools' efforts to meet their turnaround plan goals; one school is urban and one rural, both in a Midwestern state. The case study focuses on the roles of AmeriCorps members and/or other volunteers, external support staff, and teaching staff who help to support school turnaround activities. One of the schools (School 10A) engaged School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in diverse activities and had multiple school volunteer and support programs. School 10B, a comparison school that did not have School Turnaround AmeriCorps resources, focused on training and developing teaching staff to support students. Both schools received similar amounts of SIG funding. School 10A however served twice the number of students served at School 10B. About 75 percent of students at School 10A were eligible for free and reduced lunch while 60 percent of students of students at School 10B qualified for free and reduced lunch. The student population at School 10A consisted largely of white students (77 percent) while at School 10B white students made up about 51 percent of the student body and Hispanic students made up the other majority (34 percent).

 School 10A received support from 4 AmeriCorps members along with 9 other school partners that were not affiliated with AmeriCorps. School 10B did not receive any support from AmeriCorps, but had 2 school partners who supported the school. School 10A's case study write-up is based on in-person interviews and focus groups with the principal, four teachers, eight parents, and four AmeriCorps members, a tour of the school, and a phone interview with the grantee staff member. School 10B's write-

up is based on in-person interviews with the principal and two teachers, a teacher focus group, and a school tour.

Exhibit B-10: Case Study at a Glance: (10) Grantee Program #3

Characteristic	Program School 10A	Comparison School 10B
Number of AmeriCorps members	4[a]	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	9	2
SIG funding	2011–12: $475,000	2011–12: $490,000
School level	Elementary school	Elementary school
School enrollment	486	962
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 8,852	Town / 4,187
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	75%	60%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	77%	51%
Hispanic	2%	34%
Black	5%	12%
Asian	1%	1%
Other	15%	2%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 10A and 10B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 10A and 10B: grades 3, 4, 5.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] Conflicting information was received from the grantee program and school regarding the total number of members. The program confirmed initially having seven members but recently having to exit a member, while School 10A confirmed four members at the time of the site visit in January 2016.

School 10A: Program School

Local Context

School 10A's motto, "Focused, Appropriate, Cooperative," was visually prominent in its school community. The motto adorned the walls of School 10A's brand new hallways, classrooms, and bathrooms in posters of varying sizes. Some posters were professionally printed, others appeared to have been created by teachers and staff, and still others bore the handwriting and artwork of the elementary-aged children School 10A served.

School 10A was designated as a Priority school in 2011. After receiving $475,000 of SIG funding, a new school building, and a new principal, the school in 2014—through a series of efforts and partners—rose to a "Reward school," a status given to the highest-performing schools that receive Title I funds. The state system that designates schools as Priority or Reward status measures test scores for student growth, achievement gap reduction, and graduation rates. It was in the first two areas that School 10A had excelled in the past couple of years (graduation rate was not relevant, as School 10A is an elementary school).

After being named a Priority school and assigned a new principal, the school leaders and staff devoted themselves to a large goal, according to the principal: "We're going to be a Reward school in three years, and we will say we did it together." A large banner displaying this goal hung over the school's door from

2011 to 2014. In the 2014–15 school year, after its change in status, the school crossed out the slogan and wrote over it, "We did it together!"

While School 10A has achieved academic success in recent years, it faced a series of social and contextual challenges in its urban neighborhood. In the past decade, the demographics of School 10A changed with the designation of nearby housing as Section 8 eligible. Predominantly White and middle class teachers, who had been teaching predominantly a White, middle-class student population, reportedly were unprepared, according to one teacher, to teach the more diverse student body that had begun appearing in their classrooms. Both teachers and school leaders at School 10A explained that their students faced "severe mental health issues" in part due to challenges in their home environments, including substance abuse among families. Support and involvement from families were also reported to be low at School 10A. However, as one teacher explained, "From the parent perspective, they send us the best that they have. And they love their children the best that they know how to love their children. But sometimes we do a lot of parenting, too."

Teachers were not the only community members supporting School 10A. In the past couple of years, an economic upswing allowed the revitalization of local businesses, and the community stepped up and showed "tremendous support for public schools," according to one interviewed teacher. The principal described School 10A as the "bright spot" in the community and something local nonprofits and for-profit businesses have rallied behind and supported.

The School Turnaround AmeriCorps program at School 10A had four members. The members worked directly in the classrooms, working with small groups of "yellow" students, as the school termed the middle tier of students, during reading and math lessons. The members also worked with students on social skills, sometimes during lunch and recess, and two members led activities in the school's after-school program.

School 10A relied on local partners and other AmeriCorps programs to support its students. The basement of School 10A housed an after-school youth center for students of elementary through high school age. Well-used pool tables and arts and craft tables populated the center, and according to a parent who worked there and participated in a focus group with other parents, its location allowed many students from School 10A to spend time there after school doing their homework and relaxing in a safe environment. Another program run by a local organization offered homework help and fun activities after school; this same organization also offered programming during summer and school breaks. Reading buddies from a local university entered School 10A to work with students on fostering a love of reading. Foster Grandparents, a Senior Corps program, brought in volunteers to the school in the mornings to work with students on reading and math skills. The school also enlisted a few AmeriCorps members from two partner organizations, Math Corps and Reading Corps, to work on academic interventions with students.

School 10A partnered with local organizations, too, such as a zoo, a bank, and a paper mill, to provide other enrichment activities. The school strategically partnered with community organizations that brought expertise that helped the school meet benchmarks. As the principal explained, "We have [STATE] standards and benchmarks, and if we're going to bring a community partner in, we're going to say, 'Alright, the water cycle, well, let's bring in waste management, and they're going to know from the water that comes out of the spigot, all the filtration, all the water."

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The School Turnaround AmeriCorps program at School 10A used two primary strategies to make an impact on students' academic and social growth. The first dealt with members' support of teachers and the second arose from members' strong relationships with students.

"Allowing teachers to teach"

A popular refrain uttered by the principal, teachers, and members encapsulated the first strategy: "AmeriCorps allows teachers to do what they need to do." This strategy revolved around the premise that members could "free teachers from mundane activities" to target and support students in the yellow zone who needed assistance with math and literacy. By working on academics with such students and helping them pay attention and stay engaged, members enabled teachers to target students who needed more support academically and/or who had more severe behavioral issues (these students were designated as being in the "red zone" in this school's terminology). As one teacher elaborated, "Just having another person to help in a small group has been amazing. And I have to say that it is for sure improved the kids' learning." She continued that it was difficult to meet the needs of all her students, and that the member who worked in her classroom helped her do so. In this way, members created impact themselves in the form of targeted interventions to struggling students.

This first strategy extended outside the classroom to school events, as well. The principal spoke of a family engagement night, during which members set up, served food, and cleaned up so that teachers had the time to interact directly with their students' parents and other family members, and an in-school assembly, during which members set up chairs and served cookies. By releasing teachers from logistical duties, School Turnaround AmeriCorps members allowed teachers the time to prepare, teach, and engage parents.

School 10A's principal used School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in 2015–16 to target a single grade where students needed extra support. While members were divided amongst grades in previous years, in 2015–16 all four members focused on third grade. School 10A's third-graders struggled with severe behavioral problems, and the principal decided to use the members exclusively in third-grade classrooms to help mitigate behavior issues and pull small groups to support literacy and mathematics.

Building strong relationships with students

The second strategy members used to support turnaround efforts at School 10A was through building trusting relationships with students. All the stakeholders interviewed (principal, teachers, parents, members) spoke about the strong bond between the AmeriCorps members and the students in their caseloads, both in and out of the classroom.

In one particularly salient example, a teacher described how a member transformed a student's relationship with math by relating it to one of his interests, a love for video games. Working with a new lesson tailored to video games, the student could concentrate and learn the mathematical concepts "just fine" and has since made significant gains in his math scores.

Teachers and members also described examples of relationships with students outside the classroom helping to improve students' socio-emotional health and growth. Two members worked in the after-school program, including in a new Destination Imagination team that made it to the international competition in its first year (2014–15 school year). The Destination Imagination enrichment experience, rooted in creativity and innovation, was offered in 2014–15 and 2015–16 and allowed students who were "tough" during the school day to open up through improvisation or theater classes. Another teacher gave an example of a student who "shared with the AmeriCorps member when he wouldn't have shared [his home life] with anybody else because he felt that much of a bond with her." Two parents also reported

that members cultivated strong relationships with their children, including giving them extra attention to challenge them intellectually.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

While School Turnaround AmeriCorps was a highly successful partner, appreciated by both School 10A's leaders and its staff, it faced some recruitment challenges. The same economic upswing that began to revitalize the neighborhood negatively influenced the school's ability to recruit members. One teacher simply stated, "It is harder and harder to find members." School 10A, not the grantee program, was in charge of recruiting its members and found this to be a burdensome responsibility at times. The principal explained, "Quite frankly, I don't have the time or the resources to actively recruit other than putting something up on Facebook, sending something out to our [SCHOOL] community."

A partnership agreement in 2014–2015 indicated that the school partner and AmeriCorps program shared the responsibility of recruitment, describing it as a "joint responsibility" where the program works to "ensure candidates meet the minimum qualifications outlined by the Corporation" and the partner school has the responsibility to "select an individual who will be the best fit." In reality, however, School 10A respondents described this responsibility as more burdensome than anticipated and that they would have liked the program to take on more of the recruitment responsibility. The program, in turn, discussed in a Spring 2016 interview how it also felt recruitment had been a challenge but had recently adopted several strategies to improve recruitment. The recruitment strategies the program used included hiring a staff member dedicated to recruitment, such as relationship building with local colleges and universities, and beginning the recruitment process two to three months earlier. However, these efforts would help only the program's other work, as it was not expecting to have a School Turnaround AmeriCorps grant in the 2016–17 school year.

School 10A had an on-site program coordinator. Though the school stakeholders believed their supervision of members was sufficient, a grantee staff member interview noted some challenges with School 10A's site supervision, in part because "[he] has [n]ever supervised a staff before" and in part because of issues of trust and "mutual respect." However, the program also noted that the coordinator had a lot of support from the school's leader and guidance offices.

Stakeholders at School 10 A also noted challenges with members' professionalism. In prior years, a School 10A teacher supervised the program, but in 2015–16 a district staff member doubled as School 10A's family/community liaison and program coordinator. School 10A's principal and one of its teachers, the former coordinator, reflected on the uneven quality of members' performance. Specifically, they described problems with members' professionalism and conduct in the previous year, during which they had had a "bad batch" of members.

In response to this "batch," the principal and former coordinator had suggested training on professionalism, including hygiene. Overall, however, teachers found the training of members to be sufficient. The discussion in a teacher focus group referenced a member who had stayed for two years who was particularly skilled and useful to have in the classroom. Another worried that she did not "always have the time to explain to [members] why I behave the way I do." A teacher elaborated: "I think the hard part is that they're not teachers and don't have that background" but that they "really try to pick up on how we handle our classroom."

School 10A faced challenges with the loss of resources that had supported it in its transition from a Tier I school to a Reward school. For example, the school had mental health practitioners for students' severe behavior and mental health issues in prior years; when the SIG grant ended in 2015–16, the school could no longer support those positions, which remained unfilled. Relatedly, the largest barrier for School 10A

regarding School Turnaround AmeriCorps was the impending withdrawal of its funding. One teacher stated, "We just heard that our grant for next year for AmeriCorps is not there. And I'm like, what are we going to do without them?" For a school that has come to rely on members to "allow teachers to do what they need to do" and to build strong relationships with students to effect positive change, the prospect of a near future without School Turnaround AmeriCorps members was daunting. In March 2016, the grantee staff member reported in an interview that the program would be able to provide members to School 10A but in a reduced capacity. As the staff member explained, "It'll probably maybe be like a third or a fourth of what they've had."

School 10B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 10B is situated on a residential road in a rural neighborhood. It is one of two elementary schools in the district, and due to its high enrollment, currently is located in a repurposed high school. The school's lockers towered over the children who used them, and the staff made sure the young students were welcome. Almost every wall and surface was covered with colorful student work and artwork. A new elementary school will be built in the next few years, but in the meantime, the students of School 10B will continue to attend a school building designed for older (and taller) students.

School 10B experienced a large shift in demographics in the past decade. What had previously been a White, working class community changed with a large influx of Spanish-speaking immigrants eight years ago, a more recent influx of African refugees, and a current influx of Southeast Asian families. The community had experienced increasing tension as a result of recently arrived immigrants, especially those bringing new customs to the largely White rural community.

School administrators and staff were much more positive, however. One teacher explained, "We have a diverse population of kids, which I see as very beneficial because the kids are going to be more ready for the real world." A second teacher echoed this sentiment: "Being exposed and open to new thinking and ways of life and certainly that cultural piece" has had a positive impact on School 10B.

Members of the school community reported a positive impact and integration of its increasingly diverse community, both the principal and teachers noting that the shift in population had led to educational challenges. The principal explained that about one-third of School 10B's population were English learners and that was "probably one of our greatest challenges." School 10B also struggled to communicate with the parents of its diverse study body. In an attempt to bridge language barriers, the school hired two community liaisons, each speaking different languages, to help the school connect and engage with families in their native languages. This strategy appeared to be effective.

In part due to the school's inability to close the achievement gap between its immigrant and more traditional students, School 10B was named a Priority school in 2011. Teachers mentioned that the morale was particularly low in the community after that designation. By the 2014–15 school year, however, it was recognized as a Celebration school.[35] As a result, School 10B "has grown a lot with mindset and morale with teachers and students."

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[35] The state's Department of Education designates certain schools as Celebration schools as part of the state accountability system. Schools that perform in the top 15 percent of Title I schools are eligible to apply to the state for Celebration status by providing documentation on how the school has implemented successful strategies to improve student academic achievement. The state Department of Education selects Celebration schools annually based on the submitted documentation from schools. Source: state Department of Education press release, December 29, 2015).

School 10B faced challenges due to its rural location. Unlike School 10A, which could draw in a large number of partners from its city, School 10B had a very small number of academic and social partners. The school "has some teachers who are better than others or luckier … at snagging people." Overall, however, the school's partners were limited to parent volunteers and employees at a local factory who came in to read with students.

School 10B had an after-school program, staffed by teachers and interventionists. One interventionist warned of working with volunteers who were not familiar with the literacy and/or math curriculum. She explained she did not want to confront volunteers who used mismatched teaching strategies because "you want [them] to come back," but she believed that volunteers should have some background knowledge about the strategies used at School 10B to support students effectively.

Overall, however, School 10B's leader and teachers seemed to want more partnerships. The principal elaborated, "If people came in, I would hook them up with classrooms and teachers and have small groups of kids and read. … I am wishing we could get more people in here."

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The school's new principal used one primary strategy to achieve turnaround goals: investing in teaching staff.

Investing in teachers

School 10B made a push to strengthen teachers through various types of professional development, including data retreats and Professional Learning Communities. While School 10B also had 16 interventionists, the principal reported that they were not always sufficient to serve a student body of 900. The principal observed that, "You can't depend on other people all the time. … We have to build the capacity of the teachers." She worried that if her school depended on interventionists and then the funding ran out, then "that's gone, too."

The principal and three teachers who participated in the teacher focus group mentioned the data retreats as a good way to kick-start the school year and immerse teachers in best practices. The PLCs had also been a "powerful" addition to the school, according to the principal. However, the district could not afford to train all of the teachers on the PLC model and instead sent some teacher leaders via satellite to various seminars, according to the principal. As a result, the principal explained, "Some of the habits that they have in their PLCs are probably not the most effective yet," but having teachers collaborating instead of working in isolation, discussing students, and reviewing data have been beneficial in changing instructional habits.

All three teachers in the focus group spoke about the importance of PLCs for their instructional practices. Topics ranged from reciprocal teaching to data collection and usage to understanding Somali culture. The staff, in particular, wanted more professional development to meet their students' needs.

The principal had also begun peer observations, where teachers observed teachers, and had paid for substitutes to cover classrooms while teachers were observing their colleagues. Afterwards, teaching staff met with coaches to speak about what they observed and how it might affect their classroom practices. While the principal had started with peer observations for only her probationary teachers, she hoped to expand the practice to include all teachers at her school.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Even though interviewed respondents at School 10B characterized their new professional development as beneficial, they also reported facing three primary challenges: school culture, rural location, and loss of resources.

A school culture of privacy about instructional practices hindered School 10B's progress in PLCs and professional development. The principal explained that she was working to build trust among grade-level teams so that they had a certain "comfort level" with professional development activities.

The rural location of School 10B also caused issues in providing teachers with easy access to professional development. The principal explained that it was difficult to send teachers to trainings because it would involve travel costs beyond the district's means.

Another teacher mentioned that the district was already planning $1.7 million in budget cuts for the 2016–17 school year. Staff at School 10B had heard that an English learners teacher and possibly a cultural liaison would be cut, and they worried that this would further hamper their efforts to reach their English learner students. One teacher asked sadly, "In our minds, we think we are making great progress, but what's going to happen with such a cut?"

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

At School 10A, stakeholders perceived that the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program had a positive impact on students' academic achievement, due to members' work with small groups of students in reading and math who needed support.

School 10B believed its primary strategy, investing in its teaching staff, was beginning to have academic impact. However, the principal noted that the initiative would take more time and data collection before anyone could analyze its specific academic benefits.

Student socio-emotional health

At School 10A, stakeholders perceived a strong impact on student socio-emotional health, specifically in terms of the resilient, trusting relationships members had built with the students they served.

School climate

Both schools were trying to build cohesion among school stakeholders. At School 10A, by using members to "allow teachers to teach," the school staff reported that they could concentrate on the school motto of being "Focused, Appropriate, Cooperative" and cultivate a culture reflecting that mantra. At School 10B, the administration specifically focused on cohesion among staff members to ensure quality instruction.

School capacity

School 10A's school leaders, teachers, and members reported that their focused presence in third grade benefitted both students and teachers. One third-grade teacher corroborated, "Since members have been in, it's helped quite a bit. … Mine gets it really well and keeps them on task." Another explained that because the members help students stay on track, it "minimizes the distractions for the other kids and then we can … have more focused time." In particular, School 10A's principal noted that the members were instrumental in helping "to right the ship" in the third grade.

After two months of members working in the third-grade classrooms, the principal noticed that, "When you walk into a third-grade classroom, it's very functional." He expressed his appreciation for the flexibility the program afforded him, as he could place four members in three grade 3 classrooms because it allowed him to "still meet the requirements of the grant but also be practical." In short, having School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in the third grade allowed the third-grade teachers "to do what they needed to do" and built capacity by doing so.

School 10B's strategy of investing in teachers' development also helped to improve school capacity. The PLCs and professional development systems in place reportedly helped build the capacity of instructional staff, and thus, the school.

Case Study 11: Grantee Program #6

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes the turnaround strategies implemented by School 11A, the AmeriCorps program school, and School 11B, the matched comparison school, two high schools located in rural northern Maine. The communities served by the two schools both had a long history in logging and agriculture, although modernization of these industries shifted the local demographics somewhat; families were smaller than in past generations, as they no longer needed extra hands to work on family farms. Both schools are located near universities that provided sources of partnership or support in different ways, to be discussed later in this case study.

School year 2015–16 was School 11A's third year as a consolidated school, serving three different towns in an area historically supported by the milling industry. The area struggled economically in the wake of industrial shifts, and stakeholders reported that resources for the school district were tight; about half of the students qualify for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch. The town of School 11B is similar; it had experienced similar disruptions in economic growth due to changes in the agriculture and logging industries, and about half of the student body qualified for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch. The major employers for the community served by School 11B include the school district, the local hospital, the university, and a few remaining family farms. Both schools serve a mix of students from lower and middle-income, mostly White families. School 11A's write-up comes from one-on-one phone interviews with the principal, three teachers, and three AmeriCorps members. School 11B's write-up draws from one-on-one phone interviews with the principal and three teachers.

Exhibit B-11: Case Study at a Glance: (11) Grantee Program #6

Characteristic	Program School 11A	Comparison School 11B
Number of AmeriCorps members	8	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	4	3
SIG funding	2009–10: $1,215,057	2009–10: $1,623,200
School level	High school	High school
School enrollment	488	569
District urbanicity / enrollment	Rural / 1,614	Rural / 1,809
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	46%	48%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	97%	93%
Hispanic	1%	2%
Black	2%	1%
Asian	0%	1%
Other	0%	3%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 11A and 11B: awarded to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 11A and 11B: grade 11.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 11A: Program School

Local Context

School 11A served three small towns that historically relied on milling and agriculture industries, although recent changes have led to financial hardship among many in the community. A substantial portion of the student body lived in poverty; about half the student population qualified for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The turnaround strategies implemented by School 11A include (1) individualized academic support for struggling students; (2) student data monitoring to inform interventions to boost student performance and aid with credit recovery; and (3) a credit recovery program to improve graduation rates and boost the performance of the schools' most struggling students. A total of eight AmeriCorps members served in the school in 2015–16 to assist in implementing these school turnaround strategies.[36] AmeriCorps members also led a school garden project that improved the school's appearance and engaged students in making the school a welcoming place. All interviewed stakeholders agreed that some gains were made from these strategies, and that AmeriCorps members' support was an important part of the strategy. Stakeholders also agreed that there was room for improvement in some areas, especially in how the school used student data to drive the supports offered to students and to develop other intervention strategies.

Providing student academic support

AmeriCorps members assisted teaching staff at School 11A by providing supplementary support to students struggling to meet grade-level standards. Members provided one-on-one tutoring during school, as part of the after-school program, and during school spring and summer breaks. Members also helped to keep students on task during work time and motivate them to complete schoolwork. Students participating in the school's credit recovery program met with AmeriCorps members and guidance counselor as needed to help them stay on track toward on-time graduation. The payoffs from working with AmeriCorps members were not all purely academic, given the relationships members reportedly built with students. One member reported improved confidence among some of the students worked with.

Student data monitoring

Teachers, AmeriCorps members, and the guidance counselor regularly monitored student performance throughout the year to identify those students who could benefit from targeted support. AmeriCorps members worked with students who needed the most support to earn recovery credits toward graduation. Members supervised students during credit recovery sessions and provided one-on-one tutoring sessions to support student academic improvement. The AmeriCorps members tracked the progress of students with whom they worked, documenting their progress toward recovering credits.

Credit recovery program

Students who had already failed classes and needed to make up credits to graduate participated in the school's credit recovery program. These students could earn back credits by completing additional work,

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[36]   The grantee program identified member recruitment and retention as a challenge in the 2014–15 and 2015–16 school years. The grant size was reduced for 2015–16, so the grantee was unable to offer competitive stipends to members and relied on half-time positions. Members were reported to most often leave the program in favor of full-time employment and a more competitive wage.

often through computer modules, during the school day and during school breaks. AmeriCorps members supervised student credit recovery work time. All the interviewed stakeholders viewed this as an effective strategy, and they reported that the graduation rate had improved as a result of implementing the credit recovery program. One teacher noted that the program could be improved by providing opportunities for AmeriCorps members to support students who had not yet failed any classes, but who were struggling.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

School 11A served a very rural community whose families ranged from those with professional parents and highly motivated students to farmers and loggers familiar with job loss and financial hardship who didn't necessarily perceive classroom education as valuable. Members working in the school mentioned the challenge of gaining the trust of the local community, describing it as "closed" and "guarded."

Perspectives varied about relationships between members and the school. Some AmeriCorps members reported that the school staff demonstrated support for the AmeriCorps members and their work in the school. One teacher spoke very highly of the member with whom she had the most contact: "She doesn't really need a whole lot of direction. She's really good both in what she's helping the students with as far as subject matter [and in] knowing the PLATO program and how to get it set up and that sort of thing, so she really knows her stuff."

Other members reported experiencing difficulties with school teachers when they tried to implement certain turnaround strategies. Members had not been invited to attend any faculty meetings or teacher professional development sessions. One member who served in the school reported that while some teachers were approachable and communicated with members, other teachers in the school did not welcome their help and perceived members' work in classrooms as an intrusion or interference. In one example, five members who volunteered at an electronics activity for students and helped teachers set up the event were then told they were no longer needed and were expected to leave. One teacher mentioned that she was disappointed that the great ideas from AmeriCorps members were underused. She identified two reasons: lack of support from some school staff, and because members were staffed in support of the highest-needs students, who had already failed, instead of struggling students who could be helped to turn their performance around before they lost credits.

The AmeriCorps grantee staff member said that the relationship between members and the school had improved over time with increasing consistency and familiarity, to the point where members received "support and supervision" from teachers in the absence of an AmeriCorps coordinator being in the school every day. The grantee staff person reported that having a positive relationship with the schools' administration and had the ability to "pop in and check in" at the schools. However, though there is no longer regular, weekly communication like there was in the two previous years to determine roles and relationships.

One teacher reported that the gains from the AmeriCorps members varied so much from year to year because of the challenge of attracting and retaining talented members. In 2014–15, for example, one AmeriCorps member built strong connections to the families and organized events in the evenings with families that were seen as successful. That piece of the AmeriCorps members' work was not continued into the 2015–16 school year. Another teacher commented on the challenges of making progress with AmeriCorps programs in just one school year: "They had a lot of great ideas and programs that they wanted to try, but you can only implement so much within a school year."

School 11B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 11B is located in a rural community that has historically participated in logging and agriculture. A local university is located down the street from the school, which facilitated a partnership between them. The high school recently received approval to offer college credit to juniors and seniors participating in an internship program run by the school. Importantly, the demographics of the town shifted as the local industry modernized, jobs disappeared, and families became smaller. Other employers in the town include the school district and the local hospital. Students at School 11B came from low-, middle-, and high-income families. They varied in their academic achievement and level of motivation, and school staff mentioned that some students lacked motivation or were otherwise behind grade-level in their academic performance.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The main strategies School 11B implemented as part of its turnaround program were (1) building connections between classroom work and postsecondary options; (2) partnering with a professor from the nearby state university; (3) implementing a proficiency-based curriculum based on academic standards and a newly developed rubric; (4) implementing a new system for collecting and tracking student data; and (5) providing additional targeted support to high-needs students. Generally, stakeholders' perceptions were similar in how effective the school's strategies were in addressing turnaround goals. Stakeholders suggested that these strategies led to changes in students' attitudes toward learning and also seemed to increase students' connections to pursuing potential careers.

Building student connections to college or career

School 11B's students in grades 11 and 12 could opt to participate in the school's Jobs for Graduates program implemented by a full-time school staff person. At the beginning of each school year, interested students could apply to work as interns at nearby businesses. Students participated in a panel interview and demonstrated to their company of choice and to the school staff running the internship program that they were good fit for the company and the program. Additional classwork accompanied participation in the internship program. The aim of the internship program was to expose students to potential career paths, give them real-world experience, and connect work in the classroom to potential careers.

Partnership with local university

The school partnered with a professor at a nearby university, who advised the school in the development, planning, and implementation of turnaround strategies. The professor participated in the school's Leadership Team and advised school staff on multiple aspects of the school's turnaround plan. Stakeholders who were familiar with the professor's work believed that he provided important and effective support for the school's turnaround work.

Proficiency-based curriculum

The school transitioned from a traditional curriculum delivery and student evaluation model to a proficiency-based model that evaluates each student using a rubric and a 100-point scale. The district-wide Curriculum Leadership Team provided support to the school by providing training and guidance to teachers. The principal reported that some teachers took on the new approach very well and were able to pass on their knowledge and help other teachers learn, as well.

Student information system

The school created a new way of collecting and tracking student achievement data. This strategy included regular diagnostic testing, especially to inform targeted supports for the school's struggling students. One teacher served as the data point-person and provided student data for grades 10 through 12 to the Leadership Team. Student data also were crucial in reporting back to organizations that provided grant funding to the school.

Daily additional academic support

The school implemented "Warrior Time," a 30-minute period during the school day during which all students were encouraged to meet with teachers or work on schoolwork. Each teacher was assigned a group of students during that half hour, and students were grouped based on the academic areas with which they were particularly struggling. All teachers were available during this time to meet with students, so students could receive passes to work with whichever teachers from whom they need extra academic support. The interviewed stakeholders viewed Warrior Time as an effective strategy to provide students with additional support; one teacher reported that teachers and students asked for the program to return next school year.

Some teachers provided academic support after school, too, especially to students considered high needs or at risk based on their performance history and/or their background. Many of the students targeted for additional support lived in poverty, were first-generation students, or otherwise were deemed at high risk of failing or dropping out of school.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The community that School 11B served saw a substantial amount of financial hardship due to downsizing of the area's logging and agricultural industries. In addition, the community is located in a very rural, isolated region. In part because of the school's context, stakeholders reported that there had been some difficulty gaining buy-in from some of the parents and community members as the school implemented turnaround strategies. Another major challenge school staff highlighted was the lack of motivation exhibited by some of the students, which seemed to negatively affect school culture. One teacher commented on students' attitudes toward learning,

I think we've made some progress but [there's] still a long way to go. The kids have to change their frame of mind. Learning has to be cool again. In the last 7 to 10 years this has changed and kids keep not liking learning. I did have one class last year where we turned it around. Students were at least giving it a shot, did their best.

Stakeholders reported some gains in these areas due to improvements in students' motivation and school culture from the additional academic supports provided to students and from exposing them to potential career options.

A key area for improvement noted by stakeholders was using data more consistently to inform teaching practices. Most of that burden fell on the teachers, who already were stretched with other aspects of teaching. In 2015–16, the school hired a retired teacher to enter data, which the principal reported had increased the school's capacity to use data, but multiple stakeholders reported there was still room for improvement in this area.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Stakeholders from both schools reported gains in academic achievement and school climate. Teachers and the principal at School 11A reported that AmeriCorps members' support bolstered students' socio-emotional health through the relationships members built with some of those struggling.

The principal and teachers at School 11A reported improvements in the student graduation rate, and some commented on the positive value of having other adults in the building with whom students could connect and build relationships. AmeriCorps members at School 11A reported that the services they provided to students helped the school to improve students' achievement, behavior, and socio-emotional health.

Stakeholders at School 11B focused on gains in changing school climate and students' motivation and attitudes toward school. According to the principal and one teacher, students at the high school began to see the value of their schoolwork and seemed more engaged in learning the material, which was a key improvement. One stakeholder at School 11B reported that the shift in the school's approach to college or career readiness facilitated better connections between what students wanted to do after graduation and the school's support of the students' goals.

Student academic achievement

At School 11A, teachers and the principal noted a marked improvement in student graduation rates, due to the credit recovery program staffed by AmeriCorps members. In 2014–15, nearly 100 percent of students graduated on time, up from around 88 percent in 2012–13. Many students would not have done so without the support of the credit recovery program, according to the principal. Members also reported seeing improvements in students' homework. Stakeholders reported the importance of the direct one-on-one support to struggling students provided by AmeriCorps members. Furthermore, one teacher echoed what the members reported, noting that the presence of AmeriCorps members in classrooms enabled the members and teachers to work together to provide support for struggling students that otherwise would not be possible for teachers to do on their own.

All interviewed stakeholders from School 11B reported improved student attitudes toward learning and that many students seemed more motivated to improve their understanding of academic material. Stakeholders viewed "Warrior Time" as providing a key opportunity for students to seek the support they needed from teachers, in the subjects they were struggling in the most. Warrior Time was implemented in the school for the first time in 2015–16, and one teacher reported that several students and teachers had already asked for Warrior Time to continue into the next school year.

Student socio-emotional health

At School 11A, all stakeholders reported that the members represented other trusted adults to whom students could go for support. For students at School 11B, one teacher commented on the school's improved ability to support students in identifying and reaching their own career goals, which the teacher saw as an improvement from the previous approach, which had seemed judgmental of some career choices and not as helpful for a portion of the students at the school.

School climate

All interviewed stakeholders at both schools saw improvements in school climate that reflected efforts to improve student motivation and attitudes toward school. At School 11A, members helped keep students accountable and supported student academic achievement through one-on-one tutoring. In addition, the school garden project led by AmeriCorps members became a big, visible project in which students became involved. Stakeholders at School 11B reported that the students who had not seen value in an

education had begun to turn around, and that those students appeared more engaged in school, which contributed to the overall positive transformation in the learning climate of the school. Most stakeholders agreed that there were marked improvements in school climate and student motivation at School 11B, although two stakeholders mentioned that there remained room for improvement.

School capacity

AmeriCorps members in School 11A increased the school's capacity to address barriers to on-time graduation through the credit recovery program they staffed. Furthermore, the capacity of School 11A to monitor student achievement and inform teaching practices increased through the practice of student data monitoring. School 11B used funds from another grant to hire a retired teacher to improve the school's capacity to use data.

Case Study 12: Grantee Program #11

Overview

This case study describes the turnaround strategies implemented by the program school, School 12A, and the comparison school, School 12B. Both schools are located in a large urban school district in the northeastern United States.. The schools serve students in grades kindergarten through 5, who are predominantly from low-income, minority group families. School 12A, in particular, serves a larger proportion of English learner students (33 percent of the student population) than did School 12B (17 percent), according to kindergarten enrollment statistics. The sources for these write-ups are phone interviews with each principals, two teachers from School 12A and three from School 12B, one member, and the grantee staff member from School 12A.

Exhibit B-12: Case Study at a Glance: (12) Grantee Program #11

Characteristic	Program School 12A	Comparison School 12B
Number of AmeriCorps members	1[a]	None
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	2	3
SIG funding	2011–12: $4,899,454	2011–12: $4,899,454
School level	Elementary school	Elementary school
School enrollment	380	403
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 25,283	Urban / 25,283
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	99%	93%
Racial/Ethnic Composition		
White	7%	6%
Hispanic	67%	65%
Black	15%	25%
Asian	9%	1%
Other	1%	2%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual district or state websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. Schools 12A and 12B: awarded to the district.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. School 12A and 12B: grades 3, 4, 5.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] Two AmeriCorps members served School 12A at the beginning of the year. One member left the school in Fall 2015. At the time the stakeholder interviews took place, there was one AmeriCorps member serving at the school.

School 12A: Program School

Local Context

School 12A is located in a densely populated urban area with high rates of crime. The surrounding community is occupied predominantly by low-income families. The school serves 380 students in kindergarten through grade 5. The majority of the student population identifies as Hispanic (67 percent), and nearly one-fifth (15 percent) identify as Black. Almost all students qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (99 percent), and 11 percent have IEPs. The school population includes a substantial English learner population (33 percent), with students' families coming from a diverse set of countries including Somalia, Nepal, Bhutan, Vietnam, Mexico, and those in Central and South America.

School 12A has seen a huge shift in its performance classification over the last several years. In 2010, it was categorized as Level 4 (Underperforming); however, by Fall 2015, it had been reclassified as Level 1, the highest category. It was one of only four schools in Massachusetts, and the only school in Western Massachusetts, to rise above its Level 4 status in Fall 2015, according to a statement on state accountability measure results issued by the Commonwealth.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

As part of the school's turnaround effort, School 12A identified three priority areas for improvement: (1) develop and deliver effective instruction based on state standards; (2) implement a system to address the socio-emotional needs of students and to address behavior issues; and (3) create collaborative Professional Learning Communities that used data and encouraged teacher leadership. All interviewed stakeholders viewed these strategies as effective, especially remarking on the positive changes that had come about since establishing the new positive behavior management system and the key socio-emotional support the AmeriCorps member provided to students. The school also worked with a partner organization that connected students and their families to social services organizations to meet basic needs such as school supplies and clothing. AmeriCorps members at School 12A often worked directly with this partner's staff to get services or materials for students.

Standards-based lesson planning and effective instruction

The staff and principal at School 12A worked together to develop instruction aligned with Common Core standards. Teachers worked in teams by grade level and subject area to develop lesson plans, which created consistency in instruction across classrooms, according to the principal. In addition, the principal reviewed and provided feedback on teacher lesson plans. The AmeriCorps members provided socio-emotional and behavioral support.

Socio-emotional support for students and behavior management system

The AmeriCorps member serving at School 12A improved the school's ability to meet the socio-emotional needs of students by building relationships with a caseload of 20 students. Techniques included one-on-one mentoring sessions to talk about strategies to meet behavioral and attendance goals and to motivate students to attend school. The member reported noticeable improvements in behavior, attendance, and academic performance among students in his caseload. "I see students [for whom] the tardiness is going down, attendance is going up. They're not absent as much. … They continue to have positive breaks with me. I see improved grades. Behavior is going well. They're not talking back as much." The grantee staff member shared the same sentiment, highlighting the importance of the members' relationships with students on attendance, behavior, and academic performance. "[The students] come to school because they know members care."

The school also implemented an incentive-based, positive behavior system called PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports), which rewards students with "Carebear bucks" for appropriate or positive behavior. The AmeriCorps member assisted in the implementation of the PBIS system by building positive relationships with students and working with students individually to improve behavior. All interviewed stakeholders thought this program was working well and making a difference in student behavior and school culture. The principal said this about how the AmeriCorps member helped the school: "[the AmeriCorps program] allows teachers at times to continue their focus on instruction and give certain students [support] that they might need in the moment in order for the educator to be able to continue" with the main lesson.

Professional Learning Communities

According to the interviewed teachers, there was a culture of continuous improvement among the teachers, who worked together as members of PLCs to develop instructional interventions that met their students' needs and addressed challenges. Teachers met by grade level and subject matter during common planning times to develop lessons. Common planning time facilitated coordination across classrooms, along with productive discussions among teachers about standards and how best to teach students about a new skill or piece of knowledge. Within the PLC model, teachers were "solution oriented"; that is, teachers worked together to address student-related challenges that arose, such as providing scaffolding to help a student learn academic material. The school also partnered with a think-tank organization to inform English language arts professional development. No AmeriCorps member involvement in this piece of the strategy was mentioned by any stakeholders.

The grantee staff member mentioned the importance of having a strong connection between the PLCs and the school's psychology department. The PLCs reportedly "have a good pulse" on school supervisors, and they aimed to place members with experienced supervisors, so that members were supported with mentors.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The main challenge faced by School 12A in implementing its turnaround plan was meeting the needs of a diverse population of students, a third of whom were learning English. Two stakeholders reported that the culture and teamwork among the teaching staff and teacher professional development played major roles in the successful implementation of turnaround strategies in the school. Two teachers and the principal reported the presence of AmeriCorps in the school helped it address its turnaround goals by supporting the attendance and behavior goals.

The AmeriCorps grantee staff member highlighted a challenge with recruiting members for full-time positions (at this and the grantee program's other partner schools) because many members were graduate students and had a difficult time fulfilling a 40-hour weekly commitment. As a result, the program eliminated the full-time positions and retained the original 43 part-time positions across all program schools.

School 12B: Comparison School

Local Context

School 12B is an urban school serving 403 students in kindergarten through grade 5. According to the school's principal, 93 percent of the students qualified for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch. The majority of students at the school identified as Hispanic (65 percent). The school building was built in 1896, and while there are plans to build a new one, it would not be available for at least another three years. The facilities are not ideal; for example, bathrooms for students are located in the basement, which takes time

away from instruction when children need to them. The population served by the school is mostly very low income, and more than 10 percent of the students are homeless.

The district superintendent hired the current principal in 2010 to help turnaround efforts. The school has a history of low performance and high leadership turnover; it has had five different principals in 15 years. The current principal has a history of working in new and turnaround schools (one start-up and two turnaround schools in 16 years). A majority of her current staff (24 out of 38) had worked with her at a prior school. One teacher mentioned that the staff were a close-knit team who worked together well, due in part to their shared history in other school settings.

School 12B's teachers and the principal noted marked improvements in student's behavior and academic achievement and in school culture, particularly in 2015–16. The main successes reported by the principal and teachers in changing the culture were raising expectations for student achievement and creating a school that was welcoming to families. Within the first two years of beginning the turnaround plan under that principal, the school achieved the feat of leaving Level 4 status. The third year was more challenging, after a staff member was injured. However, all interviewed stakeholders believed 2015–16 was more successful than the third year (2014–15) of turnaround implementation; the staff have begun to see improvements again.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

The main strategies School 12B's leadership and staff used to address its turnaround goals were (1) ongoing data-driven interventions and targeted support for math and reading assessments for the lowest-performing students; (2) a new administrative structure, driven by a strong leadership team; and (3) strategies to engage parents through use of a software tool (ConnectED) that updates families on their child's progress throughout the school day.

While School 12B primarily relied on internal staff to implement its turnaround strategies, staff mentioned partnerships with a couple of community-based organizations, which helped to provide for students' basic needs and brought in guests from the community to read to the students. For example, there was a volunteer reading program in which local celebrity volunteers came to the school once a month to read. The school relied solely on its own staff because the principal viewed external partners as a potential distraction and was not interested in engaging with additional partners, citing the success the school had seen in meeting its goals without outside support.

Data monitoring to provide support for students

School staff continuously monitored student performance data, identifying every six weeks which students could benefit from additional support and what strategies were most appropriate to address the needs of underperforming students. The school was particularly focused on boosting math and reading performance. Teachers from the school provided tutoring to students who needed extra support because they and the principal had not found outside partners to be helpful as tutors in the past.

Strong central leadership

The principal and teachers at School 12B emphasized the importance of strong leadership among the administration and teaching staff to facilitate the establishment of clear goals and expectations. Because the principal hired most of her staff and provided clear expectations at the beginning of school turnaround, the team of teachers was reported to be tightly aligned and on board with the principal's turnaround strategies. The principal and two teachers attributed the transformation of the school's climate to one that embraced academic rigor in large part to the principal's leadership and team-building skill. One teacher described the school's shift to a culture of academic excellence, led by the principal, this way:

I call them the Navy Seals and the Special Forces. So between each teacher being Navy Seals and Special Forces and the principals being outstanding commanders and chiefs, the students became not just students. They became scholars. So the whole cultural shift became extremely academically focused. And what happened is that inner component that we all have as human beings, no matter what culture we come from or what background we have, of wanting to be successful was unleashed. So kids in every classroom—it was unbelievable. Kids in every classroom wanted to learn and become more successful every day. It was great.

Another change facilitated by the principal's leadership was the implementation of a new school schedule, which created dedicated 1.5-hour blocks of time each for reading and for math. Teachers and the principal saw this as a positive change in the schedule that provided time for students to make gains in those two key areas.

Software to engage parents

The school used a software tool called ConnectED to communicate with families throughout the day about their child's performance and behavior. Two stakeholders reported that ConnectED engaged parents, increased student accountability, and helped to improve behavior in the classroom.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

The school has faced two main challenges in implementing turnaround strategies. The first challenge was meeting the needs of a transient, high-needs student population, many of whom had experienced trauma. The second challenge was that initiatives from the school district did not always align with the school's goals (according to the principal), and this required negotiation. The teachers and the principal mentioned that their third year was difficult and they saw fewer gains, in part due to a teacher's injury and extended absence, which left the school to rely on substitutes to cover that classroom.

All stakeholders cited the change in leadership as a major factor in meeting these challenges. School 12B's leadership was unique in that the principal focused her career on the successful turnaround of low-performing schools and cited success in her previous turnaround attempts. After substantial teacher turnover, the principal hired a new team of teachers to join her at School 12B; most had worked with the principal previously at other schools. The principal and teachers attributed a large part of the school's progress to changes made by the leadership team. Student attendance remained a challenging issue for the school, but the school planned to implement a new strategy in 2016–17 that included incentives.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Stakeholders from both School 12A and School 12B were confident that their turnaround strategies were producing gains in the areas of student academic achievement, school climate, and school capacity. School 12A went from a Level 4 school to a Level 1 school and relied on the support of AmeriCorps members to achieve its goals. The principal and staff at School 12B believed that the school had shown improvements in meeting its goals through bringing in new leadership and teaching staff and relying almost exclusively on school staff to implement turnaround strategies.

Student academic achievement

School 12A moved from a Level 4 school to a Level 1 school, which stakeholders attributed to improved strategies to support students, including a revised curriculum, a new behavior management system, and attendance monitoring to help improve students' abilities to be productive in the classroom. School 12B's

staff believed the new schedule, which included uninterrupted blocks for math and for reading, along with the culture of embracing academic rigor, contributed to gains in students' academic achievement.

Student socio-emotional health

All interviewed stakeholders from School 12A reported that as a result of the turnaround strategies, students exhibited better behavior in the classroom, improved attendance rates, and were less often referred to the main office for behavioral disruptions. These improvements in student well-being were attributed in large part to the work of the AmeriCorps member in supporting students' socio-emotional health, taking one-on-one breaks with students who needed socio-emotional support, and helping students learn how to behave in a classroom. School 12B's stakeholders focused more on other areas of school improvement, such as student academic achievement, rather than on student socio-emotional health per se.

School climate

Staff from both School 12A and School 12B noted improvements in school climate. The AmeriCorps member at School 12A contributed to improving school culture in a few different ways, including making meaningful connections with students, helping in students' development of socio-emotional skills and behavior in the classroom, and attendance monitoring and meeting with students about attendance as needed. Because the member's caseload was fluid, students could receive support even if they were not identified at the beginning of the year. The member noted that adults in the school (principal, teachers, volunteers, and members) worked well together and that promoted success. In addition, stakeholders all viewed the newly implemented PBIS program as a key improvement to the school.

For School 12B, stakeholders attributed improvements in climate to strong leadership, teaching strategies that aligned with school goals, and successful teamwork and coordination among all school staff.

School capacity

Stakeholders from both School 12A and School 12B reported gains in school capacity to meet the needs of students because teachers worked well together as a unified team and received professional development in line with the goals of the school. School 12A stakeholders also noted the importance of the work the AmeriCorps member provided through one-on-one support to students around socio-emotional and behavior management skills and attendance as part of the reason the school was better able to turn around and meet the needs of its diverse population of students. Stakeholders from School 12B credited the new schedule with creating a more productive learning environment for students, which helped students and staff use time more efficiently.

Case Study 13: Grantee Program #5

Overview

This case study describes the efforts of an urban elementary/middle school (School 13A) to meet its turnaround goals during the 2015–16 school year, focusing specifically on the roles of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school support staff. This write-up is based on in-depth phone interviews with the school principal, three teachers, three AmeriCorps members, two parents, and a grantee staff member.

In 2015–16, School 13A served nearly 950 students in prekindergarten through eighth grade in an urban city in the South. Almost all students were Black and eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (99 and 89 percent, respectively). School 13A had a new principal in 2015–16, succeeding the previous principal, who had been asked to leave at the end of the 2014–15 school year. Previously, the new principal had six years of experience coaching new school leaders across the district.

Exhibit B-13: Case Study at a Glance: (13) Grantee Program #5

Characteristic	Program School 13A
Number of AmeriCorps members	2015-16: 5
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	4 total STEM: 2 Behavior coaching and mentorship: 1 Academic supports: 1
SIG funding	2010-2011: $1,398,750
School level	Elementary/middle school
School enrollment	939
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 2,431
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics	53% / 61%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	89%
Racial/Ethnic Composition	
White	1%
Hispanic	1%
Black	99%
Asian	0%
Other	0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

School 13A: Program School

Local Context

In 2005, School 13A was taken over by the state and closed as part of measures supporting increased use of independent charter schools as a vehicle for improving academic results. The school's building had been built in the early 1990s; located in a high-poverty community, it was described by one teacher as "very old" and in need of renovation.

School 13A reopened as a Type 5 charter school in 2010–11, overseen by the state Board of Education and not a local school district (called *parish* in Louisiana). About half of the state's charter schools are Type 5 (62 of 139 in 2015–16); these Type 5 charter schools are the most common type of charter school in the state, and each is governed by a board of directors with authority over finance, operations, and administration. In 2012–13, the year before School Turnaround AmeriCorps members began to serve in the school, 53 and 61 percent of students, respectively, were proficient in reading and mathematics. School 13A was described by the grantee program as one of the lowest performing schools in the parish.

Strategies for Pursuing Turnaround Goals

School 13A used multiple strategies to support efforts to meet its turnaround goal of increasing student achievement. These strategies included using data to monitor student progress, providing academic interventions in small groups, and targeting behavioral support for students.

Using data to monitor student progress

School 13A's data use guided all other turnaround goal strategies. The principal explained that based on its use of data, the school could better tailor activities to students' needs. For example, screening data helped the principal decide where to place members according to student need, such as in one-on-one or small-group interventions. One member worked solely with third-graders because screening data had indicated that many third-grade students were significantly below grade-level in reading.

Teachers also extensively used data collected throughout the year, including unit exams given after each unit, and quarterly reading and math assessments, which used the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP™) assessment. Teachers also used School Turnaround AmeriCorps members as a resource in their classrooms to collect assessment data. Members reported back to teachers about the information collected from the exams and assessments, and together they discussed the best possible ways to provide support to students based on that information. As a result, some students were placed into small intervention groups for their specific academic needs. One teacher remarked:

For guided reading, it's based on our STEP assessment, which is our reading assessment. We give it four times a year, and so any child who's reading a year below [their] reading level will get it, and the hope is that those students will get guided reading two times a day, one time by a lead teacher and one time by an AmeriCorps member.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members described their data collecting as "progress monitoring." Members assessed students placed in small intervention groups as determined by teachers as frequently as weekly or biweekly. One teacher said, "Every single day we talk about their [students'] reading levels, their assessments … so that we are pretty aware of academic and behavioral things going on with all the kids, and especially the ones that [the member] has." Teachers and members interviewed described seeing improvements in student reading and math in the data, and noted that frequent data monitoring informed them when and if a student might need extra support.

Academic interventions in small groups

Through small academic intervention formats, either one-on-one or small groups, students received extra reading and math support from School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. All interviewed stakeholders at School 13A emphasized the importance of relationships that members formed with students in their small groups, characterizing those relationships as integral to student success.

Members were placed in the first, second, and third grades because the principal believed it was important to provide opportunities for students who were academically behind early in their academic career to catch up and perform at grade level. Members at School 13A were known as "interventionists" but, according to one member, students perceived members and teachers as indistinguishable. Teachers assigned the "lowest-level students" to work with the member interventionists, whereas student "level" was determined through assessment monitoring as well as classroom testing administered by teachers throughout the year. These students were generally two levels below grade-level in reading or math. One member described that she would have as many as eight unique small groups per day in her first- and second-grade classrooms.

All stakeholders reported that students showed considerable growth in their test scores throughout the year due in large part to these small intervention groups. One member commented, "When they're behind and they don't know what's going on, they don't participate in whole-class stuff, but once they start learning stuff and get that extra support in my pull-outs, and they're super proud of what they've learned, then they definitely are engaged in class."

One-on-one sessions and small groups differed by classroom and changed throughout the year depending on how students performed on unit exams and teacher-administered assessments. One member explained that the composition of small groups changed every time members and teachers got a new set of data on student performance, to include students who were falling behind or in the lowest percentiles. Once students scored well on successive subsequent exams or assessments, they no longer were put into small groups. Students could also receive these academic interventions if a teacher determined less formally that they needed extra support, through interactions and observations of the students.

The efforts of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members had not gone unrecognized, as noted by the grantee staff member ("I don't think there's any way they could have done that without AmeriCorps") in reference to students who participated in small intervention groups and showed growth and improved academic performance. Members and teachers seemed to collaborate well in deciding how to provide small-group intervention support.

> **Successful Impact of Behavioral Support**
>
> "Having built a relationship with most of the kids, especially the kids I've been seeing all year consistently, they do have a tendency to come up to me and want to talk about stuff going on at home or they feel more comfortable approaching me with problems and stuff and I think that definitely helps them in the long run."
>
> *–Member Interview (2016)*

Targeted student behavioral support

Another strategy in place at School 13A was using members to help implement targeted behavioral supports. All three teachers and the principal commented that these services helped improve students' behavior throughout the year, a perspective corroborated by the two parents interviewed.

Teachers and parents lamented that significant time spent managing student behavior eroded valuable teaching time. One member commented that the school needed a "behavioral overhaul." The principal and all three teachers' referred to this overhaul as targeted behavioral support. As a way of managing students or redirecting their behavior, the three teachers described relying on School Turnaround AmeriCorps members as a resource to provide support to students who needed extra behavioral support or attention, so they could participate with the whole class without being disruptive.

Both teachers and members mentioned that working together throughout the school year allowed them to create their own unique approach for addressing behavioral disruptions and issues during whole-group instruction. Informally, students were identified by their teachers and pulled out of the larger group, so they could receive one-on-one or small-group services from members. During these sessions, students worked on assignments provided by the teacher. One member noted, "Behavior is hard, because with my pull-out groups, they're in a small group, and it's easier to control when the kids are getting that individualized attention. So I have less behavior issues than when they are in a larger group." One teacher, for example, observed that a member in one particularly challenging homeroom helped students who had socio-emotional issues, and the member was able to work with some demanding students. Members reported similar sentiments; one member mentioned that she believed she had a positive influence on students' behavior and would check in with her students whether or not she was working with them in a small group on a given day.

All three teachers also reported that they believed the members affected their classrooms in a positive way, and members similarly reported seeing the results of targeted behavioral support and the growth and connections their students made in the classroom and the school. One member stated:

I think [a small group] is pretty helpful, if only just to see [students'] confidence grow. All these kids that I pull work better in small groups. They will get lost and fall through the cracks in larger classrooms, and so it's my job to be there and at least bolster their confidence, especially in their own intelligence … because they've internalized this idea that they're stupid.

Implementation Conditions and Challenges

Defining the role of AmeriCorps members

One of the biggest challenges for most stakeholders at School 13A was understanding School Turnaround AmeriCorps members' roles. For example, members served as co-teachers in the 2014–15 school year; they administered tests and graded student work. In 2015–16, however, members no longer co-taught in classrooms, per the guidelines stipulated in the partnership agreement between the district and the school, although students and parents perceived members as indistinguishable from teachers. Instead, members provided additional support to teachers, primarily through pull-out sessions with small groups of students. The principal, all three teachers, all three members, and the grantee staff member commented that members' roles were confusing and challenging. One teacher commented, "I think probably the biggest issue is AmeriCorps members themselves don't even really seem to know what they're allowed and not allowed to do as AmeriCorps members, and it seems to shift not only from leader to leader or year to year, but maybe even month to month."

Explanations for this role confusion included the following: leadership turnover at the school, meaning the new principal was unfamiliar with the conditions of the partnership agreement between the grantee program and the district; and conflicting messages from the program and principal to members and school staff about members' roles in the school. One teacher explained the confusion about members' changing roles and the tension teachers felt about it:

For teachers, I think it's really hard, especially this year we had pretty severe budget cuts happen to our staff, where we had to let go a large chunk of staff members from pre-K through grade 2. And so … these supports that we were getting within our classroom were now disappearing and it's difficult, I think, for … me or most teachers to understand, "Here's this extra person who could be helping out with my math pull-outs or guided reading" but … now we're … being told that they're not allowed to do it unless [the students are] falling way below [grade] level.

One strategy the program implemented at the beginning of the 2015–16 school year was to conduct unscheduled observations of members and their experiences in the school to address the inconsistent messages members received about their allowed roles in School 13A and to "keep the school staff kind of on their toes, because we find that when members are put in a position of a disallowed activity, it's not their fault, it's because someone asked them to do that." The program used this strategy to advocate for members who might have been asked to take on responsibilities beyond the allowable scope and also to inform school leadership and staff about appropriate roles/responsibilities for members.

It took nearly the entire 2015–16 school year for everyone to adopt a common understanding of allowable member roles and activities in School 13A. The principal mentioned this as one of his responsibilities, noting that "I need to make sure that [staff] understand compliance-wise what the AmeriCorps member

can and cannot do." Two members reflected that that it had taken a few months into the school year to get to a point where they received consistent messages from the program about what constituted allowable activities. Members said that by then they had already built strong working relationships with staff members and were able to comfortably explain their role if put into an awkward position or if asked to create curriculum or enter students' grades in the school's system (neither allowed under program guidelines).

The principal and school staff believed members' potential effectiveness had been adversely affected by the length of time it took to reach common understanding about members' roles and responsibilities. However, all three interviewed teachers indicated that they were better able to use members as a resource once they understood which activities were and were not allowable.

Training opportunities for School Turnaround AmeriCorps members

The three members each mentioned having received training about their role from the grantee program before the start of the 2015–16 year at School 13A. They all described the grantee training as valuable; it taught them generally about the district and student population they would serve, as well as provided general guidelines about their role in supporting schools to reach their turnaround goals. The three members noted, however, that they wished there had been a formal training to familiarize them with the school specifically, including information about that student population and their expected roles within the school—even though two members said they had participated in some school-specific training. One member (who had not participated in any school-specific training) remarked, "Well, we were kind of dropped in. I think everybody had teaching experience, but we weren't prepared, maybe none of us had low-income teaching experience. … I didn't have any training, really, whatsoever."

The need for member training at School 13A also was acknowledged by the principal and staff. The principal wished members had been provided more instructional training about tutoring and information about their expected roles at the school. The principal attributed the absence of such training to limited time at the beginning of the year and on his constraints with leading a school for the first time. The three teachers mentioned that members could have been more prepared, as well. They understood, however, that the members' lack of knowledge was partially due to the changing guidelines given to them by the grantee program and principal, and that members themselves did not have a good idea of what their roles were for most of the year. One teacher stated, "I don't think [members are] the most prepared, but I also think unfortunately it's kind of the problem with these charter schools and the type of situation that we work a lot in … learning quickly on-the-fly how curriculum is taught and how guided reading and things are supposed to be instructed."

Interestingly, one member approached the absence of training proactively by collaborating with School 13A's Head of Intervention to develop a manual for its new members. This member explained that information and processes that were useful to her when she began will be included. Additionally, the principal indicated that in the future, the school would try to provide members with more training at the beginning and throughout the year.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

Student academic achievement

School 13A's principal and staff attributed their effective use of data and small-group academic intervention with students performing at the "lowest level" as having contributed to students' academic growth. School 13A achieved remarkable success in its School Performance Score and letter grades. In the last two years, the school's score increased from 75 points in 2013–14 to 81.6 points in 2014–15 (out of 150 points) and its letter grade increased from a C in 2013–14 to a B in 2015–16.

This improvement moved it from one of the lowest-performing schools in the district to one of the highest–performing schools.

Student socio-emotional health

School 13A implemented one-on-one and small-group behavioral support for its students. Staff found that using School Turnaround AmeriCorps members to provide behavioral support and extra attention to students allowed them to function better in whole-group instructional environments. Although this issue was not completely resolved, teachers were able to spend more time on instruction rather than behavior management, and if they needed extra help, members could pull out students to work with them individually or in small groups.

Behavior remained a challenge, however. Parents interviewed reported that time teachers spent managing behavior reduced instructional time for their children, but that School 13A had implemented strategies that helped to address this issue.

School climate

School 13A had gone through many leadership changes since opening in 2010. No principal had remained for more than two years. In 2015–16, the school had a first-time principal who knew the district from his earlier work with other schools. One teacher who had been teaching at the school for five years reported that changes in leadership had been difficult for the school and the staff. This teacher reported that the current leadership had done a good job of being transparent with the staff; she also indicated that she felt supported by the school's leaders. Approval of the principal's performance seemed to be validated by the improvements in the school's ratings. This teacher added that the hard work of the staff, supported by leadership, resulted in those improvements.

School capacity

Despite significant changes in leadership and staff in the last few years, School 13A adopted several strategies to improve school outcomes, chiefly by using members to provide small-group academic support and help control disruptive behavior in those classrooms. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided added capacity for teachers to focus on whole-classroom instruction when members pulled out students who were below grade-level and provided additional academic supports. These AmeriCorps services supported students' capacity to participate in their main classrooms—academically, emotionally, and behaviorally.

B.3. SIG Exiter Case Studies

Case Study 1: Grantee Program #11

Overview

This case study describes the major strategies used by an urban elementary/middle school in the Northeast to exit SIG status after the 2013–14 academic year. This write-up is based on in-depth telephone interviews with the principal, three teachers, and the grantee staff member.

SIG Exiter 1 served almost 400 students, kindergarten through grade 8, in an urban district of approximately 25,000 students. More than two-thirds of students at SIG Exiter 1 were eligible to receive Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. Its district was awarded a School Redesign Grant in the 2011–12 school year. SIG Exiter 1 had various external partnerships with programs that provided academic, mentoring, and social services, but the principal and all three teachers reported that AmeriCorps members had a significant presence in the school (one teacher was not familiar with external partners except for

AmeriCorps) and that members were relied on heavily to support the school to implement its turnaround goals.

Exhibit B-14: SIG Exiter Case Study at a Glance: (1) Grantee Program #11

Characteristic	School
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 3 2015–16: 1
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	Academic support (literary/math):3 Mentoring:1 Social service/community: 2
SIG funding	2011–12: $4,899,454
School level	Elementary/middle school
School enrollment	392
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 25,283
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics[a]	2012–13: 62% / 58% 2013–14: 67% / 62%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	68%
Racial/Ethnic Composition	
White	21%
Hispanic	43%
Black	27%
Asian	1%
Other	8%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. SIG Exiter 1: allocated to the district.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 and state averages were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Proficiency data from year of SIG exit were provided by principals. SIG Exiter 1: 2012–13: grades 3–8. 2013–14: grades 3–8, 10.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] State Averages (Reading / Mathematics): 2012–13: 69%, 61%. 2013–14: 69%, 60%.

Improvement Strategies

SIG Exiter 1 implemented three key strategies to achieve its turnaround goals to exit SIG status: (1) providing targeted interventions for student's socio-emotional support; (2) putting into place a principal and an instructional leadership team who together could provide strong leadership; and 3) using data to support best teaching practices.

Targeted student socio-emotional support

One of the biggest challenges that the school had to contend with to meet its turnaround goals was meeting the socio-emotional needs of its students. This was identified by the principal and mentioned by all three teachers interviewed. One teacher stated, "One of the biggest challenges in an environment like this is keeping kids in classrooms and helping with that social emotional piece, and the academic piece comes along after."

> **SIG Exiter 1's Key Improvement Strategies**
>
> - Targeted student socio-emotional support
> - Strong leadership and instructional support team
> - Use of data to inform best teaching practices

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided socio-emotional support services, through one-on-one counseling as well as small-group social events during lunch time, to targeted groups of students. During the first year of the grant (2013–14) AmeriCorps members worked in various classrooms, known as the "floating model," providing supports to students in each classroom. This model did not provide the level of support that the principal and teachers believed was effective enough to produce socio-emotional outcomes. Consequently, the principal changed the model the following year and assigned members to classrooms, where they worked five days a week with targeted groups of students determined by the principal for the entire academic year.

In the 2014–15 school year, SIG Exiter 1 had three AmeriCorps members, each assigned to his or her own classroom. Two members were designated to provide socio-emotional support, through one-on-one counseling as well as small-group social events during lunch time, as well as documenting and tracking each student's socio-emotional well-being. The third member provided academic support such as small-group or one-on-one tutoring in reading and math. This grantee program had a unique model that allowed it to place members in school counselor roles: It recruited master's students in school guidance, social work, or related counseling fields who were supervised by professional staff at the schools, as their AmeriCorps hours fulfilled a fieldwork requirement for advanced students or early training for first-year students. The program also recruited for several specialized academic support positions.

Describing the members' assignment to specific classrooms, a teacher stated, "I personally like the model with them in the room, so I think they did what they could do where they were. I think the year before—when we did not have the model [in which] they were assigned to a room and they did a little more floating—probably didn't work as well. So I like that change."

Selected students were assigned to members by the principal based on their performance scores and input from teachers. Students at risk of retention or below grade-level were provided targeted support. One interviewed teacher who had an assigned AmeriCorps member in her classroom found the member to be very helpful:

The rooms where there were struggling students that could use that extra support, that's where [AmeriCorps members] came in, and I think that really helped the teacher to do more focused work with other students and to have an extra pair of hands in the room to give those kids who were almost there the boost. So I know that there were three rooms that were lucky last year to have an AmeriCorps volunteer working with them and it was awesome for all three of us.

According to SIG Exiter 1's principal, the targeted socio-emotional interventions allowed students to build strong connections with their assigned AmeriCorps member and helped to create a stable emotional environment within classrooms, which stakeholders reported resulted in fewer suspensions and less violence at the school and, as the year progressed, fewer behavioral issues. The program also credited this strong connection between members and students for increased student attendance and academic engagement because "[students] know our members care and they know that the progress that they're making with their AmeriCorps members matters to the members."

Strong leadership and instructional support team

The school's current principal was specifically assigned by the district to implement strategies for the school to reach its turnaround goals. This principal has remained at the school throughout the SIG grant duration, and under this instructional leadership, the school went from the lowest designation in the state outside of receivership (Level 4) to an unmonitored status (Level 1) within the span of the grant.

> **Teachers Implementing Change**
>
> "Teachers are part of the leadership team. We are all leaders in this school. And although administration has final say, we really have the ability and the power to make change and implement the change."
>
> *—Teacher Interview*

The principal described the school's main strategy for meeting its turnaround goals as supporting teacher input and giving teachers leadership roles. A leadership team was established at the school consisting of teacher representatives from each grade. The leadership team met regularly, then shared strategies and goals discussed during those meetings with the other teachers in their grades.

Teachers at SIG Exiter 1 were also provided professional development focused on subject areas and classwork targeted at achieving turnaround goals. For example, one teacher commented, "I'm in a math recovery professional development class where we're going to be able to actually assess the kids who are struggling and really find out where their deficits are and then give them the targeted instruction there, and then move them forward in math."

All three teachers considered supportive school leadership as a main strategy for helping achieve SIG Exiter School 1's turnaround goals. One teacher said, "The fact that leadership has given the teachers the power to do what they need to do" helped them achieve those goals.

Use of data to inform best teaching practices

The third main strategy implemented at SIG Exiter 1 was the use of data to set goals and continually adjust teaching strategies to improve student performance. The principal set expectations that the school used data to inform best teaching practices and strategies implemented at the school. SIG Exiter 1 was described by the principal as "very data driven," and data were collected in various ways

> **Using Data to Adjust Goals**
>
> "The team is constantly analyzing data, adjusting goals and kind of following through and being accountable to them."
>
> *—Teacher Interview*

including from student performance scores and assessments, informal Survey Monkey surveys of teachers to report on student progress, and tracking logs collected from AmeriCorps members. One teacher explained that, "[teachers] used data to back everything up, solid data … that they are very open to sharing the data and explaining how it's used, why it's used, and why it's important; and then setting goals and working toward that." The principal and all three teachers interviewed reported that data helped support the school to exit SIG status and provided valuable information to support their teaching practices and their students.

Perceived Effectiveness of Strategies and AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

Strategies Perceived as Most Helpful to SIG Exit

The strategy most helpful for SIG Exiter School 1 to exit SIG status was the use of its leadership and instructional support team. This strategy was the foundation to all subsequent strategies implemented at the school. The principal established an environment in which teachers could help establish turnaround goals and could discuss their progress during instructional support meetings. The principal also assigned AmeriCorps members to specific classrooms that needed targeted socio-emotional interventions to

support students and set the expectation that data must be used to support best teaching practices and student growth. Each strategy was initiated through the strong leadership implemented by the principal.

Strategies Perceived as Less Helpful to SIG Exit

The principal and all teachers interviewed from SIG Exiter School 1 reported that all of the strategies implemented at the school to exit SIG status worked well. One teacher said, "I don't think there really were any strategies that didn't work well. I mean, I think there were some times when we looked at things and then we said, 'This is good, but now we need to take it to the next level, so how do we take it to the next level?'" Strategies were refined by the principal and leadership at the school if they were viewed as ineffective.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided services to the neediest students. The principal explained that their work was "done with fidelity and fully implemented to ensure that" the school would successfully exit SIG status. The principal reported consistently checking the data collected by members, such as their tracking logs, and frequently scheduling meetings with members to check in on their progress. Another contributing factor was AmeriCorps members' use of branding (they wore AmeriCorps labeled t-shirts) to ensure that they could easily be identified and approached by students and staff.

> **AmeriCorps Members' Contributions to SIG Exit**
>
> "Members are eager, very willing and very authentic … and when you have authentic or genuine help, there's a difference."
>
> *—Teacher Interview*

The three teachers also thought that AmeriCorps members contributed to exiting SIG status through being professional, friendly, and willing to help. Teachers mentioned that the members were able to assist them in providing help to struggling students who needed extra support teachers may not have been able to provide with their existing capacity. All three teachers noted that they wished the school had had more members.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

The three key strategies implemented at SIG Exiter School 1 were perceived to be effective in meeting key turnaround outcomes.

Student academic achievement

SIG Exiter School 1 achieved success in student academic achievement, moving from a Level 4 school (lowest designation) in 2011–12 to a Level 1 school by the end of 2013–14. Students' reading scores increased from 63 percent proficient or higher in 2011–12 to 67 percent proficient or higher in 2013–14.[37] Student math scores increased from 54 percent proficient or higher in 2011–12 to 62 percent proficient or higher in 2013–14.

Student socio-emotional health

Providing socio-emotional interventions for students at SIG Exiter School 1 initially was one of the biggest challenges for the school in meeting its turnaround goals. Once strategies were put into place to address these needs, students' behavioral issues decreased. However, after the school successfully exited SIG status, access to resources decreased. In 2014–15 there were three full-time AmeriCorps members who worked at the school,

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[37] Source: state Department of Education, 2015 and 2014 state School Report Card Overviews. Note that the URL is not included to maintain confidentiality.

whereas in the next year (2015–16) one member worked part-time at the school. The grantee staff attributed this change to the program's inability to recruit full-time members. Most of the members this program hires are graduate students, and a 40-hour week is difficult to fulfill, so the program hires them as part-time members. The principal and all of the teachers commented that taking away resources that were useful and effective at the school made it harder to provide the necessary socio-emotional health supports that their students needed.

School climate

The principal and all three teachers reported that there were negative implications of exiting SIG status. The principal repeatedly emphasized that the SIG grant as currently structured seemed reactionary and that it was a "backwards model." The principal instead proposed that the grant should be a preventive measure given to schools to stop them from reaching the lowest level of proficiency in the first place: "There needs to be a protocol on how you get [School Improvement Grants], how you sustain them, and I think that everyone should get them regardless of their school status. I think it needs to be proactive." Teachers at the school believed they had worked hard to exit SIG status, but that hard work had resulted in resources being removed from the school.

School capacity and implications of change in SIG status

Although the principal was aware that funding would cease once the school exited SIG status, the principal nevertheless remarked that the school was being punished for achieving its goals, because it no longer had the capacity to afford the resources that helped it exit SIG status. The principal indicated that data clearly showed that the school was improving with the assistance of those SIG and AmeriCorps resources and "that we should keep those systems of support in place." The principal said that the SIG grant felt like a "Band-Aid" and that once the funding was taken away, the tools that supported schools to improve were limited. As a result, the same level of support given to teachers and students could not be sustained.

The principal stated, "I don't think they should phase it out, I think they should sustain [the grant] and figure out a way where that [school] grows and that's based on the data. I mean [if] schools get out of that [status], it doesn't mean the school won't go back into it."

In a Spring 2015 interview, the grantee staff member also reflected on the difficult tension when schools lose AmeriCorps resources as they started to improve. In 2015–16, SIG Exiter School 1 lost School Turnaround AmeriCorps members due to recruitment challenges. The grantee staff described how because its partnership was with the district, it needed to balance the overall needs of the district, as new schools enter the lowest-performing category and need the highest level of support: "We're getting more schools but no new members, so we have to kind of move people around. … We finally get them out of [the lowest performance category], and then we take away all their resources. … It's a balance."

SIG Exiter 1 was able to maintain one part-time AmeriCorps member in 2015–16, compared to the three members it had in 2014–15. The principal decided to assign that member to work in one classroom to have sustained focused work with the students in that room. Consequently, many of the services that could be provided when the school had three members could not be maintained. The principal therefore had to find alternative solutions to distributing services and resources; he noted:

No matter what, we still have to service those kids. So we just shift their focuses to find other resources, and send out letters to the community. We advocate to parents to help out, we use our older students, the middle school students to help mentor our younger students, we have a behavior specialist team and we tap into the college communities in the area.

The school now relies on external partnerships more than they did before exiting SIG status.

Case Study 2: Grantee Program #11

<u>Overview</u>

SIG Exiter School 2 served grades kindergarten through 5 in a large urban district in New England. The school was the poorest elementary school in the Commonwealth; 98 percent of its students were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. About one-third were English learners, predominantly with Hispanic, Somali, and Burundi backgrounds. Many students relied on donations of school supplies, backpacks, and clothing provided by partner organizations in the community. All students lived within walking distance (one mile) of the school, mostly in one of five public housing developments. The principal and one interviewed teacher also characterized the student population as highly transient, and the school population as fluctuating throughout the year. There was also a high level of teacher turnover; approximately one-third of the teachers left at the end of school years 2012–13 and 2013–14, many to teach in suburban school districts with modern facilities and higher pay or for personal reasons, according to the principal.

The oldest in the district, the 1898 school building lacked a cafeteria, parking, and green space for students to play outside. Stakeholders were pleased to report that construction of a new building would begin in Summer 2016, thanks to a successful parent petition effort in the 2012–13 school year.

AmeriCorps members were placed in the school beginning in 2014–15 and again in 2015–16. Previously (in 2013–14), the school relied on support from undergraduate work-study students and retired teachers called back to provide additional support. The principal reported that although the school had been allocated six AmeriCorps spots, it was able to fill only three in the first year (2014–15) and two the next year (2015–16). The principal explained that there were too few applicants.

This case study describes the successful strategies and challenges experienced by school staff at SIG Exiter School 2. It includes reflections on implementation of strategies that supported the school in a successful transition from Level 4 to Level 3 status based on its performance in the 2014–15 school year. The data collection for this case study consisted of in-depth phone interviews with the principal and two teachers and an interview with the grantee staff member.

Exhibit B-15: SIG Exiter Case Study at a Glance: (2) Grantee Program #11

Characteristic	School
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 3 2015–16: 2
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	4 total Literacy assistance: 1 School supplies: 2 Connections to social service and community organizations: 1
SIG funding	2011–12: $4,899,454
School level	Elementary school
School enrollment	354
District urbanicity / enrollment	Urban / 25,283
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics[a]	2012–13: 21% / 21% 2014–15: 27% / 34% [b]
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	98%
Racial/Ethnic Composition	
White	1%
Hispanic	86%
Black	13%
Asian	0%
Other	0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. SIG funding: allocated to the district.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 and state averages were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. 2012–13: average of grades 3–5; year of SIG exit proficiency provided by principal and state school report card.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] State Averages (Reading / Mathematics): 2012–13: 69%, 61%. 2014–15: 73%, 66%.

[b] In 2014–15, only a portion of students in grades 3–8 participated in state testing, and state-level results were not released. Percentages shown are estimates calculated by the research team.

Improvement Strategies

SIG Exiter School 2 implemented a multi-faceted turnaround plan that included the following strategies: (1) establishing a strong leadership team with both administrative and instructional leaders, (2) providing coaching and professional development for teachers, (3) regularly reviewing student data to inform teaching practices and school-level improvement strategies, (4) providing socio-emotional supports for students, and (5) implementing efforts focused specifically on improving student attendance and behavior.

One teacher also reported that the school district had helped to sustain the school's turnaround efforts by offering the principal ways to keep key partners in the school budget after the school had achieved Level 3 status.

> **SIG Exiter 2's Key Improvement Strategies**
>
> - Strong leadership team
> - Coaching and professional development for teachers
> - Using student data to inform teaching and school improvement strategies
> - Socio-emotional support for students
> - Targeted interventions to address attendance and behavior

Establishing a strong leadership team

With support from the school district, the current principal joined the administrative team of SIG Exiter School 2 in 2012–13 as part of the school's turnaround plan. The principal, who had prior experience leading school improvement practices in struggling schools, made some early changes to kick-start the turnaround process. For example, during the first six months, the principal made sure each classroom in grades 3, 4, and 5 was equipped with smartboards. According to one teacher, during the year, grade-level teachers received funds to equip their classrooms with any necessary supplies.

The school also formed an Instructional Leadership Team that included the principal, two Instructional Leadership Specialists (ILS), and teacher representatives from each grade level. The ILSs were experienced teachers who took on this leadership role, becoming internal instructional coaches in math/science or literacy. The team met weekly to discuss strategies to support the school's academic achievement goals, including using student performance data to develop appropriate interventions to address areas of academic need. The ILSs met with teachers to provide individualized coaching on various aspects of teaching in their subject area(s). They shadowed teachers and provided feedback on best practices and on how to use student performance measures to inform lesson planning, among other support activities.

> **Equipped Classrooms**
>
> "The principal gave each grade level teacher a certain amount of money. He gave it to them four times. So they got—we're talking in the thousands of dollars, to supply their classroom with what they needed. So they were able to pick out all those things. … I think that was very helpful to the teachers."
>
> *–Teacher Interview*

Coaching and professional development for teachers

As part of the turnaround efforts, the school provided one-on-one coaching to teachers from the in-school math/science and literacy ILSs. ILSs coached teachers of grades 3 through 5 on subject-specific best practices, covering such topics as guidance for teaching English learners, data reviews, lesson planning, and informal observations with feedback. Once a month, teachers were pulled from their classrooms to work with the ILSs for a day of intensive unit planning. The school's staff of retiree call-backs covered the classroom while teachers were away during the monthly planning day.

> **Instructional Coaches Support Teacher Professional Development**
>
> "I coach teachers about best practices in math and best practices in general, [such as] classroom management. … I also do professional development. I coach teachers individually. I go into their rooms and I do observations. Not formal observations. Just informal observation, and I give them feedback, which is not shared with the principal."
>
> *–Teacher Interview*

Teachers also met in grade-level teams during "team time." ILSs often provided training or professional development, provided lesson planning support, or conducted data reviews with teachers during these sessions. One teacher mentioned that reviewing data and then planning the lesson often go hand-in-hand because indicators of student progress can inform the priority areas to be addressed in a lesson. The ILS developed a lesson plan template that teachers of any grade-level or subject could use. This helped teachers plan lessons that aligned with the school's goals.

Using data to inform targeted support for students

The ILSs analyzed school data and reported internally to the principal, to the rest of the Instructional Leadership Team, and to teachers about student academic performance data. The data were used to gauge progress on academic achievement in the school, to help define the focus of the next phase of interventions, and to inform teacher lesson planning and selecting of other academic supports for students as needed. For example, students who performed in the lowest two performance groups—"in warning" and "needs improvement"—were offered the opportunity to attend an after-school enrichment program.

The school also implemented regular meetings to review data in "data teams." Members of the Instructional Leadership Team gathered on Saturdays to look at data and discuss next steps to bolster students' academic achievement. One teacher described how staff went about reviewing data and the kinds of questions they discussed: "We did a big data dive. What kids are performing at this level? What can we do for those kids? And what are [we] going to do for those? And how are we going to reteach them?"

Informed by student data reviews, SIG Exiter School 2 implemented a few strategies to boost the academic performance of its high-needs student population. The school grouped students in grades 3 through 5 by student ability to facilitate instruction relevant to individual students' current performance levels. Each classroom was also offered a second teacher specifically trained to support English learners; these interventionists were generally retired teachers who were already familiar with many best practices and well equipped to provide support to the classroom. The third strategy consisted of in-classroom tutoring support in 2014–15 and 2015–16 from AmeriCorps members. One AmeriCorps member in each year tutored small groups, reinforcing the lessons teachers delivered. Each AmeriCorps member supported a designated caseload of students who had been assigned at the beginning of the year based on student academic and behavioral data.

Socio-emotional support for students

During the past two school years (2014–15 and 2015–16), one or two of the AmeriCorps members, who were also graduate social work students, supported the socio-emotional needs of students in SIG Exiter School 2. The members helped students manage their behavior while in the classroom and offered students opportunities to take breaks during class time as needed. All interviewed stakeholders commented that these member-provided supports helped improve students' ability to focus on classwork and participate in the school day, while also minimizing disruptions during the lesson for all students in the classroom.

> **Members Provide Student Socio-Emotional Support**
>
> "[Members'] ability to keep children in the classroom and deal with their issues and get help for the families, that really helped us in getting these kids on board academically. Because if [students are] not in the classroom and they're always leaving, they're not getting [the material]."
>
> *—Teacher Interview*

These stakeholders reported that the students could better manage difficult situations by developing meaningful relationships with AmeriCorps members. AmeriCorps members worked closely with the guidance counselor to provide student-specific interventions and encouraged students to seek guidance from a school counselor when appropriate.

Strategies to improve behavior and attendance

The school implemented a few practices to improve student behavior and attendance and thereby school culture, including the use of the Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) system to reward students for exhibiting positive behavior during school. AmeriCorps members participated in PBIS program implementation, staffing activities that students could attend when they reached their behavior goals. In the 2014–15 school year, AmeriCorps members also helped improve student attendance through the Walking School Bus program, in which members picked up students from their homes and walked to school all together. The principal and one interviewed teacher reported the Walking School Bus contributed positively to improving student attendance that year. The Walking School Bus program could not continue in 2015–16 because there were not enough AmeriCorps members to run the activity. The grantee staff member attributed improvement in student behavior and attendance to relationship building between students and members. The staff member commented that students believed that AmeriCorps members cared whether they came to school or not, so they were more likely to attend and be engaged.

Perceived Effectiveness of Strategies and AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

Strategies Perceived as Most Helpful to SIG Exit

All interviewed stakeholders mentioned that one of the most helpful elements of the school's turnaround plan was the new principal and the Instructional Leadership Team, which included math and English language arts coaches. One teacher reported that the school's academic coaches (ILSs) were strong and knew what interventions the school needed to implement and how to help teachers by "going into the classrooms, having their lesson plans structured to fit tests and [state test] guidelines."

Strategies Perceived as Less Helpful to SIG Exit

All interviewed stakeholders mentioned that the academic supports provided to students in the classroom by AmeriCorps members varied as a function of the members' expertise and level of interest and engagement. While stakeholders praised the efficacy of the AmeriCorps members' supports of the socio-emotional aspects of students' lives, they characterized the efficacy of the small-group tutoring that members provided to students as mixed. For example, one teacher reported that one tutor did not build

strong relationships with students or teachers and was not perceived as effective at providing socio-emotional and academic supports. That same teacher speculated that it was due to the member not being placed in an academic area of interest or expertise. The principal, on the other hand, reported that all AmeriCorps members contributed positively to school improvement strategies.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

Overall, all interviewed stakeholders agreed that AmeriCorps member presence in the school positively affected the school's turnaround efforts. All stakeholders mentioned how the AmeriCorps members who supported the socio-emotional needs of students in both years of service (2014–15 and 2015–16) became integral members of the school community, by attending celebrations, building relationships with their caseload of students, and developing strong rapport with school staff. One teacher spoke highly of the relationships one AmeriCorps member built with students and teaching staff (see textbox).

The principal mentioned that the school benefitted from the AmeriCorps presence, especially with members' contributions to school improvement initiatives related to behavior and attendance. Because of these benefits, the principal said, he would have liked to have had at least one or two more members in the school each year. "They're just such a critical positive impact on the building. … The relationships they have with the kids, the contributions that they're making in terms of school improvement initiatives that we're trying to get off the ground."

> **Praise for AmeriCorps Member**
>
> "She has a great relationship with the kids and a great relationship with the staff. And the staff count on her."
>
> *–Teacher Interview*

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

SIG Exiter School 2 stakeholders reported improvement in student academic achievement, student socio-emotional health, and school climate. Teachers at the school expressed concern about the possible implications for sustaining school improvement efforts when the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grant ended or if funding ran out to pay retired teacher call-backs. According to one teacher, the principal met with district officials to discuss strategies for shifting resources to allow some of the supports to stay in the school.

Student academic achievement

Student standardized test scores improved substantially for math and reading between 2012–13 and 2014–15, the year the school changed from Level 4 status (lowest proficiency level) to Level 3 status. Student math scores increased from 21 percent proficient in 2012–13 to 34 percent proficient in 2014–15. Gains were shown in reading also, from 21 percent proficient in 2012–13 to 27 percent proficient in 2014–15.[38]

Student socio-emotional health

All stakeholders reported improved student socio-emotional health and improved classroom behavior. AmeriCorps members were cited as the reason for much of this improvement. The trusting relationships members formed with students as positive role models in the students' lives were perceived as supporting students' socio-emotional health, as well as students' attendance and engagement.

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38   Source: Massachusetts Department of Education, 2015 and 2014 Massachusetts School Report Card Overviews http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/. Full URL is not included to maintain confidentiality.

School climate

All interviewed stakeholders mentioned successes in improving school climate. Even without the Walking School Bus in 2015–16, the principal reported improved attendance: "Our attendance this year is the highest it's ever been since I've been at the school, and it could be the highest in the history of the school."

School capacity and implications of change in SIG status

All of the interviewed stakeholders reported improved capacity for the school. The teaching staff's capacity to use data to inform teaching strategies was one example of the kind of capacity the school developed since turnaround began. The principal reported that the turnover of the teaching staff (one-third annually) represented a challenge, both in sustaining institutional memory and in keeping all staff on the same page about school improvement goals and activities. According to one interviewed teacher, the principal had already negotiated to keep a partner coordinator position that would otherwise have been removed from the school's budget after it reached Level 3 status under the state accountability system. The same teacher expressed concern over losing funding or services the school had relied on to achieve that improved status: "A lot of these [services] are what got [the school] out of Level 4 in the first place. And to just let them vanish would be a great disservice."

Case Study 3: Grantee Program #6

Overview

This case study describes a rural New England elementary school's successful efforts in meeting its turnaround goals and exiting SIG status during the 2014–15 school year. It focuses on the specific strategies the school implemented and the roles of AmeriCorps members, school staff, and other volunteers in implementing those strategies. SIG Exiter School 3's write-up is based on phone interviews with the school principal, two teachers, and the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee staff member.

SIG Exiter 3 served more than 427 students in prekindergarten through grade 5 and was the most diverse elementary school in its rural district. More than 50 percent of its student population were English learners and nearly three-quarters were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch. Students and their families hailed from a diverse array of countries, including Somalia, Iraq, and other Arabic-speaking nations. The variety of cultural backgrounds, families' traumatic experiences in their home countries, languages spoken, and other obstacles added to SIG Exiter School 3's challenges. One teacher explained, "The big, big job for us has been to get families involved to understand the school system. And when you think you've got it made, then it's a new group coming in and you have to … learn what their needs are."

> **Key Components of SIG Exiter School 3's Turnaround Plan**
>
> - Increased academic achievement among student subgroups
> - Teacher professional development on teaching strategies and cultural diversity
> - Parental and family engagement
> - Extended school day

In 2010, SIG Exiter School 3 received the largest SIG grant in its state, totaling $3.4 million. Its turnaround plan focused on increasing academic achievement, particularly for subgroups; improving teachers' instructional abilities through a college reading and writing workshop and professional development on poverty and cultural issues; and extending the school day. The school also worked to better support and include its students' families in the school community and their children's learning. The school exited SIG status in the 2014–15 school year and continued to be monitored while it worked toward proficiency.

SIG Exiter School 3's principal, who had been at the school since 2010, and one school staff member voiced contrasting views about how the designation of Turnaround status affected their school's community and morale. While the principal believed the designation galvanized the school staff to show their commitment to success and to their students, the teacher described it as "traumatic for the school to go through the process." She commented that staff "feel blamed for something that's really not your fault."

In the 2015–16 school year, SIG Exiter School 3 had six School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, who worked in classrooms to support students academically and pulled out small groups of students during lunch to work on their socio-emotional skills. The members also ran an after-school program and worked to engage families. The school also partnered with Foster Grandparents, another CNCS-supported program. As one teacher noted, these two programs "support each other in making connections with kids." Community health professionals also worked to connect students and families to needed resources.

Exhibit B-16: SIG Exiter Case Study at a Glance: (3) Grantee Program #6

Characteristic	School
Number of AmeriCorps members	2015–16: 6 2014–15: not reported
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	Mentoring and academic support: 1 Community partner: 1
SIG funding	2009–10: $3,386,154
School level	Elementary school
School enrollment	427
District urbanicity / enrollment	Rural / 6,966
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics[a]	2012–13: 55%; 47% 2013–14: 60%, 50%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	73%
Racial/Ethnic Composition	
White	40%
Hispanic	5%
Black	41%
Asian	10%
Other	5%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. SIG Exiter 3: allocated to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 and state averages were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Proficiency data from year of SIG exit were provided by principals. SIG Exiter 3: 2012–13: grade 5. 2013–14: grades 3–8.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] State Averages (Reading / Mathematics): 2012–13: 71%, 62%. 2013–14: 69%, 60%.

Improvement Strategies

SIG Exiter School 3 used a variety of strategies to exit SIG status and improve students' reading and math proficiencies, including providing socio-emotional support for students, increasing teachers' capacity to teach, and engaging families in the school.

Socio-emotional support for a diverse student body

In line with its goal of serving specific subgroups of its student population who needed more support, SIG Exiter School 3 addressed students' behavioral and socio-emotional needs through varied tailored support mechanisms, including a new behavior program, Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS), which the principal believed benefitted students. The school also addressed issues of bullying and diversity by creating a team to tackle these issues "from a civil rights point of view." The principal explained that her school had civil rights clubs, a civil rights week in March, and a civil rights assembly "to celebrate working together and being cooperative and recognizing people bring different things to us."

When asked about the role of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in helping her school exit SIG status, the principal said she believed members contributed with their ability to connect with kids: "Anytime you have additional support in a classroom, I think that's a real good thing."

> **AmeriCorps Compensates for Loss of SIG Resources**
>
> "AmeriCorps came in very handy because you get to a point where some of the [SIG] money's going away and yet you still have all these things you need to do."
>
> *—Teacher Interview*

The principal and both interviewed teachers noted that members provided socio-emotional support to students. One teacher described how a member gave personal instruction and rewards to a student whose mother was incarcerated. The teacher described a drastic change in the student that "allowed that student to go from not completing their work and … becoming a little bit worrisome … to being able to participate in the school day and have … a really positive experience."

Increasing teachers' capacity to teach

SIG Exiter School 3 worked to increase its teachers' abilities to successfully instruct and meet the needs of its diverse student population in large part by offering extensive professional development. Topics ranged from the effective use of data, to the intricacies of serving English learners and special-needs students, to lessons in which one teacher would model exemplary practices for other teachers observing the class. As one teacher explained, "We put a lot of effort into making sure that everybody is well-trained in what we're doing."

AmeriCorps members could attend professional development programs, and they also supported teachers' capacities to teach by virtue of being in the classroom. One teacher explained, "In an elementary school, it's you and your classroom. You can't really get out … even having somebody who can run down to the office with a kid if they're sick, you can't do those things." She concluded that having members function as reliable adults who "are involved and care about the kids" was a huge help regardless of the specific activities they performed.

Both teachers noted that the members had helped to support their school as it lost its SIG funding and resources. Specifically, members were useful in their ability to connect with students and serve as an additional adult able to work with small groups of students. As one teacher explained, "We have a lot of kids who have to have … small-group testing as an accommodation for them. There aren't enough adults.

The AmeriCorps people were very helpful that way. They could even go in and cover a classroom so a teacher could go briefly, or they would sit with a small group and just be there while they took the test."

Engaging families

SIG Exiter School 3 also worked to engage and support students' families as part of its strategy to exit SIG status. The principal and one teacher discussed a parent math academy run by teachers and supported by members. The principal explained, "It was a great academy because [parents] got to learn how to play the games associated with the math curriculum, and then they also had a chance to take games home." At the academy, the school also included a community health group that connected families with resources they needed. For example, the health group brought in another program that enabled Somali women, who were a large proportion of those attending the academy, to run a farm stand that accepted food stamps as payment.

Perceived Effectiveness of Strategies and AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

Strategies Perceived as Most Helpful to SIG Exit

Of all of the strategies SIG Exiter School 3 used to exit SIG status, its strong leadership and intense interventions were its most helpful tactics, according to the school-based interviewees. The school's School Turnaround AmeriCorps staff believed strongly that it was their "best partner school relationship" because the principal was "super invested in the success of [the] program and … knows the name of every student." The staff credited the school's successful exit from SIG status to its mixture of "really fantastic leadership" and the "variety of resources and interventions" that came together to create a high-functioning school and positive climate. One teacher described the principal's leadership as "instrumental," and the other explained that her support of staff "makes all the difference."

Strategies Perceived as Less Helpful to SIG Exit

Initially, members were assigned to work with the neediest students, but school staff quickly realized that was "leading to a lot of unsuccessful moments [with students] because [the AmeriCorps members] were our least-trained staff." The principal and teachers noted that members were generally untrained for their daily responsibilities when they arrived at the school. Throughout the year they were included in PBIS training with school staff and were welcome at professional development sessions.[39] Once they changed the student population with which the members worked—from the neediest students to struggling students they could support without advanced training—the arrangement with members was both "purposeful" and "successful."

One teacher also noted that sometimes members completed their terms of service or left abruptly, which caused issues. She elaborated, "You think you get someone who's really good, and then they're gone. And then you have to start over again, and that's very difficult." She described how her first year with the program she received a "good fit" in a member who really connected with her students, but "then her hours ran out, and she was gone."

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[39]   The program described challenges in 2013–14 and 2014–15 specifically with recruiting members early enough to have them fully trained by the beginning of the school year.

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Contributions to SIG Exit

School Turnaround AmeriCorps members at SIG Exiter School 3 supported teachers and students effectively by providing socio-emotional support to its diverse student population and collaborating and working with teachers in a manner that increased teachers' capacities to teach. One teacher explained that members' effectiveness began with their site coordinator, who was a "really good lead AmeriCorps [leader] at the building." Other contributors were strong communication with the school and the school's principal, who "was incredibly instrumental … in helping with the scheduling [and] setting boundaries." In addition, the other teacher summarized how important it was to have AmeriCorps members remaining in the school when other SIG resources were withdrawn.

Perceived Impact/Success in Meeting Key Turnaround Outcomes

The three strategies SIG Exiter School 3 used to exit SIG status and its use of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members enabled the school to successfully meet key turnaround outcomes for its student and school communities.

Student academic achievement

When this school exited SIG status at the end of the 2013–14 school year, 60 percent of students were proficient in reading and 50 percent proficient in math. This represents a 5 percentage point gain in reading and a 3 percentage point gain in math over the prior year.

Student socio-emotional health

The principal and both interviewed teachers believed that their school had increased its ability to meet the socio-emotional needs of its student population in large part due to its targeted use of its School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. One teacher described how personalized attention and focus from a member allowed a student with adverse home circumstances to have a positive school experience.

School climate

Both teachers believed that their school climate had been positively transformed after the current principal arrived at the school and worked to improve communication with and professional development of teachers. One teacher recalled that teachers had been told that if they were to remain at SIG Exiter School 3 they "will be working harder, [they] will be working longer," which she reported some teachers originally found "obnoxious." The teacher described how over time she and her colleagues realized that the principal supported them, and "that makes a difference." She elaborated that the change in mindset now meant that, "We kind of take care of each other. … People need to know it's going to be really hard and it's not a competition. You all have to work together." The approach has been both "data driven, but it also has to be very kid driven" in order to meet students' needs.

School capacity and implications of change in SIG status

SIG Exiter School 3's capacity to meet students' needs and to train and support its teachers effectively was perceived to increase through its SIG funding and targeted interventions, but the school has felt the loss of its SIG resources since exiting at the end of 2013–14. With the impending withdrawal of its six School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, all of whom were described as important to their school's progress by interviewed stakeholders, the principal and teachers voiced their concerns about the loss of another resource that helped them achieve their success. The principal stated, "Unfortunately, … because we've made so much progress, we're no longer eligible for AmeriCorps." One teacher anticipated the withdrawal of members would be a "huge loss" for the school.

Like the school's staff, the grantee program's staff member also reflected on the detrimental implications of the change in status for its continued relationship with the school: "It's also frustrating actually right now because we are looking at re-competing for another AmeriCorps grant, and I don't know how realistic it is that we will be re-funded, but that school, because [it has] changed status, will no longer be eligible."

Case Study 4: Grantee Program #8

<u>Overview</u>

This case study describes the major strategies employed by SIG Exiter School 4 to address school turnaround goals and achieve key outcomes during the 2015–16 school year. The write-up is based on telephone interviews with the principal and three teachers, an interview with the grantee program staff member, and reviews of the program's progress reports to CNCS.

SIG Exiter School 4 is in an area largely defined as a poor community, deeply affected by the downturn of the coal mining industry. The school principal estimated that the county's tax revenue has decreased by more than "one million dollars" in the 2015–16. These economic changes resulted in massive population decline and increased poverty in the community, including among the families and students at the school. Exhibit B-17 below illustrates SIG Exiter School 4's demographics as of the 2012–13 school year. Note that proficiency data refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Of the school's almost 500 students, more than half were eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch.

When it was labeled a turnaround school, SIG Exiter School 4 was ranked 228 of 232 high schools in the state. By the time it exited SIG status in 2013–14, it had garnered remarkable success in student achievement since the beginning of the turnaround efforts. In 2012–13, only 36 percent of students were proficient in reading and 40 percent in math, compared with state averages of 56 percent and 36 percent. In 2013–14, the year the school exited SIG status, 56 percent of students were proficient in reading, representing a 20 percentage point increase (although math performance remained low).[40]

In 2015–16, the school had 18 AmeriCorps members, who served all students. They provided varied services, including mentorship, ACT registration and preparation, academic support, and attendance monitoring. While the school has applied for multiple grants to maintain these services, AmeriCorps members were expected to leave at the end of the year.

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[40] The study did not collect any information to explain the decrease in math scores.

Exhibit B-17: SIG Exiter Case Study at a Glance: (4) Grantee Program #8

Characteristic	School
Number of AmeriCorps members	2014–15: 25 2015–16: 18
Number of non-AmeriCorps partners	College readiness: 1
SIG funding	2010–11: $1,497,464
School level	High school
School enrollment	497
District urbanicity / enrollment	Rural / 1,918
Academic proficiency in reading / mathematics[a]	2012–13: 36% / 40% 2013–14: 56% / 31%
Proportion of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	59%
Racial/Ethnic Composition	
White	99%
Hispanic	0%
Black	1%
Asian	0%
Other	0%

Notes: SIG Funding: Data on SIG funding were obtained from individual school or district websites and therefore cannot be referenced without revealing school identities. SIG Exiter 4: allocated to the school.

Academic Proficiency: Proficiency data from 2012–13 and state averages were obtained from state websites, and refer to school years before School Turnaround AmeriCorps program implementation began. Proficiency data from year of SIG exit were provided by principals. SIG Exiter 4: 2012–13: grade 12. 2013–14: grades 10, 11.

Enrollments, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, Racial/Ethnic Composition: U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. 2012–2013.

[a] State Averages (Reading / Mathematics): 2012–13: 56%; 36%. 2013–14: 55%, 38%. Grades 9–12.

Improvement Strategies

Five key strategies emerged from interviews that SIG Exiter School 4 used to achieve its turnaround goals and transform the school's culture: (1) cultivating strong leadership and school support; (2) prioritizing time for student learning; (3) building trusting relationships with students; (4) promoting a college readiness culture of high expectations; and (5) targeting academic support for struggling students.

Cultivating strong leadership and school support

The school principal and all three teachers interviewed described the culture at SIG Exiter School 4 as toxic under the previous administration. Two teachers focused on the stigma associated with becoming a turnaround school. Another teacher described lack of trust and respect among faculty, students, and the administration.

Two teachers discussed how the change in leadership facilitated a change in the school culture. Under previous administrations, "there had been a lot of blaming" in which schools leaders failed to take ownership of boosting student academic achievement. One teacher mentioned that the new principal took responsibility for the school's progress and held everyone accountable. For example, that teacher noted, the principal frequently reviewed formative and summative assessments to assess each teacher's performance and to try to eliminate personal bias in decision-making.

Two teachers indicated that the school principal was also instrumental in increasing faculty and student buy-in, which played an important role in transforming the school's negative culture. The new administration collected and integrated feedback from teachers, staff, the community, and students through surveys and

open meetings to increase "buy-in into the new way of doing things." One teacher described how the administration asked students and teachers for their top 10 recommendations for improving the school, and they established shared goals based on that feedback.

Prioritizing time for student learning

The school principal and one teacher discussed how the school allocated and used time in new ways as part of their turnaround plan to increase academic performance. To facilitate increased learning support for struggling students, the school principal indicated that he extended the learning day by 20 minutes and increased time to implement interventions for struggling students.

> **SIG Exiter School 4's Key Improvement Strategies**
> - Cultivating strong leadership and school support
> - Prioritizing time for student learning
> - Building trusting relationships with students
> - Promoting a college readiness culture of high expectations
> - Targeting academic support for struggling students

The school principal also increased time to implement interventions to boost academic achievement and bridge gaps in math. For example, he revised the school schedule to ensure that all juniors were required to complete two and half hours of math instruction a day. Additionally, he incorporated a Response to Intervention class within the school schedule that focused exclusively on mathematics instruction for juniors. In these classes, teachers addressed students' weaknesses based on assessment scores. The school leadership also eliminated all physical education, health, and elective classes to try to increase student performance in literacy and math.

While initially the revised schedule was unpopular, the principal reported that faculty and students were now comfortable with it, given the remarkable success they have achieved together academically. One teacher commented that these systematic changes helped to increase the school's end-of-course and ACT scores over the past three years.

Building trusting relationships with students

The school principal and two teachers described how AmeriCorps members helped transform the school's culture by building trusting relationships with students. The AmeriCorps members served as mentors and friends to students. Specifically, one teacher indicated that many students were not comfortable speaking with teachers about emotional or personal issues.

These relationships not only helped change the school's toxic culture, but also increased students' expectations and motivation for college. Many students at SIG Exiter School 4 resided in communities and homes where they were not expected to attend college or succeed academically. The principal and two teachers described how AmeriCorps members inspired the students by telling them, "You're going to college. … You can do it. I did it."

The grantee program reported that it recruited members from the local area out of a desire to create attractive service opportunities for people who had committed to stay in the region despite its economic challenges.[41,42] When members from the students' same background told them they can go to college, drawing on members' experiences, students recognized they faced similar challenges.

Additionally, the school principal, three teachers, and the grantee staff member discussed how attendance monitoring had enabled AmeriCorps members to connect with students. For example, the AmeriCorps members reviewed attendance reports daily. If students were absent, the AmeriCorps members called the students' families to determine how they can best help students make it to school the next day. By building trusting relationships with students, the AmeriCorps members helped build a strong foundation for a college readiness culture in which students were expected to attend school daily and progress to college.

Promoting a college readiness culture of high expectations

A central component of SIG Exiter School 4's turnaround plan focused on ACT registration and preparation as a mechanism for promoting and sustaining a strong college readiness culture. One teacher observed that in prior years, the school did not proactively encourage students to complete the ACT, aside from state-mandated ACT testing of juniors each March. However, under new leadership and vision, students were encouraged to complete the ACT earlier in the year, beginning in August.

The school principal and all three teachers mentioned that the AmeriCorps members were instrumental in registering students for the ACT and boosting student achievement on the exam. The AmeriCorps members regularly engaged parents and students about registering students for the test. Another teacher indicated that AmeriCorps members provided ACT preparation for students. For example, they assessed students using ACT practice exams and worked individually with students in key areas such as English, math, and science.

Increasing academic support for struggling students

The school principal and all three interviewed teachers viewed AmeriCorps members as critical in providing struggling students with increased academic support. Based on assessment scores, the school principal identified approximately 50 sophomores he believed could become proficient on state assessments. AmeriCorps members provided mentoring and one-on-one math instruction for these students. By providing one-on-one attention to struggling students, they could ensure the students understood basic math skills necessary to improve academically.

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[41]   One member, quoted in the 2014–15 report, described how the program "has impacted my life both professionally and personally. It has enabled me to give back to the high school I attended as well as the community in which I live by making a difference in the lives of young people."

[42]   The grantee program explained in its reports in 2013–14 and 2014–15 how the local economic conditions also created a retention problem for the program. Employment opportunities in the area were rare, and so members often left their AmeriCorps service if they were offered a full-time, permanent position elsewhere because they might not receive another offer for years.

APPENDIX C.   SUPPLEMENTAL SURVEY DATA TABLES

C.1.   Grantee Survey

Exhibit C-1:   Relationship with Target School Prior to School Turnaround AmeriCorps Program

Statement	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
Any prior relationship	**N=13**	**N=13**
Yes, with some schools	8	7
Yes, with all schools	4	4
No	1	2
Duration of prior relationship	**N=12**	**N=11**
Two years or less	4	2
Three or more years	4	3
Varies by school	4	6

Notes: Year 1: ("Any prior relationship" N=13; "Duration of prior relationship N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: ("Any prior relationship" N=13; "Duration of prior relationship N=11, Missing=0)

Duration question limited to grantees whose relationship with the school(s) existed before the School Turnaround AmeriCorps partnership agreement. Multiple responses were permitted for grantees who indicated the duration of prior relationship varies by school. In Year 1, among the four grantees where duration of relationship varied by school, one grantee had a relationship of less than 6 months and all four had relationships of 1 year, 2 years, and 3 years. In Year 2, among the six grantees where duration of relationship varied by school, one grantee had relationships of between 6 months and 1 year, 1 year, and 2 years; three grantees had relationships of 1 year, 2 years, and 3 years; and two grantees had relationships of 2 years and 3 years.

Exhibit reads: Eight grantees in Year 1 out of n=13 and seven grantees in Year 2 out of n=13 had a relationship with some of their target schools prior to the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. Four of the grantees in Year 1 out of n=12 and two of the grantees in Year 2 out of n=11 with any prior school relationships indicated that their prior relationships had existed for two years or less.

Source: Grantee Survey Q1 (Did your organization's relationship with the school(s) your grant is operating in exist before you established a partnership agreement for the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?). Grantee Survey Q1a (If yes, how long has your organization been collaborating with the school(s)?)

Exhibit C-2:   Unit of Service for School Turnaround AmeriCorps Direct Services

Target	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
Individual students	11	12
Whole classroom	7	5
All students	4	5
Varies by school	3	3

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Frequencies do not sum to 13 because multiple responses were permitted.

Exhibit reads: Eleven grantees in Year 1 and 12 grantees in Year 2 indicated that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided direct services to individual students.

Source: Grantee Survey Q2 (To the best of your knowledge, do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide direct services to individual students, to the whole classroom, or to all students in the school during the 2015–16 school year?)

Exhibit C-3: Grantee Knowledge of Students Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Knowledge Level	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
Yes	11	11
Some, but not all	2	2

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: Eleven grantees in Year 1 and Year 2 knew which students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members.

Source: Grantee Survey Q3 (Do you know which students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?)

Exhibit C-4: Target Number of Students Expected to be Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps

	Year 1 Average number of students per school expected to be served (n)	Year 1 Average number of students per school expected to complete services (n)	Year 1 Complete/ Serve (%)	Year 1 Average number of AmeriCorps members per school (n)	Year 1 Caseload (Complete/ Members) (%)	Year 2 Average number of students per school expected to be served (n)	Year 2 Average number of students per school expected to complete services (n)	Year 2 Complete/ Serve (%)	Year 2 Average number of AmeriCorps members per school (n)	Year 2 Caseload (Complete/ Members) (%)
Mean	210	189	89	8	28	223	166	78	7	25
Standard deviation	150	170	30	5	20	174	159	25	5	12
Maximum	540	673	165	20	87	689	600	100	20	48
Minimum	46	38	45	1	8	14	12	27	0	11
Median	160	136	78	6	25	180	135	88	6	25
1st Quartile	102	61	75	4	16	122	81	64	4	17
3rd Quartile	230	227	100	10	34	309	185	100	9	32

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0). Percentages and Ns rounded to the nearest single digit.

Exhibit reads: The mean number of students expected to be served across all 13 grantees is 210 per school in Year 1 and 223 per school in Year 2. The mean number of students expected to complete services across all 13 grantees is 189 per school in Year 1 and 166 per school in Year 2. The mean percentage of students expected to complete services out of students expected to be served is 89% in Year 1 and 78% in Year 2. The mean number of AmeriCorps members per school is eight in Year 1 and seven in Year 2. The mean caseload (number of students per school expected to complete services divided by the number of AmeriCorps members) is 28 in Year 1 and 25 in Year 2.

Source: Grantee Survey Q5 (Please review the list below to confirm the schools to which your organization assigned School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. Fill in the targeted number of students that you expect to serve and complete the program (as defined above in Question 4) this school year (2014–15 and 2015–16). If you don't know, please write in "DK.")

Exhibit C-5: Frequency of Student Progress Meetings between School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members and School Staff

Occurrences	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
More than twice per month	5	3
Twice per month	-	3
Once per month	3	3
Once per year	1	1
Very different from school to school	3	3

Notes: One grantee in Year 1 did not know how often School Turnaround AmeriCorps members meet with school staff to discuss student progress data. "Twice per month" was not an option in Year 1. Year 1: (N=12, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: Five grantees in Year 1 and three grantees in Year 2 indicated that meetings between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school staff are held twice per month or more often. Three grantees in Year 1 and Year 2 indicated that it is very different from school to school.

Source: Grantee Survey Q7 (On average, how often do the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members meet with school staff to discuss data on the progress of all students? Please select the option that is closest to your members' experience.)

Exhibit C-6: Mechanisms to Identify Students for School Turnaround AmeriCorps Activities

Mechanism	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
Teacher recommendation	9	9
Standardized test scores	5	8
Grades	7	7
Counselor recommendation	6	5
Student request	4	3
Parent request	2	1
Other	4	6

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Frequencies do not sum to 13 because multiple responses were permitted.

Exhibit reads: Nine grantees in Year 1 and Year 2 chose "Teacher recommendation" as a mechanism to identify students for School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities.

Source: Grantee Survey Q8 (To the best of your knowledge, which mechanisms did the school(s) use to identify students to participate in activities led by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?)

Exhibit C-7: Reasons Students were Identified to Participate in School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Reason	Year 1 (n)	Year 2 (n)
Improve academic achievement	12	11
Improve academic engagement	10	8
Improve behavior	9	8
Assist students at risk for dropping out	7	8
Improve self-esteem or socio-emotional health	8	7
Sustain performance	6	6
Other	0	1

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: 12 grantees in Year 1 and 11 grantees in Year 2 indicated that students were identified to participate in School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities to "Improve academic achievement."

Source: Grantee Survey Q9 (To the best of your knowledge, what are the reasons that students were identified to participate in School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming?)

Exhibit C-8: Grantee Perceptions of Most Important Student Outcomes in Next Two Years

School Turnaround Student Outcome	Year 1 Rank of Importance Number Ranked	Year 1 Rank of Importance Mean Rankings (Standard Deviations)	Year 2 Rank of Importance Number Ranked	Year 2 Rank of Importance Mean Rankings (Standard Deviations)
Enhanced academic achievement	12	2.8 (2.7)	11	2.0 (1.8)
Improved attendance	12	4.1 (1.9)	10	3.9 (2.1)
Increased motivation	12	4.3 (2.0)	10	4.0 (1.8)
Improved grades	12	3.5 (2.4)	10	4.2 (2.2)
Improved completion of assignments	11	5.4 (1.9)	10	4.6 (2.1)
Increased self-esteem	12	5.8 (2.0)	10	4.8 (2.0)
Improved socio-emotional health	12	5.5 (2.5)	10	5.8 (2.4)
Improved behavior	12	4.6 (1.7)	10	6.6 (1.5)

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0);

Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important; not all responses were given a ranking. One grantee in Year 1 and Year 2 indicated that this question was not applicable and that grantee was excluded from the calculations. Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean rankings of grantees in Year 2.

Exhibit reads: 12 grantees in Year 1 and 11 grantees in Year 2 ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the most important student outcome, with a mean ranking on a 9-point scale of 2.8 in Year 1 and 2.0 in Year 2; 100% of grantees ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Grantee Survey Q10 (What do you consider to be the most important school turnaround outcomes for students over the next two years?)

Exhibit C-9a: Grantee Perceptions of Areas of Improvement in Student Outcomes in Year 1

Student Outcome	Total (n)	All Schools (n)	Most Schools (>50%) (n)	Some Schools (25-49%) (n)	Small Number of Schools (<25%) (n)	Don't Know (n)	Degree of Improvement Mean Rankings (Standard Deviations)	Number Ranked
Enhanced academic achievement	13	7	1	2	0	3	2.4 (2.0)	9
Improved grades	13	4	1	2	0	6	2.6 (2.1)	7
Improved completion of assignments	13	4	0	3	0	6	4.0 (2.2)	6
Improved behavior	13	3	2	0	2	6	4.0 (3.6)	6
Increased motivation	13	2	1	1	0	9	4.0 (3.6)	4
Increased self-esteem	13	2	1	1	0	9	4.3 (1.3)	4
Improved attendance	13	4	0	1	1	7	4.5 (2.1)	5
Improved socio-emotional health	13	2	1	1	0	9	4.5 (2.2)	4

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0)

Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important. Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for grantees who ranked the option. Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean rankings of grantees.

Exhibit reads: In Year 1, seven grantees perceived that students at all schools demonstrated "Enhanced academic achievement." One grantee perceived "Enhanced academic achievement" in most schools, whereas two grantees perceived it in some schools. Grantees in Year 1 ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the student outcome with the greatest degree of improvement across schools, with a mean ranking on a 9-point scale of 2.4; 13 grantees in Year 1 ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Grantee Survey Q11 (Please fill in the following table about student outcomes. Was there improvement in this area for students in your schools served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this year? If you marked "Yes," what were the outcomes with the greatest degree of improvement, across schools?)

Exhibit C-9b: Grantee Perceptions of Areas of Improvement in Student Outcomes in Year 2

Student Outcome	Total (n)	All Schools (n)	Most Schools (>50%) (n)	Some Schools (25-49%) (n)	Small Number of Schools (<25%) (n)	Don't Know (n)	Degree of Improvement Mean Rankings (Standard Deviations)	Number Ranked
Enhanced academic achievement	12	6	5	1	0	-	1.8 (1.4)	11
Increased self-esteem	10	3	6	1	0	-	2.9 (1.7)	7
Improved grades	9	3	5	1	0	-	3.1 (1.1)	8
Improved behavior	7	2	3	1	0	-	3.9 (2.9)	9
Improved attendance	10	2	6	1	0	-	4.3 (1.8)	8
Increased motivation	10	5	3	1	0	-	5.6 (1.9)	7
Improved completion of assignments	9	3	4	1	0	-	5.6 (2.3)	5
Improved socio-emotional health	8	3	4	1	0	-	5.6 (2.4)	7

Notes: Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important. Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for grantees who ranked the option. Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean rankings of grantees. Grantees in Year 2 were not given the option to select "Don't Know."

Exhibit reads: In Year 2, six grantees perceived that students at all schools demonstrated "Enhanced academic achievement." Five grantees perceived "Enhanced academic achievement" in most schools, whereas one perceived it in some schools. Grantees in Year 2 ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the student outcome with the greatest degree of improvement across schools, with a mean ranking on a 9-point scale of 1.8 in Year 2; 12 grantees in Year 2 ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Grantee Survey Q11 (Please fill in the following table about student outcomes. Was there improvement in this area for students in your schools served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this year? If you marked "Yes," what were the outcomes with the greatest degree of improvement, across schools?)

Exhibit C-10: Grantee Opinions about Communication and Collaboration with Partner Schools

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Strongly Agree (n)	Year 1 Agree (n)	Year 1 Disagree (n)	Year 1 Very Different by School (n)	Year 2 Total (n)	Year 2 Strongly Agree (n)	Year 2 Agree (n)	Year 2 Disagree (n)	Year 2 Very Different by School (n)
It is easy for me to get in touch with someone from the school(s)	10	8	2	0	3	12	7	4	0	1
The school(s) has (have) the ability to accomplish set goals	11	6	5	0	2	12	6	6	0	0
The school(s)responds, if needed, when I make contact	11	7	4	0	2	12	6	4	0	2
There is frequent communication between my organization and the school(s) (e.g., visits to each other's offices, meetings, written information and telephone communications)	11	8	3	0	2	12	6	3	3	0
The school(s) is (are) committed to making our collaboration a success	10	7	3	0	3	12	5	5	0	2
The school(s) puts forth effort to maintain relationship(s) with my organization	9	6	3	0	4	12	4	6	0	2

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=12, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: In Year 1, eight grantees strongly agree and two agree that "It is easy for me to get in touch with someone from the school(s)." In Year 2, seven grantees strongly agree and four agree with this statement. Three grantees in Year 1 and one grantee in Year 2 believe that this is very different from school to school. In Year 2, one grantee did not know.

Source: Grantee Survey Q12 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement about your organization's collaboration with your school partner(s) for each statement listed below. Please try to respond in reference to the typical school, if you work with more than one.)

Exhibit C-11: Grantee Satisfaction with Elements of School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Element	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Very Satisfied (n)	Year 1 Satisfied (n)	Year 1 Dissatis-fied (n)	Year 1 Very Dissatis-fied (n)	Year 1 Very Different (n)	Year 2 Total (n)	Year 2 Very Satisfied (n)	Year 2 Satisfied (n)	Year 2 Dissatis-fied (n)	Year 2 Very Dissatis-fied (n)	Year 2 Very Different (n)
Communication between school(s) and grantee	13	5	4	0	0	4	13	2	10	1	0	-
Communication and collaboration between teachers and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	13	1	6	0	0	4	13	4	7	1	0	-
Communication and collaboration between school leadership and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	13	3	7	0	0	3	13	3	10	0	0	-
Implementation of the roles and responsibilities outlined in the school partnership agreements	13	3	8	0	0	1	13	1	11	1	0	-
Placement of members in meaningful service activities	13	5	7	0	0	1	13	1	12	0	0	-
Referral of students to receive services offered by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	13	5	5	0	0	1	13	3	9	1	0	-
Matching of members to students in need of academic strengthening and/or social/emotional supports	13	6	4	0	0	1	13	2	11	0	0	-
Alignment of School Turnaround AmeriCorps member activities with school turnaround plans	13	6	6	0	0	1	13	2	11	0	0	-
Sharing of outcome data by the school/district	13	7	5	0	0	1	13	4	8	1	0	-

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=0)

Number of respondents who did not know ranged from 0-1 in Year 1. Number of respondents who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-1 in Year 1 and Year 2. Year 2 respondents did not have the option to select Don't Know or Very Different.

Exhibit reads: In Year 1, five grantees are very satisfied and four are satisfied with the "Communication between school(s) and grantee." Two grantees are very satisfied and 10 grantees are satisfied with this element in Year 2.

Source: Grantee Survey Q14 (For this school year (2014–15 and 2015–16), please indicate your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with each of the elements listed below.)

Exhibit C-12: Grantee Perceptions of Important Elements of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Implementation

Element	Year 1 Very Important (n)	Year 1 Important (n)	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Not Applicable (n)	Year 2 Very Important (n)	Year 2 Important (n)	Year 2 Total (n)	Year 2 Not Applicable (n)
Comprehensive trainings of AmeriCorps members and program support staff during their year(s) of service	8	5	13	0	9	3	12	0
AmeriCorps member recruitment and selection process that effectively identifies members and selects members with characteristics/skills aligned with the program's objectives[b]	9	4	13	0	9	3	12	0
Orientation and training of AmeriCorps members before they serve at the school	12	1	13	1	11	0	11	1
Clearly defined multi-layered supervisory structure to ensure fidelity of program implementation[b]	10	2	12[a]	0	7	4	11[a]	0
Clearly defined framework (e.g., RTI) to guide instructional choices and allow for the assessment of program effectiveness[b]	6	5	11[a]	0	6	4	10[a]	0
Alignment of AmeriCorps activities to the strategies outlined in the school's turnaround plan	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	4	6	10[a]	0
Highly defined set of research-based scripted interventions to improve student-level outcomes[b]	4	4	8[a]	3	2	6	8[a]	3

Notes: Year 1: (N=13, Missing=0-1); Year 2: (N=13, Missing=1)

[a] Number of respondents who indicated the question was somewhat important ranged from 0-2 in Year 1. The number of respondents who indicated the question was not at all important ranged from 0-2 in Year 1. No respondents in Year 2 indicated the question was somewhat or not at all important.

[b] The wording of the response item was changed to match the wording in the principal survey. This could possibly lead to difference in responses from the grantee staff in Year 1 and Year 2.

Exhibit reads: Eight grantees in Year 1 and nine grantees in Year 2 reported "Comprehensive trainings of AmeriCorps members and program support staff during their year(s) of service" to be very important, and five grantees in Year 1 and three in Year 2 reported this element as important. Zero grantees in Year 1 and Year 2 characterized this as not applicable.

Source: Grantee Survey Q16 (How important are the following characteristics to successfully implementing your School Turnaround AmeriCorps program at a typical school?))

C.2. School Leader Survey

Exhibit C-13: School Leader Title/Role

Title/Role	Year 1 (%)	Year 2-Fall (%)	Year 2-Spring (%)
Principal	89	93	90
Assistant Principal	2	2	5
Site Director	2	0	0
Other	7	5	5

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0). In Year 1, the "Other" response consisted of an Instructional Facilitator. In Year 2-Fall and Year 2-Spring, the "Other" response consisted of an Administrative Teacher on Special Assignment. Table rows are sorted in the order the response items appeared in the survey.

Exhibit reads: 89% of school leaders in Year 1, 93% school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 90% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring were principals.

Source: School Leader Survey Q1 (What is your title/role?)

Exhibit C-14: School Leader Number of Years at School

Years Worked at School	Year 1 (%)	Year 2-Fall (%)	Year 2-Spring (%)
Fewer than 3 years	28	27	25
Between 3 and 4 years	21	16	18
4 years or more	51	57	58

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0).

Exhibit reads: 28% of school leaders in Year 1, 27% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 25% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring had worked fewer than 3 years at their school.

Source: School Leader Survey Q2 (How many years total have you worked at this school, including this year?)

Exhibit C-15: School Improvement Grant Models

School Improvement Grant (SIG) Change Model	Year 1 (%)	Year 2-Fall (%)	Year 2-Spring (%)
Turnaround	64	54	63
Transformation	22	16	13
Restart	7	0	0
Not applicable	8	30	24

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=1). Table rows are sorted in the order the response items appeared in the survey.

Exhibit reads: 64% of school leaders in Year 1, 54% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 63% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring reported that their school followed the Turnaround school improvement grant model.

Source: School Leader Survey Q4 (What School Improvement Grant (SIG) change model does your school follow?)

Exhibit C-16a: Number of Students Per School Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Number of Students Served	Year 1 (%)
Fewer than 10 students	44
Between 10 and 100 students	13
100 or more students	26

Notes: (N=38, Missing=0). Five school leaders (13%) saw slightly different question text: "This school year, how many AmeriCorps members are serving at your school as part of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?" They confirmed the information was still accurate afterwards and thus are included in the table. Seven grantees were not sure.

Exhibit reads: 44% of school leaders in Year 1 reported that fewer than 10 students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members at their school.

Source: School Leader Survey Q5 (This school year, how many students are AmeriCorps members serving at your school as part of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?)

Exhibit C-16b: Average Hours Per Week Each Member Serves

Hours per week	Year 1 (%)
Fewer than 20 hours per week	4
Between 20 and 30 hours per week	19
Between 30 and 40 hours per week	38
Between 40 and 50 hours per week	27
50 or more hours per week	12

Notes: (N=38, Missing=0).

Exhibit reads: 4% of AmeriCorps members in Year 1 served fewer than 20 hours per week on average in the school.
Source: School Leader Survey Q5 (On average, how many hours per week does each of these AmeriCorps members serve this school year?)

Exhibit C-16c: Average Number of Weeks Member Serves in School

Weeks	Year 1 (%)
Fewer than 30 weeks per year	14
Between 30 and 40 weeks per year	50
40 or more weeks per year	37

Notes: (N=38, Missing=0).

Exhibit reads: 14% of AmeriCorps members in Year 1 served fewer than 30 weeks per year in the school.

Source: School Leader Survey Q5 (On average, how many weeks do these AmeriCorps members spend in your school this school year?)

Exhibit C-16d: Number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members

Number of Members Serving	Year 2- Fall (%)	Year 2- Spring (%)
Fewer than 3 members	27	21
Between 3 and 5 members	25	36
Between 6 and 9 members	25	25
10 members or more	23	19

Notes: Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0).

Exhibit reads: 27% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 21% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring reported that fewer than three members were serving at their school as part of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Source: School Leader Survey Q5 (Year 2-Fall: As of today (beginning of school year), how many AmeriCorps members are serving at your school as part of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?; Year 2-Spring: As of today, how many AmeriCorps members are serving at your school as part of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?)

Exhibit C-17: School Turnaround AmeriCorps Direct Services Target

Target	Year 1 (%)	Year 2-Fall (%)	Year 2- Spring (%)
Individual students	74	77	75
Whole classroom	45	58	39
All students in the school	54	50	40

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0). Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were allowed. Table rows are sorted in the order the response items appeared in the survey.

Exhibit reads: 74% of school leaders in Year 1, 77% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 75% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring reported that School Turnaround AmeriCorps services were provided to individual students.

Source: School Leader Survey Q6 (To the best of your knowledge, to whom do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide direct services this school year? (Check all that apply.)

Exhibit C-18: School Leader Knowledge of Students Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Knowledge Level	Year 1 (%)	Year 2-Fall (%)	Year 2- Spring (%)
Yes	74	78	73
Sometimes, but not always	26	18	23
No	0	3	5

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=2); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0).

Table rows are sorted in descending order.

Exhibit reads: 74% of school leaders in Year 1, 78% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall, and 73% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring knew which students were being served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps.

Source: School Leader Survey Q7 (Do you know which students are served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school year?)

Exhibit C-19: School Leader Communications with and Monitoring of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Activities and Members

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2- Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2- Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program	37	12	88	37	3	97	39	2	97
The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of implementation of turnaround activities at this school.	38	6	94	37	0	100	39	7	94
The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of students and share this information with AmeriCorps members.	38	19	82	37	6	94	39	9	91
The principal and/or school leadership team communicates a clear vision of turnaround to AmeriCorps members.	38	16	85	37	4	96	39	17	84
AmeriCorps members are integrated into regular staff meetings and communication.	38	16	85	36	9	91	39	20	79

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0-1). (In this context, the number "Missing" are those that did not rank any outcomes). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 2-Fall and Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-1. Table rows are sorted in descending order by percentage of school leaders who responded "Agree or Strongly Agree" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 88% of school leaders in Year 1, 97% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall, and 97% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring agreed or strongly agreed that "Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program".

Source: School Leader Survey Q8 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with each of the elements listed below for this school year: (Mark one response in each row)).

Exhibit C-20: School Leader Perceptions of Important Elements of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Implementation

Element	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Somewhat Important or Not at all Important (%)	Year 1 Important or Very Important (%)	Year 2- Fall Total (n)	Year 2- Fall Somewhat Important or Not at all Important (%)	Year 2-Fall Important or Very Important (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Somewhat Important or Not at all Important (%)	Year 2-Spring Important or Very Important (%)
AmeriCorps member recruitment and selection process that effectively identifies and selects members with characteristics/skills aligned with the programs objectives*	38	0	100	37	0	100	39	0	100
Comprehensive trainings of AmeriCorps members and program support staff during their year(s) of service	37	2	98	36	9	91	39	0	100
Highly defined set of research-based interventions to improve desired student-level outcomes	38	4	96	36	0	100	39	0	100
Clearly defined framework (e.g. RTI) to guide instructional choices and allow for the assessment of program effectiveness	38	0	100	37	3	96	39	0	100
Orientation and training of AmeriCorps members before they serve at the school	38	2	98	37	10	91	39	2	98
Clearly defined multi-layered supervisory structure to ensure fidelity of program implementation	38	0	100	37	5	95	39	2	98
Alignment AmeriCorps activities to the strategies outlined in the school's turnaround plan	38	2	98	36	0	100	39	2	98

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0). (In this context, the number "Missing" are those that did not rank any outcomes). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 2-Fall: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-1; Year 2-Spring: One respondent indicated the question was not applicable. *The wording of the response item was changed in Year 2-Fall and Year 2-Spring to match the wording in the grantee survey. This could possibly lead to difference in responses from the school leader staff in Year 2-Fall and Year 2-Spring. See Appendix E for specific wording from each survey. Table rows are sorted in descending order by percentage of school leaders who responded "Important or Very Important" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 100% of school leaders in Year 1, 100% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 100% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring perceived that "AmeriCorps member recruitment and selection process that effectively identifies and selects members with characteristics/skills aligned with the programs objectives" was important or very important to the successful implementation of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in their school.

Source: School Leader Survey Q9 (How important are the following to the successful implementation of School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in your school(s)?)

Exhibit C-21: School Leader Perceptions of Most Important Student Outcomes in Next Two Years

School Turnaround Student Outcome	Rank of Importance n	Rank of Importance Mean	Rank of Importance Standard Deviation	Highest Rank	Lowest Rank
Year 1					
Enhanced academic achievement	38	1.5	1.8	1	8
Increased motivation	35	3.5	1.9	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	35	5.0	2.7	2	8
Improved attendance	32	4.4	2.5	1	9
Increased self-esteem	31	4.5	1.7	1	8
Improved behavior	31	6.4	2.3	2	9
Improved grades	29	4.1	3.0	2	8
Improved completion of assignments	29	5.8	2.5	2	9
Year 2 Fall					
Enhanced academic achievement	37	2.0	2.4	1	8
Increased motivation	37	3.9	2.1	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	35	4.6	2.5	1	8
Improved attendance	35	3.3	2.1	1	7
Increased self-esteem	34	4.8	2.4	1	8
Improved behavior	34	5.3	2.1	1	8
Improved grades	33	5.6	2.8	1	8
Improved completion of assignments	34	6.0	2.8	2	9
Year 2 Spring					
Enhanced academic achievement	40	2.0	2.1	1	8
Increased motivation	39	3.8	2.3	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	38	4.0	2.8	1	8
Improved attendance	38	4.2	2.1	1	7
Increased self-esteem	37	4.9	2.0	2	8
Improved behavior	38	5.2	2.6	1	8
Improved grades	37	5.7	2.5	2	8
Improved completion of assignments	37	5.8	2.1	2	8

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0). Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important; not all responses were given a ranking. (In this context, the number "Missing" are those that did not rank any outcomes). Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean rankings of school leaders in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: In Year 1, school leaders ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the most important student outcome, with a mean ranking on a 9-point scale of 1.5.

Source: School Leader Survey Q10 (What do you consider to be the most important school turnaround outcomes for students over the next two years? (Please rank in order of importance with 1 as the most important. Please only rank outcomes that you consider important.))

Exhibit C-22: School Leader Perceptions of Areas of Improvement in Student Outcomes

Area of Improvement	Any Improvement n	Any Improvement Yes (%)	Any Improvement No (%)	Degree of Improvement Mean	Degree of Improvement Standard Deviation	Degree of Improvement Highest Rank	Degree of Improvement Lowest Rank
Year 1							
Enhanced academic achievement	31	100	0	1.7	1.6	1	8
Improved grades	30	100	0	3.7	2.4	1	8
Improved completion of assignments	31	100	0	4.3	2.3	1	8
Increased motivation	27	100	0	3.2	1.5	1	6
Increased self-esteem	25	100	0	4.3	1.7	2	7
Improved attendance	26	100	0	3.5	2.9	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	28	100	0	5.2	2	2	8
Improved behavior	33	100	0	4.0	3.1	1	9
Year 2 Fall							
Enhanced academic achievement	35	78	22	2.8	2.7	1	8
Improved grades	36	91	9	4.1	2.9	1	8
Improved completion of assignments	35	80	20	4.2	2.6	1	8
Increased motivation	36	96	4	3.5	2.0	1	8
Increased self-esteem	35	88	12	4.6	2.6	1	8
Improved attendance	36	80	20	4.1	3.0	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	34	85	15	5.0	2.5	1	8
Improved behavior	37	96	4	4.2	2.8	1	8

Area of Improvement	Any Improvement n	Any Improvement Yes (%)	Any Improvement No (%)	Degree of Improvement Mean	Degree of Improvement Standard Deviation	Degree of Improvement Highest Rank	Degree of Improvement Lowest Rank
Year 2 Spring							
Enhanced academic achievement	38	80	20	3.9	3.3	1	8
Improved grades	38	83	17	3.8	2.4	1	8
Improved completion of assignments	38	88	12	3.8	2.7	1	7
Increased motivation	37	83	17	3.5	2.0	1	8
Increased self-esteem	38	82	18	3.7	2.1	1	7
Improved attendance	37	76	24	4.1	2.4	1	8
Improved socio-emotional health	38	84	16	4.3	2.4	1	8
Improved behavior	37	81	19	4.8	2.7	1	9

Notes: Year 1: Any Improvement: (N=38, Missing=0); Degree of Improvement: (N=38, Missing=0). Year 2-Fall: Any Improvement: (N=37, Missing=0-3); Degree of Improvement: (N=28-35, Missing=0-2). Year 2-Spring: Any Improvement: (N=40, Missing=2-3); Degree of Improvement: (N=28-33, Missing=2-6). Ranks of improvement range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the greatest improvement; not all responses were given a ranking. Number of school leaders who did not know ranged from 0-10.

Exhibit reads: 100% of school leaders that knew whether there was improvement reported that "Enhanced academic achievement" witnessed any improvement and ranked it as the outcome with the highest degree of improvement, with a mean ranking of 1.7 on a 9-point scale.

Source: School Leader Survey Q11 (Please answer the following about school outcomes for students. Was there improvement in this area at your school(s) last year?) If you marked "Yes," what were the outcomes with the greatest degree of improvement, across the school(s)?)

Exhibit C-23: School Leader Perceptions of School Climate and Student Supports

Statement about School	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Support for Learning									
Offers staff a supportive and inviting environment within which to work	38	4	96	36	0	100	40	0	100
Emphasizes helping students academically when they need it	38	2	99	37	0	100	40	0	100
Promotes trust and collegiality among staff	37	10	91	36	0	100	40	0	100
Offers students a supportive and inviting environment within which to learn	38	4	96	37	0	100	40	0	100
Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to do your job effectively	38	2	98	37	0	100	39	3	97
Emphasizes teaching lessons in ways relevant to students	37	8	93	36	0	100	39	3	97
Sets high standards for academic performance for all students	38	11	90	37	0	100	40	4	96
Promotes academic success for all students	38	4	96	35	0	100	39	7	93
Provides adequate counseling and support services for students	38	9	92	36	2	98	40	10	90
Has sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of students	38	20	80	37	16	84	40	19	81
Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to work with special education (IEP) students	38	4	96	37	12	88	40	25	76
Has sufficient support staff to meet the needs of students	38	26	74	37	24	76	40	38	62

Statement about School	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Student Autonomy and Access to Opportunities									
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussions or activities	38	0	100	37	0	100	40	3	97
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities	37	19	81	37	13	87	40	5	95
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities	37	4	95	37	7	93	40	9	91
Encourages students to enroll in rigorous courses (such as honors and AP), regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality	33	6	94	30	3	97	34	17	83
Gives students opportunities to "make a difference" by helping other people, the school, or the community (e.g., service learning)	36	9	91	37	19	81	40	17	83
Encourages opportunities for students to decide things like class rules	36	16	84	37	14	86	40	23	77
Diversity and Culture									
Considers closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap a high priority	36	0	100	37	2	97	39	5	95
Emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices	38	4	96	35	5	95	40	8	92
Fosters an appreciation of student diversity and respect for one another	37	2	99	36	0	100	40	10	91

Statement about School	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Emphasizes using instructional materials that reflect the culture or ethnicity of our students	35	8	92	37	14	87	40	18	83
Has staff examine their own cultural biases through professional development	36	18	81	36	10	89	40	31	69
Discipline Environment									
Handles discipline problems fairly	38	7	93	36	0	100	40	3	98
Clearly communicates to students the consequences of breaking school rules	38	11	90	37	7	93	40	3	97
Effectively handles student discipline and behavioral problems	38	6	94	36	0	100	40	10	91
School Safety and Physical Appearance									
Is a safe place for staff	38	2	98	36	0	100	40	0	100
Is a safe place for students	38	2	99	36	0	100	40	0	100
Is welcoming to and facilitates parent involvement	38	2	98	36	2	98	40	4	96
Makes information and resources available to parents/guardians about how they can support their children's education	38	2	98	36	5	95	40	8	92
Has clean and well-maintained facilities and property	38	12	88	37	10	90	40	17	83

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0-4); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0-2); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0-1). Table excludes school leaders who did not know. Year 1: Number of school leaders who did not know ranged from 0-2; Year 2-Fall and Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who did not know ranged from 0-6.

Table rows are sorted within sections in descending order by percentage of school leaders who answered "Agree or Strongly Agree" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 96% of school leaders in Year 1, 100% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 100% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring agreed or strongly agreed that the school "Offers staff a supportive and inviting environment within which to work ".

Source: School Leader Q12 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school during this school year. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-24: School Leader Perceptions of School Challenges

Topic	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Not a Challenge (%)	Year 1 Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 1 Severe Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Not a Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Severe Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Not a Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Severe Challenge (%)
Student academic performance	37	0	41	59	37	7	43	50	39	0	48	52
Student attendance	37	8	50	41	36	8	49	43	40	13	49	38
Disruptive student behavior	37	12	66	22	37	10	74	16	40	7	59	34
Student depression or other mental health problems	37	18	55	27	37	25	54	21	40	19	48	34
Student behavior and discipline	37	10	78	11	37	11	72	17	40	7	63	30
Student engagement in school	36	11	71	19	37	7	80	13	40	9	65	26
Lack of respect of staff by students	37	42	47	11	36	40	52	7	39	23	61	16
Student fatigue/lack of sleep	36	29	58	13	37	15	71	14	40	18	70	12
Cutting classes or being truant	36	58	39	3	36	54	37	9	40	45	43	12
Harassment or bullying among students	37	25	67	8	37	29	63	9	40	19	71	10
Theft	37	75	22	3	37	56	37	7	39	57	34	9
Student aspirations for college and/or career	37	24	58	18	37	25	63	12	40	25	67	8
Physical fighting between students	37	58	40	2	37	49	44	7	40	39	55	6
Student alcohol and drug use	37	62	34	4	37	52	35	13	40	59	35	5
Student safety	37	63	28	9	36	50	44	6	40	64	33	3
Student tobacco use	37	69	29	2	37	72	22	7	40	74	23	3
Gang-related activity	37	77	23	0	37	76	17	7	39	74	23	3

Topic	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Not a Challenge (%)	Year 1 Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 1 Severe Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Not a Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 2-Fall Severe Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Not a Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Moderate Challenge (%)	Year 2-Spring Severe Challenge (%)
Racial/ethnic conflict among students	37	77	20	2	37	79	19	2	40	70	30	0
Weapons possession	37	92	8	0	37	88	10	2	40	85	15	0
Vandalism (including graffiti)	37	90	10	0	37	76	20	5	40	73	27	0

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=1-2); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=01); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, missing=0-1). Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Severe challenge" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 59% of school leaders in Year 1, 50% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 52% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring perceived "Student academic performance" as a severe challenge.

Source: School Leader Survey Q13 (Please indicate whether the following topics represent challenges in your school this school year. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-25: School Leader Perceptions of Students, Teachers and Families

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Teachers and other school staff communicate and collaborate	38	0	100	37	0	100	39	0	100
Students treat AmeriCorps members with respect	38	6	94	36	0	100	39	2	98
Students treat teachers with respect	37	9	91	37	0	100	40	17	83
Students treat each other with respect	37	15	85	37	12	88	40	17	83
Students take their school work seriously	38	18	82	37	19	81	40	24	75
Families play an active role in our school	38	35	65	37	51	50	39	58	42

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0-1; Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0-1). Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Agree or Strongly Agree" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 100% of school leaders in Year 1, Year 2-Fall, and Year 2-Spring agreed or strongly agreed that "Teachers and other school staff communicate and collaborate".

Source: School Leader Survey Q14 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school this school year. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-26: School Leader Perceptions about Out-of-Classroom Student Supports

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
Make appropriate support services available to students with special needs	38	7	93	37	4	96	40	4	96
Provide academic enrichment, extended learning time or other academic supports to students	38	6	94	36	10	90	39	6	94
Deliver wraparound services and non-academic (social/emotional) supports to students	38	7	93	37	5	95	40	7	94
Increase awareness about and access to health resources/services (e.g. targeting drug use, mental health, teen pregnancy)	35	7	93	37	12	88	37	9	90
Expose students to post-secondary education opportunities and increase student interest in and knowledge about college	35	7	92	34	9	91	35	11	89
Connect parents/guardians to information and resources to help them support their children's education	37	2	98	37	9	91	40	14	86

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0-1). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 1 and Year 2-Fall: Number of school leaders who indicated not applicable ranged from 0-3; Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-4. Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Agree or Strongly Agree" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 93% of school leaders in Year 1, 96% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 96% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring agreed or strongly agreed that they "make appropriate support services available to students with special needs."

Source: School Leader Q15 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school this school year. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-27: School Leader Satisfaction with Elements of School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied (%)	Year 1 Satisfied or Very Satisfied (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied (%)	Year 2-Fall Satisfied or Very Satisfied (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied (%)	Year 2-Spring Satisfied or Very Satisfied (%)
Communication and collaboration between school leadership and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	37	3	97	37	7	93	38	7	93
Overall quality of School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming	37	9	92	37	5	95	38	7	92
Matching of members to students in need of academic strengthening and social/emotional supports	37	10	90	36	12	88	38	7	92
Communication between school leadership and grantee staff	34	11	90	37	3	97	38	11	90
Communication and collaboration between teachers and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	37	3	97	36	12	88	38	11	89
Implementation of the roles and responsibilities outlined in the school partnership agreements	34	4	97	37	12	88	38	13	88
Referral of students to receive services offered by AmeriCorps members	37	10	90	35	11	88	35	14	86
Placement of members in meaningful service activities	37	10	90	37	10	90	37	15	85

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=1-2); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=1-2). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 1: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-3. Year 2-Fall: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-2. Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 1-4. Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Satisfied or Very Satisfied" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 97% of school leaders in Year 1, 93% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 92% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring were satisfied or very satisfied with the "Communication and collaboration between school leadership and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members."

Source: School Leader Q16 (Year 1: For this school year, please indicate your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with each of the elements listed below. (Mark one response in each row.)).

Exhibit C-28: School Leader Perceptions of Success of School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Success Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Somewhat Unsuccessful or Very Unsuccessful (%)	Year 1 Somewhat Successful or Very Successful (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Somewhat Unsuccessful or Very Unsuccessful (%)	Year 2-Fall Successful or Very Successful (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Somewhat Unsuccessful or Very Unsuccessful (%)	Year-Spring Successful or Very Successful (%)
AmeriCorps program's success in improving school climate	37	13	88	37	8	91	40	4	96
AmeriCorps program's success in improving the school's capacity to implement its turnaround model	36	10	90	37	5	95	39	6	94
Overall success of the AmeriCorps program	37	7	94	37	5	95	40	7	94
AmeriCorps program's success in improving student socio-emotional health	37	12	89	37	8	91	40	7	94
AmeriCorps program's success in improving student academic achievement	36	9	91	37	3	97	39	7	93

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=1); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=0); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=0). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-1 (all years). Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Somewhat Successful or Very Successful" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 88% of school leaders in Year 1, 91% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 96% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring perceived AmeriCorps to be very successful or somewhat successful in improving school climate.

Source: School Leader Q17 (Year 1: In your opinion, how successful is the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in the following areas this school year? (Mark one response in each row.)).

Exhibit C-29: School Leader Perceptions of Value of School Turnaround AmeriCorps

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 1 Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Fall Agree or Strongly Agree (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Disagree or Strongly Disagree (%)	Year 2-Spring Agree or Strongly Agree (%)
School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school.	38	0	100	36	3	97	39	4	95
School Turnaround AmeriCorps members offer supports that are beneficial to the teachers in this school.	38	11	89	36	5	94	39	7	93
School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are important partners in improving student outcomes.	38	6	93	34	5	94	39	12	89
School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities occur frequently enough to be valuable.	37	9	91	34	9	91	38	21	79
School Turnaround AmeriCorps members engage parents/guardians to become involved in their children's school.	36	25	75	35	32	67	37	24	76
School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide access to information and resources to parents/guardians about how they can support their children's education.	35	16	83	34	22	78	35	36	63

Notes: Year 1: (N=38, Missing=0); Year 2-Fall: (N=37, Missing=1-3); Year 2-Spring: (N=40, Missing=1). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 1: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-3. Year 2-Fall: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-2. Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-4. Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Agree or Strongly Agree" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 100% of school leaders in Year 1, 97% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 95% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring agreed or strongly agreed that "School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school ".

Source: School Leader Post-Survey Q18 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements this school year. (Mark one response in each row.)).

Exhibit C-30: School Improvement Grant Strategy Most Influenced by School Turnaround AmeriCorps

School Improvement Grant (SIG) Strategy	Rank of influence n	Rank of influence Mean	Rank of influence Standard Deviation	Highest Rank	Lowest Rank
Year 1					
Academic achievement	27	1.8	1.4	1	5
School culture and environment	25	2.5	1.3	1	6
Increased learning time	25	2.7	1.8	1	6
Family and community engagement	25	3.6	1.5	1	6
Graduation rates	19	4.2	1.5	2	6
College enrollment rates	20	4.7	1.8	1	6
Year 2 Fall					
Academic achievement	31	1.9	1.5	1	5
School culture and environment	30	2.7	1.8	1	6
Increased learning time	29	3.3	2.1	1	6
Family and community engagement	29	4.0	1.8	1	6
Graduation rates	26	4.1	1.9	1	6
College enrollment rates	25	4.5	1.7	1	6
Year 2 Spring					
Academic achievement	33	1.9	1.3	1	5
School culture and environment	33	2.6	1.6	1	6
Increased learning time	31	2.8	1.7	1	6
Family and community engagement	30	3.9	1.6	1	6
Graduation rates	29	4.2	1.6	1	6
College enrollment rates	28	5.2	1.3	2	6

Notes: Year 1: (N=31, Missing=3); Year 2-Fall: (N=34, Missing=2); Year 2-Spring: (N=35, Missing=2). Ranks range from 1 - 6, with 1 being the most important; not all responses were given a ranking. (In this context, the number "Missing" are those that did not rank any outcomes). Year 1: Seven school leaders (23%) indicated that this question was not applicable; Year 2-Fall: Three school leaders (9%) indicated that this question was not applicable; Year 2-Spring: Five school leaders (14%) indicated that this question was not applicable. Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean rankings of school leaders in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: School leaders across all three surveys ranked "Academic achievement" as the strategy most influenced by the AmeriCorps members, with a mean ranking on a 6-point scale of 1.8 in Year 1, 1.9 in Year 2-Fall, and 1.9 in Year 2-Spring.

Source: School Leader Survey Q19 (Which School Improvement Grant (SIG) strategies are influenced the most by the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school year?)

Exhibit C-31: School Leader Perceptions of Level of Influence of School Turnaround AmeriCorps on School Turnaround Goals

Statement	Year 1 Total (n)	Year 1 Minimal Influence or No Influence (%)	Year 1 Some influence or Substantial influence (%)	Year 2-Fall Total (n)	Year 2-Fall Minimal Influence or No Influence (%)	Year 2-Fall Some influence or Substantial influence (%)	Year 2-Spring Total (n)	Year 2-Spring Minimal Influence or No Influence (%)	Year 2-Spring Some influence or Substantial influence (%)
Improving academic performance in ELA and/or math	37	15	85	36	8	91	40	15	85
Establishing a school culture and environment that fosters school safety, attendance, and discipline	37	14	86	35	5	95	40	17	83
Increasing college readiness and enrollment rates	22	18	82	22	14	86	27	32	68
Increasing rates of high school graduation	21	26	74	20	15	85	23	33	66
Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement	35	37	63	35	33	67	39	42	59

Notes: Year 1: (N=22-37, Missing=0-1); Year 2-Fall: (N=21-37, Missing=1); Year 2-Spring: (N=23-40, Missing=0). Table excludes school leaders who indicated not applicable. Year 1: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 1-16; Year 2-Fall: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-16; Year 2-Spring: Number of school leaders who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 0-17. Table rows are sorted in descending order by the percentage of school leaders who answered "Some Influence or Substantial Influence" in Year 2-Spring.

Exhibit reads: 85% of school leaders in Year 1, 91% of school leaders in Year 2-Fall and 85% of school leaders in Year 2-Spring perceived that AmeriCorps had some substantial influence or some influence on "Improving academic performance in ELA and/or math."

Source: School Leader Survey Q20 (Please indicate the level of influence School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have over the following elements of your school's turnaround goals? (Mark one response in each row.))

C.3. Instructional Staff and Counselor Survey

Exhibit C-32: School Staff Primary Roles (2014-2015)

Primary Role/Position	%
All subjects	19
Mathematics	19
Special education/resource	14
Science and technology/engineering	12
English language arts	11
History and social science	10
English language learners	6
Instructional coach for teachers	5
Reading/literacy support	4
Other electives	3
School counselor	3
Foreign languages	2
Comprehensive health/physical education	2
Vocational Technical programs	2
Visual and performing arts	1
Speech, physical, or occupational therapist	1
Librarian	0
Nurse	0
Others	8

Notes: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were permitted.

All subjects selected if elementary school teacher provides instruction in most or all core academic subjects.

(N=215, Missing = 0)

Table rows are sorted in descending order.

Exhibit reads: 19% of school staff teach all subjects.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q1 (What is your primary role/position this school year?)

Exhibit C-33: Grades Served by School Staff (2014-2015)

Grade	%
K	12
1	11
2	9
3	13
4	14
5	9
6	20
7	22
8	23
9	36
10	37
11	36
12	35

Notes: Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were permitted. (N=215, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: 12% of school staff teach kindergarten.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q2 (What grades do you work with? (Check all that apply.))

Exhibit C-34: School Staff Years of Experience (2014-2015)

Years Worked	Total (%)	At the School (%)
Fewer than 2 years	11	25
Between 2 and 6 years	36	53
Between 6 and 12 years	27	13
12 years or more	26	10

Notes: Total: (N=215, Missing=4)

At the school (N=215, Missing=2)

Exhibit reads: 11% of school staff have less than 2 years of teaching or counseling experience. 25% of school staff have less than 2 years of teaching or counseling experience at their current school.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q3 (How many years total have you worked as a teacher/counselor and how many years total have you worked at this school, including this year?)

Exhibit C-35: Number of Students Served by School Staff and Average Class Size (2014-2015)

Number of Students	%
Number of Students Overall (N=215)	
Fewer than 50 students	27
Between 50 and 100 students	21
Between 100 and 200 students	25
200 students or more	27
Average per class (N=185)	
Fewer than 10 students	7
Between 10 and 20 students	22
Between 20 and 30 students	49
30 students or more	21

Notes: Overall: (N=215, Missing=0)

Average per class: 30 respondents indicated this question was not applicable. (N=185, Missing=4)

Exhibit reads: 27% of school staff work with fewer than 50 students overall; 7% of school staff have an average class size smaller than 10 students.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q4 (Across all your responsibilities, approximately how many students do you work with this year?) - Q5 (On average, how many students do you teach in each class? (If not applicable, enter NA))

Exhibit C-36: Proportion of Staffs' Students Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps (according to staff familiar with the program) (2014-2015)

Target of AmeriCorps Programming	%
Less than 25 percent of students	35
Between 25 and 50 percent of students	16
Between 50 and 75 percent of students	9
75 percent of students or more	40

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Sixty respondents were not familiar with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Sixty nine respondents did not know how many of their students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps. (N=86, Missing=0)

Exhibit reads: 35% of staff reported that less than 25 percent of their students were involved in School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q6 (Approximately how many students with whom you have worked this school year (2014-15) are/were involved in School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming?)

Exhibit C-37: Mechanisms to Identify Students for School Turnaround AmeriCorps Activities (2014-2015)

Mechanism	Rank of Frequency		
	Mean Rankings	Standard Errors	Percent Ranked
Teacher recommendation	2.1	0.1	89
Counselor recommendation	2.6	0.2	66
Standardized test scores	2.6	0.2	62
Grades	3.1	0.2	71
Parent request	3.6	0.3	43
Student request	3.8	0.2	46
Other	2.3	0.6	15

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Ranks range from 1 - 7, with 1 being the most important.

Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for respondents who ranked the option.

Fifty one respondents did not know which mechanisms were most frequently used. (N=104, Missing=3)

Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean ranking of school staff.

Exhibit reads: School staff ranked "Teacher recommendation" as the most important mechanism, with a mean ranking of 2.1 on a 7-point scale; 89% of school leaders ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q7 (To the best of your knowledge, which of the following mechanisms are most frequently used in your school to identify students for activities led by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members)

Exhibit C-38: Reasons Students were Identified to Participate in School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Reason	Rank of Frequency		
	Mean Rankings	Standard Errors	Percent Ranked
Improve academic achievement	1.8	0.2	88
Improve academic engagement	2.3	0.1	79
Improve behavior	3.1	0.2	61
Improve self-esteem or socio-emotional health	3.4	0.2	60
Assist students at risk for dropping out	3.5	0.2	53
Sustain performance	4.4	0.2	52
Other	4.2	1.1	8

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Ranks range from 1 - 7, with 1 being the most important.

Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for respondents who ranked the option.

Forty one respondents did not know the reasons students were identified. (N=114, Missing=1)

Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean ranking of school staff.

Exhibit reads: School staff ranked "Improve academic achievement" as the most important reason, with a mean ranking of 1.8 on a 7-point scale; 88% of school leaders ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q8 (To the best of your knowledge, what are the reasons that students were identified to participate in School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming this school year?)

Exhibit C-39: Target for Direct Services in School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Target	%
Individual students	80
All students in the school	34
Whole classroom	33

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Percentages do not sum to 100 because multiple responses were allowed.

Twenty three respondents did not know the targets of School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming. (N=132, Missing=0)

Table rows are sorted in descending order.

Exhibit reads: 80% of school staff said School Turnaround AmeriCorps members served individual students.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q9 (To the best of your knowledge, to whom do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide direct services this school year? (Check all that apply.))

Exhibit C-40: School Staff Knowledge of Students Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members (2014-2015)

Do you know which students are served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?	%
Yes	37
Sometimes, but not always	42
No	21

Note. Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. (N=155, Missing=6)

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected each option.

Exhibit reads: 37% of school staff knew which students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q10 (Do you know which students are served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school year?)

Exhibit C-41: School Staff Perceptions of Most Important Student Outcomes in Next Two Years (2014-2015)

School Turnaround Student Outcome	Rank of Importance		
	Mean Rankings	Standard Errors	Percent Ranked
Enhanced academic achievement	2.6	0.2	91
Increased motivation	3.4	0.2	85
Improved grades	4.3	0.2	75
Improved attendance	4.5	0.2	73
Increased self-esteem	4.2	0.2	75
Improved socio-emotional health	4.1	0.2	73
Improved completion of assignments	4.8	0.2	67
Improved behavior	4.4	0.2	76
Other	5.2	2.6	3

Notes: Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important.

Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for respondents who ranked the option.

Ten respondents (5%) indicated that this question was not applicable. (N=205, Missing=0)

Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean ranking of school staff.

Exhibit reads: School staff ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the most important school turnaround student outcome, with a mean ranking of 2.6 on a 9-point scale; 91% of school staff ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q11 (What do you consider to be the most important school turnaround outcomes for students over the next two years? (Please rank in order of importance with 1 as the most important. Please only rank outcomes that you consider important.))

Exhibit C-42: School Staff Perceptions of Improvement in Student Outcomes (2014-2015)

Student Outcome	Quantity of Students						
	Total (n)	All (%)	Most (%)	Some (%)	Few (%)	None (%)	Don't Know (%)
Enhanced academic achievement	153	9	23	22	6	1	39
Increased motivation	152	7	24	21	5	1	42
Improved completion of assignments	151	7	19	23	9	2	40
Improved grades	150	7	16	26	8	1	42
Increased self-esteem	153	8	22	21	4	1	45
Improved behavior	152	8	20	23	7	1	42
Improved socio-emotional health	153	7	17	20	7	3	46
Improved attendance	152	5	15	19	6	4	50
Other	54	0	9	0	4	4	83

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important.

Not all responses were given any ranking.

Number of respondents who did not know ranged from 47-76. (N=155, Missing=2-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the mean ranking of student outcomes.

Exhibit reads: 9% of school staff perceived that all students demonstrated enhanced academic achievement. 23% perceived enhanced academic achievement in most students, 22% in some students, 6% in few students, and 1% in no students. 39% of school staff did not know how many students demonstrated enhanced academic achievement.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q12 (For how many of the students served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps at your school this year (2014-2015) are there improvements in the following areas?)

Exhibit C-43: School Staff Perceptions of Improvement in Student Outcomes (2014-2015)

Student Outcome	Degree of Improvement		
	Mean Rankings	Standard Errors	Percent Ranked
Enhanced academic achievement	2.6	0.3	74
Increased motivation	2.9	0.2	74
Improved completion of assignments	3.1	0.3	59
Improved grades	3.3	0.3	54
Increased self-esteem	3.8	0.4	62
Improved behavior	4.1	0.5	56
Improved socio-emotional health	4.6	0.5	56
Improved attendance	5.1	0.5	48
Other	9.0	7.8	10

Notes: Ranks range from 1 - 9, with 1 being the most important.

Not all responses were given any ranking. Means are calculated for respondents who ranked the option. (N=5 95, Missing=0)

Table rows are sorted in ascending order by the mean ranking of school staff.

Exhibit reads: School staff ranked "Enhanced academic achievement" as the most important student outcome, with a mean ranking of 2.6 on a 9-point scale; 74% of school staff ranked this particular outcome.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q12 (For how many of the students served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps at your school this year (2014-2015) are there improvements in the following areas?)

Exhibit C-44: School Staff Communications with and Monitoring of Members (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program	150	44	44	5	2	4
Teachers and AmeriCorps members successfully collaborate to support students	151	32	41	12	10	5
Teachers in this school discuss their expectations for students with AmeriCorps members	150	31	44	12	7	6
Teachers in this school share and discuss behavioral management strategies with AmeriCorps members	151	30	38	16	8	8
Teachers in this school share and discuss instructional practices with AmeriCorps members	151	27	43	16	7	8

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Number of respondents who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 5-10. (N=155, Missing=4-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school staff who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 44% of school staff strongly agreed and 44% agreed that "Teachers in this school are supportive of the AmeriCorps program."

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q13 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about teacher relationships with School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school year (2014-15). (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-45: School Staff Perceptions of School Climate and Student Supports (2014-2015)

Statement about School	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Support for Learning					
Promotes academic success for all students	211	32	55	11	2
Offers students a supportive and inviting environment within which to learn	212	31	56	12	2
Emphasizes helping students academically when they need it	210	40	57	2	1
Offers staff a supportive and inviting environment within which to work	210	25	52	14	9
Promotes trust and collegiality among staff	207	24	60	11	4
Emphasizes teaching lessons in ways relevant to students	211	27	59	12	2
Sets high standards for academic performance for all students.	212	36	46	14	4
Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to do your job effectively	210	21	54	19	6
Provides adequate counseling and support services for students	211	24	43	23	10
Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to work with special education (IEP) students	209	13	51	22	14
Has sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of students	214	21	45	23	11
Has sufficient support staff to meet the needs of students	214	18	45	25	11
Student Autonomy and Access to Opportunities					
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities	212	26	57	14	3
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities	213	24	56	17	3
Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussions or activities	213	33	60	5	2
Encourages students to enroll in rigorous courses (such as honors and AP), regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality	206	25	47	23	5
Gives students opportunities to "make a difference" by helping other people, the school, or the community (e.g., service learning)	212	20	49	25	6
Encourages opportunities for students to decide things like class rules	213	21	54	21	4
Diversity and Culture					
Considers closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap a high priority	213	29	51	17	3
Emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices	212	32	55	13	1
Fosters an appreciation of student diversity and respect for one another	213	30	54	15	1

Statement about School	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Has staff examine their own cultural biases through professional development	210	19	41	30	11
Emphasizes using instructional materials that reflect the culture or ethnicity of our students	211	20	57	20	3
Discipline Environment					
Handles discipline problems fairly	214	23	47	17	12
Clearly communicates to students the consequences of breaking school rules	214	32	43	14	10
Effectively handles student discipline and behavioral problems	210	22	41	25	12
School Safety and Physical Appearance					
Is a safe place for staff	214	33	57	6	4
Is welcoming to and facilitates parent involvement	213	27	56	15	1
Is a safe place for students	214	30	57	9	4
Has clean and well-maintained facilities and property	213	28	52	16	4
Makes information and resources available to parents/guardians about how they can support their children's education	211	23	64	11	2

Notes: (N=215, Missing=1-9)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 32% of school staff strongly agreed and 55% agreed that the school "Promotes academic success for all students."

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q14 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school during the 2014-15 school year. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-46: School Staff Perceptions about Out-of-Classroom Student Supports (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Make appropriate support services available to students with special needs	208	28	48	14	5	5
Deliver wraparound services and non-academic (social/emotional) supports to students	209	23	60	9	4	5
Expose students to post-secondary education opportunities and increase student interest in and knowledge about college	206	28	52	9	<1	10
Provide academic enrichment, extended learning time or other academic supports to students	210	29	49	11	2	9
Connect parents/guardians to information and resources to help them support their children's education	209	23	57	13	3	4
Increase awareness about and access to health resources/services (e.g. targeting drug use, mental health, teen pregnancy)	208	20	47	19	6	8

Notes: Number of respondents who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 7-22. (N=215, Missing=5-9)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 28% of school staff strongly agreed and 48% agreed that they "Make appropriate support services available to students with special needs".

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q15 (Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about community involvement and partnerships with your school this school year (2014-15). (Mark one response in each row.)

Exhibit C-47: School Staff Perceptions of School Challenges (2014-2015)

Topic	Total n	Severe Challenge (%)	Moderate Challenge (%)	Not a Challenge (%)
Student academic performance	212	50	45	5
Student attendance	212	33	57	11
Student depression or other mental health problems	212	22	56	22
Disruptive student behavior	213	45	48	7
Student engagement in school	213	38	53	9
Student aspirations for college and/or career	210	21	60	19
Student fatigue/lack of sleep	212	23	60	18
Student behavior and discipline	213	43	50	7
Lack of respect of staff by students	212	27	50	23
Student safety	210	6	48	46
Harassment or bullying among students	213	18	63	19
Student alcohol and drug use	211	11	41	49
Cutting classes or being truant	212	26	44	31
Theft	211	11	46	43
Physical fighting between students	212	19	48	33
Student tobacco use	211	8	32	60
Racial/ethnic conflict among students	213	4	30	67
Gang-related activity	213	6	32	62
Vandalism (including graffiti)	213	6	36	57
Weapons possession	210	4	19	78

Notes: (N=215, Missing=2-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Severe Challenge".

Exhibit reads: 50% of school staff perceived "Student academic performance" as a severe challenge. 45% of school staff perceived it as a moderate challenge, and 5% did not perceive it as a challenge at all.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q16 (Please indicate whether the following topics represent challenges in your school this school year (2014-15). (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-48: School Staff Perceptions of Students, Teachers and Families (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Teachers and other school staff communicate and collaborate	213	13	68	16	3
Students treat AmeriCorps members with respect [a]	153	10	68	18	4
Students treat teachers with respect	211	6	58	26	10
Students take their school work seriously	214	6	49	38	7
Students treat each other with respect	213	5	54	34	6
Families play an active role in our school	213	3	30	51	16

Notes: (N=155-215, Missing=1-5)

[a] These items were restricted to respondents who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school staff who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 13% of school staff strongly agreed and 68% agreed that "teachers and other school staff communicate and collaborate".

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q17 (Please indicate the level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school this school year (2014-15). (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-49: School Staff Perceptions of Value of School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school [a]	150	31	63	4	2
AmeriCorps members are important partners in improving student outcomes [a]	153	30	59	8	3
AmeriCorps members offer supports that are beneficial to the teachers in this school [a]	150	27	58	11	4
AmeriCorps activities occur frequently enough to be valuable [a]	152	26	49	20	5

Notes: (N=155-215, Missing=1-5)

[a] These items were restricted to respondents who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school staff who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 31% of school staff strongly agreed and 63% agreed that "AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school".

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q17 (Please indicate the level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school this school year (2014-15). (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-50: School Staff Satisfaction with Elements of School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Element	Total (n)	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Don't Know (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Implementation of the roles and responsibilities outlined in the school partnership agreements	150	24	46	17	2	0	11
Communication and collaboration between teachers and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	151	28	47	14	6	0	5
Overall quality of School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming	152	30	46	16	3	0	6
Matching of members to students in need of academic strengthening and social/emotional supports	150	25	49	15	3	0	7
Referral of students to receive services offered by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members	152	23	52	15	2	0	8
Placement of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members in meaningful service activities	153	30	48	11	6	0	6

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Number of respondents who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 7-17. (N=155, Missing=2-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Very Satisfied".

Exhibit reads: 24% of school staff are very satisfied and 46% are satisfied with the "Implementation of the roles and responsibilities outlined in the school partnership agreements".

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q18 (For this school year (2014-15), please indicate your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with each of the elements listed below. (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-51: School Staff Perceptions of Success of School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Success Statement	Total (n)	Very Successful (%)	Somewhat Successful (%)	Somewhat Unsuccessful (%)	Very Unsuccessful (%)	Not Applicable (%)
Overall success	150	39	41	11	4	6
Success in improving the school's capacity to implement its turnaround model	152	40	35	14	6	6
Success in improving school climate	151	34	36	15	7	7
Success in improving student socio-emotional health	151	30	42	14	6	8
Success in improving student academic achievement	152	34	45	11	5	5

Notes: Responses limited to school staff who worked with at least one student in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.

Number of respondents who indicated the question was not applicable ranged from 6-11. (N=155, Missing=3-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Very Successful".

Exhibit reads: 39% of school staff perceived School Turnaround AmeriCorps to be very successful and 41% perceived it to be somewhat successful overall. 11% perceived it to be somewhat unsuccessful and 4% very unsuccessful. 6% said the overall success of School Turnaround AmeriCorps was not applicable.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q19 (In your opinion, how successful is the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in the following areas this school year (2014-15)? (Mark one response in each row.))

Exhibit C-52: School Staff Perceptions of Changes in Behavior of Student "A" Served by School

Behavior	Total (n)	Significant Improvement (%)	Moderate Improvement (%)	No Change (%)	Moderate Decline (%)	Significant Decline (%)	Did Not Need to Improve (%)
Participating in class	93	28	50	17	1	0	5
Coming to school motivated to learn	92	24	49	23	0	0	3
Getting along well with other students	93	22	49	21	1	0	7
Volunteering (e.g., for extra credit or more responsibilities)	92	21	30	39	0	0	10
Being attentive in class	92	21	55	20	1	0	3
Attending class regularly	90	20	42	26	0	0	12
Completing homework to your satisfaction	92	20	47	28	0	1	4
Turning in his/her homework on time	91	20	44	32	1	0	4

Notes: Each respondent was asked about two students, one whose last name is closest to the beginning of the alphabet, and another whose last name is closest to the end of the alphabet. (N=95, Missing=2-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of students for whom school staff who selected "Significant Improvement" with "Did Not Need to Improve" excluded from the denominator.

Exhibit reads: 28% of school staff perceived a significant improvement in class participation for the student whose last name is closest to the beginning of the alphabet. 50% perceived a moderate improvement, 17% perceived no change, 1% perceived a moderate decline, 0% perceived a significant decline, and 5% reported that the student did not need to improve.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q20 (Since beginning to work with a School Turnaround AmeriCorps member(s), to the best of your knowledge, what extent has student with the last name closest to the beginning of the alphabet changed his or her behavior in terms of Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Exhibit C-53: School Staff Perceptions of Changes in Behavior of Student "Z" Served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Behavior	Total (n)	Significant Improvement (%)	Moderate Improvement (%)	No Change (%)	Moderate Decline (%)	Significant Decline (%)	Did Not Need to Improve (%)
Participating in class	91	26	48	21	0	0	5
Coming to school motivated to learn	92	24	48	21	1	1	4
Getting along well with other students	91	20	52	20	0	0	9
Volunteering (e.g., for extra credit or more responsibilities)	91	14	37	36	1	0	12
Being attentive in class	90	23	56	15	1	0	4
Attending class regularly	91	24	41	23	1	1	9
Completing homework to your satisfaction	92	19	44	31	0	0	6
Turning in his/her homework on time	92	15	47	31	0	0	7

Notes: Each respondent was asked about two students, one whose last name is closest to the beginning of the alphabet, and another whose last name is closest to the end of the alphabet. (N=95, Missing=2-5)

Total n column describes the number of survey respondents who provided an answer in each row. The remaining columns present nonresponse-weighted percentages to approximate the population of interest (see Appendix A.2.1 for details).

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of students for whom school staff who selected "Significant Improvement" with "Did Not Need to Improve" excluded from the denominator.

Exhibit reads: 26% of school staff perceived a significant improvement in class participation for the student whose last name is closest to the end of the alphabet. 48% perceived a moderate improvement, 21% perceived no change, 0% perceived a moderate decline, 0% perceived a significant decline, and 5% reported that the student did not need to improve.

Source: Instructional Staff and Counselors Survey Q20 (Since beginning to work with a School Turnaround AmeriCorps member(s), to the best of your knowledge, what extent has student with the last name closest to the end of the alphabet changed his or her behavior in terms of:)

C.4. Parent Interviews

Exhibit C-54: Parent Perceptions of Students, Teachers and Families (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
Teachers and leaders at my child's school care about my child's academic performance	50	50	40	6	2	2
Teachers and leaders at my child's school care about my child's social and emotional well-being	50	42	50	4	2	2
Families play an active role in our school	49	37	43	16	0	4

Notes: (N=50, Missing=0-1)

Number of respondents who did not know ranged from 1 - 2.

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of parents who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 50% of parents strong agreed and 40% agreed that "Teachers and leaders at my child's school care about my child's academic performance".

Source: School Turnaround AmeriCorps Parent Interviews Q10 (Now I will read several statements about your child's school. For each statement, please tell me whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or don't know.)

Exhibit C-55: Parent Perceptions of Value of School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Statement	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school †	38	74	18	0	3	5
AmeriCorps members are important partners in improving student outcomes †	38	58	34	0	3	5
AmeriCorps activities occur frequently enough to be valuable †	38	47	42	0	3	8

Notes: Responses limited to those familiar with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program (N=38, Missing=0).

Number of respondents who did not know ranged from 2 - 3.

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of parents who selected "Strongly Agree".

Exhibit reads: 74% of parents strongly agreed and 18% agreed that "AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school".

Source: School Turnaround AmeriCorps Parent Interviews Q10 (Now I will read several statements about your child's school. For each statement, please tell me whether you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, or don't know.)

Exhibit C-56: Parent Perceptions of Success of School Turnaround AmeriCorps (2014-2015)

Overall success of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in terms of…	Total (n)	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know (%)
Overall success	38	66	24	0	0	11
Success in improving the school's capacity to implement its turnaround model	38	45	34	0	0	21
Success in improving school climate	38	55	21	3	3	18
Success in improving student socio-emotional health	38	61	18	5	0	16
Success in improving student academic achievement	38	66	29	0	0	5

Notes: Responses limited to those familiar with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program (N=38, Missing=0).

Number of respondents who did not know ranged from 2 - 8.

Table rows are sorted in descending order by the proportion of school leaders who selected "Very Successful".

Exhibit reads: 66% of parents perceive School Turnaround AmeriCorps to be very successful overall.

Source: School Turnaround AmeriCorps Parent Interviews Q11-Q15 (On a scale of 1-4, what is your perception of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program's success in terms of …)

APPENDIX D.   SUPPLEMENTAL ADMINISTRATIVE DATA TABLES

In this appendix, we provide additional details of our analyses of administrative data. See the section *Description of Program Activities and Services* in Section IV of the main report for the main results.

D.1.   Member Activity Data

Exhibit D-1 presents the range of service activities offered by each program in 2014–15 and 2015–16. Grantee programs generally cluster into three groups: those offering either all or almost all types of services (4 programs), between two and five of the 11 types of services (3 programs), or only one service (5 programs). Interestingly, services offered were largely consistent across years; only one program added a service (grantee program #7 added College Readiness) in 2015–16, and only one program dropped a service (grantee program #9 dropped Supportive Services). Tutoring was the most common service offering in 2014–15 and 2015–16 (9 and 10 programs, respectively), followed by Mentorship (6 and 7 programs).

Exhibit D-1: Types of Services Offered, by Grantee Program & Academic Year

Grantee Program	CE	PE	AS	AT	BS	ME	CR	TU	SS	SC	OT	2015 Total	2016 Total
Grantee program #7	O	O	O	O	O	O	B	O	O	O	O	10	11
Grantee program #13	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		10	10
Grantee program #1	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O		9	9
Grantee program #10	O	O	O	O	O	O		O		O	O	9	9
Grantee program #9		O		O		O		O	A			5	4
Grantee program #4								O			O	2	2
Grantee program #2											O	1	1
Grantee program #8						O						1	1
Grantee program #12								O				1	1
Grantee program #3								O				1	1
Grantee program #5								O				1	1
Grantee program #6		†	†			†		†			†	*	5
Grantee program #11	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Number of Programs (2015)	4	5	4	5	4	6	2	9	3	4	4		
Number of Programs (2016)	4	6	5	5	4	7	3	10	2	4	5		

Notes:

* Data were not reported by grantee program.

† This grantee program reported activity in 2015–16, but did not provide information on activities in 2014–15.

Value key:

    O: service/activity offered in both school years

    A: service/activity offered in 2014–15 only

    B: service/activity offered in 2015–16 only

    Service/Activity Type Abbreviations:

    CE: Community Engagement

    PE: Parental Engagement

    AS: After-School & Extended Learning

    AT: Attendance

    BS: Behavioral Support

    ME: Mentorship

    CR: College Readiness

    TU: Tutoring

    SS: Supportive Services

    SC: School Climate

    OT: Other Service/Activity

Other Service/Activities were as follows:

    Summer Camp

    Service learning, civic engagement, and leadership opportunities for youth

    Teaching

    Graduate Assistant Support

    Credit Recovery Program

Most services were offered in multiple formats, including one-on-one, small group settings, or larger group settings; not surprisingly, services designed to support individual students, such as tutoring or mentorship, were more likely to be offered to individuals or small groups, whereas community engagement services were more frequently provided in large group settings (see Exhibit D-2).

Exhibit D-2: Level of Service Offering, by Service Type Provided

Service Type	Academic Year	Total Number of Schools Offering[a]	Number of Schools Offering Individual[b] Services	Number of Schools Offering Small Group[c] Services	Number of Schools Offering Large Group[d] Services
Tutoring	2014–15	42	33	37	13
	2015–16	44	35	41	17
Mentorship	2014–15	26	26	22	13
	2015–16	29	28	26	12
Attendance	2014–15	24	24	23	13
	2015–16	22	22	19	12
Parental Engagement	2014–15	22	22	20	14
	2015–16	21	20	12	16
After-School & Extended Learning	2014–15	20	12	11	20
	2015–16	18	10	9	15
Behavioral Support	2014–15	20	12	20	13
	2015–16	22	14	22	12
Community Engagement	2014–15	20	20	18	13
	2015–16	18	18	17	10
School Climate	2014–15	20	14	13	19
	2015–16	18	15	12	12
Other	2014–15	19	18	19	17
	2015–16	10	10	9	7
College Readiness	2014–15	14	6	6	13
	2015–16	15	6	5	11
Supportive Services	2014–15	8	7	7	1
	2015–16	7	6	7	6

[a] N = 55 schools in 2014–15 (missing = 13 schools)[43]

N=50 schools in 2015–16 (missing = 10 schools)[44]

[b] Services are offered at the *individual* level if they are offered to individual students and/ or families

[c] Services are offered at the *small group* level if they are offered to small groups of students and/ or families

[d] Services are offered at the large group level if they are offered to entire classrooms and/ or schools of students, and/or offered to all families within a school

Exhibit D-3 shows which GPR outcome performance measures contributed to each service, according to grantee staff. In a majority of schools, Tutoring was linked to ED5 (improved academic performance), and in about a third of schools, Tutoring was linked to ED27 (improved academic engagement). Services most frequently linked to ED27 include Mentorship, Behavioral Support, After-School and Extended Learning,

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43   2014–15 activity-level information not reported by grantee program #6 (3 schools) and grantee program #11 (10 schools).

44   2015–16 activity-level information not reported by grantee program #11 (10 schools).

and Attendance.[45] In general, grantee staff infrequently identified activities that contribute to ED6 (improved school attendance) and ED7 (decreased disciplinary referrals).

Exhibit D-3: Service Contribution to Performance Measures, by Service Type and Year

Service Type	Academic Year	Number of Schools Offering Service Type	Number of Schools where Service Contributes to…			
			ED5	ED6*	ED7	ED27
Tutoring	2014–15	42	27	2	2	14
	2015–16	44	32	3	2	11
Mentorship	2014–15	26	9	0	1	21
	2015–16	29	14	1	1	19
Attendance	2014–15	24	1	1	0	13
	2015–16	22	1	1	0	12
Parental Engagement	2014–15	22	1	0	0	5
	2015–16	21	2	1	1	4
After-School & Extended Learning	2014–15	20	0	0	0	5
	2015–16	18	0	1	1	4
Behavioral Support	2014–15	20	1	0	1	12
	2015–16	22	5	1	1	10
Community Engagement	2014–15	20	0	0	1	14
	2015–16	18	1	1	1	12
School Climate	2014–15	20	1	1	1	6
	2015–16	18	1	1	1	4
Other	2014–15	19	13	2	2	6
	2015–16	10	7	3	3	4
College Readiness	2014–15	14	0	0	0	0
	2015–16	15	0	0	0	0
Supportive Services	2014–15	8	1	0	0	0
	2015–16	7	0	1	0	0

Performance Measure Definitions:

ED5 = Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math.

ED6 = Number of students that improved their school attendance over the course of the CNCS-supported program's involvement with the student.

ED7 = Number of students with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions over the course of the CNCS-supported programs' involvement.

ED27 = Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring, or other education program including CNCS-supported service learning who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

* According to the performance measure guidance documented in CNCS's Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity Addendum for AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2013, "Applicants and grantees may report on either ED27 or ED6 but not both measures to ensure an unduplicated count. Applicants are encouraged to select ED27, which is a more direct measure of academic engagement than ED6, but ED6 may be preferred if it is significantly easier to collect school attendance data than to obtain parental consent and administer a pre-post survey." (p. 7)

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[45] Though ED6 addresses attendance directly, grantee programs can report either ED6 or ED27, and ED27 is preferred.

Within schools offering a particular service activity, all or nearly all AmeriCorps members participated in the activity (exhibit not shown), suggesting that members did not generally specialize in one particular activity. Grantee programs are required to establish minimum dosages of AmeriCorps services received by students to count towards their performance measure goals; here, too, there is considerable variation across programs as well as across service activities (Exhibit D-4). For example, the minimal threshold (in hours) established for Tutoring ranged from 15 hours to 130 hours.[46] Programs typically used other time metrics for other service activities (e.g., days or weeks of support provided), and the dosage thresholds range from 30 to 90 days. There are no discernible changes in what programs reported for minimum dosage by activity category between 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Exhibit D-4: Minimum Dosage Requirements, by Grantee Program

Service Type	Number of Grantee Programs with Minimum Dosage Requirements	Minimum Dosage Requirements by Grantee Program
Tutoring	8	10 contacts 15 hours 30 hours 40 hours 60 hours 77 hours 130 hours 90 days
Attendance	3	10 contacts 8 weeks 90 days
Mentorship	3	10 contacts 40 hours 90 days
Parental Engagement	2	10 contacts 90 days
After-School & Extended Learning	2	30 days 90 days
Behavioral Support	2	8 weeks 90 days
Other	2	2 contacts[a] 20 hours
Community Engagement	1	90 days
Supportive Services	1	10 contacts
School Climate	1	90 days
College Readiness	0	N/A

[a] "2 contacts" is the minimum dosage for grantee program #4's Graduate Assistant Support activity, which falls under the "Other Activities" category.

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[46] One grantee program (grantee program #10) defines Tutoring dosage by days of support provided rather than activity hours, and another (grantee program #9) defines tutoring dosage by number of contacts.

D.2. Performance Measure Data

Exhibit D-5 examines how grantee programs changed their targets from 2013–14 to 2014–15. When looking at the percent change in targets over time for grantee performance measures, the majority of targets remained the same across years, while four programs lowered targets and one program raised them.

Four grantee programs (#4, #13, #5, and #2) lowered performance measure targets in 2014–15 and one program (#1) increased its targets. Grantee programs #13, #5, and #2 each met a single performance measure target in 2013–14, while grantee program #4 met one (ED2) and did not meet two others (2013–14 ED5 or ED6). CNCS permitted grantee program #5 to adjust its performance measure targets for 2014–15 after learning that it misunderstood the performance measure definitions when setting its 2013–14 targets (see textbox). CNCS also allowed grantee program #13 to adjust its performance measure targets for 2014–15 after learning that it incorrectly entered targets for all three years of the grant rather than annual targets. The other two grantee programs with reduced targets (#4 and #2) experienced significant challenges with enrollment in 2013–14, requested fewer MSY in 2014–15 to allow them to reach full member enrollment, and adjusted their performance measure targets accordingly.

Grantee program #1 increased performance measure and member enrollment targets in 2014–15, and credited its success in meeting its targets with its collaboration with schools and its effective partnership agreements in addition to its "unique, added value" to partner schools, in which grantee program #1 is oftentimes the only provider of after-school programming. It should be noted that grantee program #1 exceeded all but one of its targets in 2013–14 and met all targets in 2014–15. Grantee program #1 also increased the number of members it planned to recruit in 2014–15, which presumably would have allowed a corresponding increase in the number of students served.

> **Performance Measure Targets Improved with Program Experience**
>
> "[R]evising and right-sizing performance measure targets in year two has been very positive, helping program staff to reduce the number of students entering the program, while increasing the number of students who "complete" the program. With refined definitions and targets, we are more capable of reviewing, analyzing, and guiding members and school leaders on progress, next steps, and needed adjustments."
>
> *–Grantee Program 2014–15 GPR*

Exhibit D-5: 2014–15 Performance Measure Targets as a Proportion of 2013–14 Targets

Grantee Program	Activity Type	ED1	ED2	ED4A	ED5	ED6*	ED7	ED27
Grantee program #1	Academic Achievement	136%	136%		136%			
	Academic Engagement	113%	113%					112%
Grantee program #11	Academic Engagement and Achievement	100%	100%		100%			100%
Grantee program #3	Academic Engagement	100%	100%		100%			
Grantee program #6	Academic Performance		100%		100%			
Grantee program #10	Attendance and Academic Engagement		100%					100%
Grantee program #8	Early Warning System			100%				100%
Grantee program #9	Tutoring		100%		100%			
	Mentoring and Wraparound Services			100%				100%
Grantee program #7	Classroom and Extended Learning		100%		100%			
	The Whole Child	100%	100%				100%	100%
Grantee program #4	Tutoring	49%	41%		41%			
	Family/Community Engagement	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	
	Early Warning System		57%			46%		
Grantee program #5	Academic Interventions	47%	47%		47%			
Grantee program #13	Project Graduation	33%†	33%†		‡			33%†
Grantee program #12	Tutoring		100%		100%			
Grantee program #2	Academic Achievement		79%		83%			

Notes: See Performance Measure Definitions in Exhibit D-3.

Cells present the 2014–15 MSY and Performance Measure target as a proportion of the same MSY or Performance Measure target in 2013–14.

* According to the performance measure guidance documented in CNCS's Notice of Federal Funding Opportunity Addendum for AmeriCorps State and National Grants FY 2013, "Applicants and grantees may report on either ED27 or ED6 but not both measures to ensure an unduplicated count. Applicants are encouraged to select ED27, which is a more direct measure of academic engagement than ED6, but ED6 may be preferred if it is significantly easier to collect school attendance data than to obtain parental consent and administer a pre-post survey." (p. 7)

† In 2013–14, grantee program #13 inadvertently entered performance measure targets for the entire three-year grant period rather than annual targets. The two-thirds reduction reflects a conversion to annual targets.

‡ Performance Measure ED5 was selected in error for this grantee program, so data were not reported. The relevant outcome Performance Measure is ED27.

Exhibit reads: In 2014–15, grantee program #1 had a target for Academic Achievement for ED1, ED2, and ED6 that was 136 percent of its target in 2013–14.

Exhibit D-6 shows how close grantee programs came in 2013–14 and 2014–15 to reaching the student program completion target (ED2) for each of the PMs they report. ED2 measures the number of students who completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs—that is, who received the full "dose" of School Turnaround AmeriCorps services designated by programs. All programs are presumed to begin working with more students than those who complete services.[47] On average, the programs in the portfolio showed modest growth in their completion rate from 2013–14 to 2014–15; however, this average masks the fact that some programs were consistently over their target and others consistently under their target.

Exhibit D-6: Percent of ED2 Target Achieved over Time

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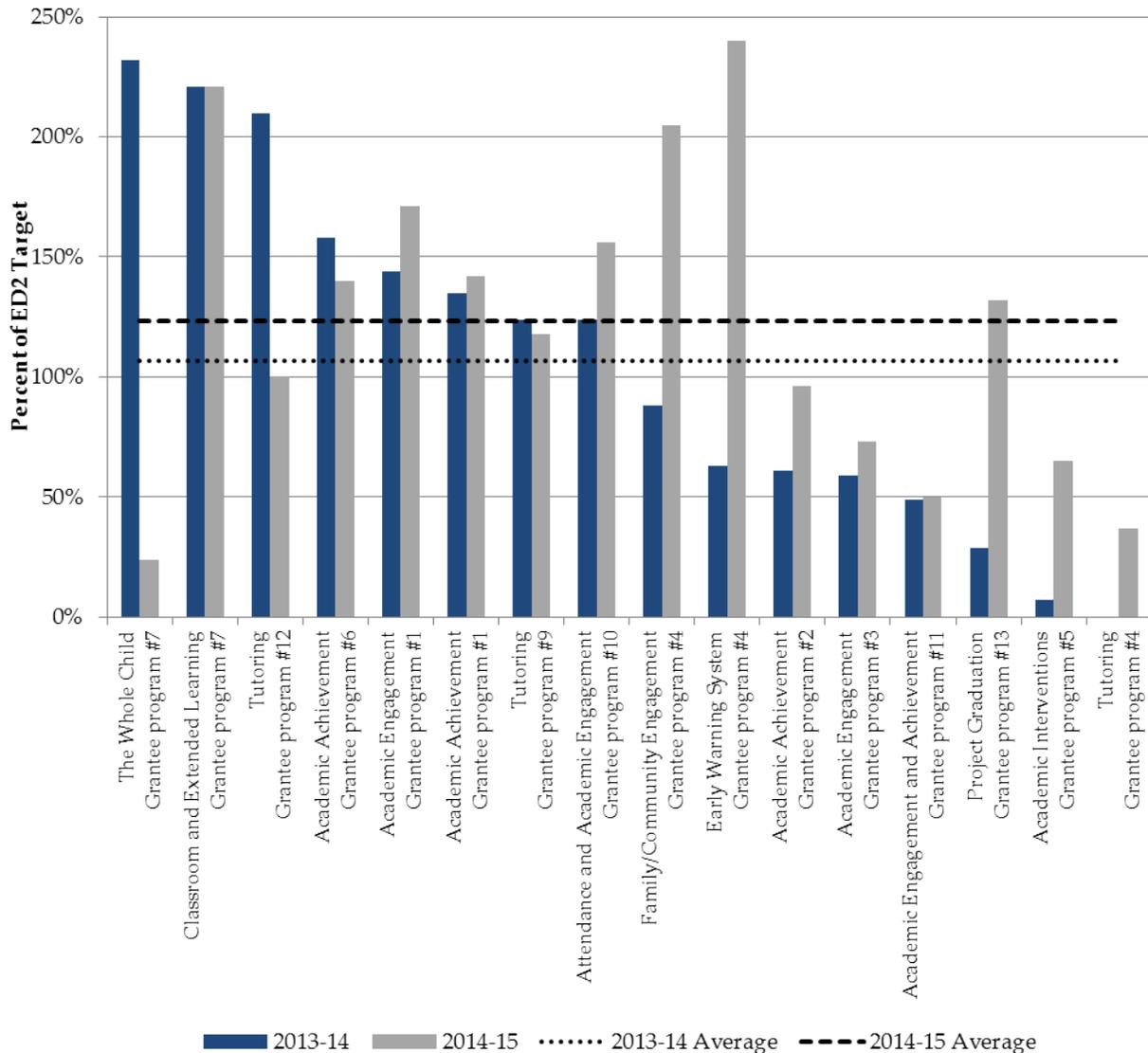
[47]   The number of students who start in a CNCS-supported education program is reported as ED1; about half of programs (7) report this measure.

Several grantee programs (#4, #7, and #1) appear more than once in this exhibit because they report on multiple sets of matched performance measures, presumably corresponding to different elements of their program (tutoring, family engagement, etc.).

While most programs performed similarly from year to year, a few notable exceptions are described below.

Program completion in grantee program #4's "Early Warning System" increased dramatically (63% to 240%) and "Family/Community Engagement" more than doubled (88% to 205%). In the 2013–14 GPR, grantee program #4, a new AmeriCorps-funded program, reported on a series of debilitating challenges that severely impacted its ability to meet its performance measure targets. Due to management issues, the program was unable to launch its program and recruit members until October for a November launch. As a result of the poor timing, the program was only able to offer half-time positions, which the program posited were "not as attractive and led to less-then-desirable enrollment outcomes." This issue in enrollment, in turn, impacted the program's ability to serve its target number of students in its ED2 measures. As the grantee staff explained, "had both full-time member positions been filled, [these measures] would likely have been met."

In its 2014–15 GPR, grantee program #4 reported an enrollment rate of 95.2 percent, a significant increase from the 27 percent achieved in the previous year, and a retention rate of 85 percent. This indicates a larger cohort of members was deployed, which translated into serving a larger number of students. It should also be noted that grantee program #4 adjusted its early warning indicator target for the 2014–15 year. The target in 2013–14 (350 students) decreased to 200 students on the 2014–15 GPR, due to a reduction in program MSY from 30 to 20. In 2014–15 grantee program #4 was able to exceed its ED2 targets for both its early warning system and family/community engagement activities.

Program completion in grantee program #7's "The Whole Child" activity decreased precipitously (232% to 24%). While grantee program #7's "Whole Child" target remained the same in 2014–15 as it did in 2013–14 (112 students), grantee program #7 was not able to achieve its goal in 2014–15 for one primary reason: loss of student transportation in an area that requires use of bussing. The School Turnaround AmeriCorps program had access to transportation in 2013-14, and without it, students could not stay for the after school programming. As a result, 26 of 106 students who started the after school program completed it.

Performance measures are set for numbers of students, but grantee programs must implicitly determine what proportion of their target number of students they expect to improve on either academic achievement (ED5) or academic engagement (ED27).[48] Exhibit D-7 shows the proportion of students expected to improve relative to those who completed services (ED5 Target/ED2 Target), and illustrates that programs' implicit expected rates of improvement range from 44 to 85 percent. These variations may reflect different definitions of improvement, as programs must specify the amount of progress that qualifies as improved performance in their grant application.

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[48]   See Figure 1 in the section *Potential Uses and Challenges of Administrative Data* for a sense of the complexity of this determination. In addition, note that an improvement rate (e.g., ED5 divided by ED2) can be hard to interpret, because the output measures may include students participating in different interventions for which the corresponding outcome measures are variously applicable. For example, at a given program, students may receive a member service labeled "Tutoring" which may in fact involve several interventions of varying levels of intensity (e.g., homework help, intensive one-on-one tutoring). Students included in the ED2 count may receive one or several of the interventions. The program might expect that only the students who received the intensive one-on-one tutoring would demonstrate improved academic performance (ED5), but all students would demonstrate improved academic engagement (ED27). Since ED2 does not disaggregate students by specific service received, it would be an imperfect denominator for ED5 in this theoretical case.

Exhibit D-7: Target versus Actual Proportions of Aligned Academic Performance Measures (2014–15)

Grantee Program	Activity Type	ED5 Target / ED2 Target	ED5 Actual / ED2 Actual	ED2 Actual / ED2 Target	ED5 Target Met?
Grantee program #9	Tutoring	85%	68%	118%	N
Grantee program #6	Academic Achievement	80%	84%	140%	Y
Grantee program #5	Academic Interventions	75%	72%	65%	N
Grantee program #3	Academic Engagement	75%	37%	73%	N
Grantee program #4	Tutoring	70%	77%	37%	N
Grantee program #12	Tutoring	65%	0% †	100%	N
Grantee program #2	Academic Achievement	60%	34%	96%	N
Grantee program #1	Academic Achievement	59%	42%	142%	Y
Grantee program #7	Classroom and Extended Learning	45%	25%	221%	Y
Grantee program #11	Academic Engagement and Achievement	44%	36%	51%	N

Notes: This table presents the quotient of targets for outcome performance measure ED5 and output performance measure ED2.

Performance Measure Definitions:

ED2 = Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs.

ED5 = Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math.

† It should be noted that grantee program #12 reported zero percent improvement in academic performance because the state assessment was changed to align with Common Core standards, causing them to not have comparable data from fall 2014 to spring 2015.

Exhibit reads: Grantee program #9's target for ED5 was 85 percent of its target for ED2. In other words, it expected that 85 percent of students who completed participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps would demonstrate improved academic performance in literacy and/or math. Grantee program #9's results for ED5 were 68 percent of its results for ED2. In other words, 68 percent of students who completed participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities demonstrated improved academic performance in literacy and/or math. It did not meet its ED5 target, even though the number of students who completed participation in AmeriCorps was 118 percent of the expected figure.

The next column in Exhibit D-7 shows the ratio of number of students who improved academically relative to the number who completed services (ED5 Actual/ED2 Actual). Three of 10 grantee programs reported on ED5 as a primary outcome and met their targets for improving student academic outcomes. [49] Programs could have produced student improvement but failed to meet their ED5 target if they did not meet their minimum program dosage or improvement threshold, as students who do not meet the minimum dosage and improvement threshold are not counted in ED5. Actual ratios of improvement varied from 0 to 84 percent; few programs were within a few percentage points of their projected rates for student improvement. Two of the three programs (#7 and #1) met their performance targets because ED5 targets are assessed in terms of number of students with improved academic performance rather than

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[49] One additional grantee (grantee program #5) did not meet its ED5 target for Tutoring but met its ED5 target for Family/Community Engagement. It does not appear that ED5 was the primary outcome for Family/Community Engagement, since the target for ED5 was very low (10 students, out of 100 expected to participate) and ED6 (improved attendance) and ED7 (decreased disciplinary referrals) were also reported.

ratios of ED5 to ED2. Since both programs served more students than predicted (even though the ratio of served to improved students was lower than predicted), they met their numeric ED5 targets.[50]

Grantee programs did not meet their performance targets for a variety of reasons. As discussed above, shortfalls in member enrollment or retention translated into programs' diminished capacity to serve the planned number of students and therefore missed performance targets. Other factors reported by individual programs included changes in student assessment metrics between 2013-14 and 2014-15, student disciplinary issues (i.e., suspensions that made it impossible for students to attend afterschool programs) or student transfers out of the school limiting data availability on their performance, parents not returning consent forms, and higher numbers of ELL students.

Exhibit D-8 shows that the ratio of students expected to improve on academic engagement relative to those who completed services (ED27 Target/ED2 or ED4A Target) ranges from 45 to 100 percent. Four of seven grantee programs met their stated targets for improving student academic engagement on ED27. Actual ratios of improvement varied from 0 to 100 percent, but most programs (five of seven) either approached or exceeded their projected rates for student improvement. One grantee program (#11) failed to meet its ED27 performance target even though 99 percent of students showed improvements in academic engagement because it only served half as many students as expected.

Two of the four grantee programs that met ED27 credited their performance to AmeriCorps members increasing schools' capacity by providing "more caring adults" and one-on-one and small group support to students in completing their work and preparing for course-end testing. Two of the three programs that did not meet ED27 attributed their underperformance to low member retention and high transient student populations, as well as problems with data management that resulted in inaccurate reporting of ED27 data.

The research team also explored potential relationships between performance and program characteristics (i.e., prior experience with AmeriCorps, urban vs. rural, grade levels served, SIG vs. Priority schools, number of school partners), and found no consistent patterns. This may reflect the small number of programs in any analysis. The results were the same when looking for patterns between program characteristics and narrative descriptions.

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[50]   Grantee program #9 served more students than predicted but did not meet its ED5 target.

Exhibit D-8: Target versus Actual Proportions of Aligned Academic Engagement Measures (2014–15)

Grantee Program	Activity	ED27 Target / ED2 or ED4A Target	ED27 Actual / ED2 or ED4A Actual	ED2 or ED4A Actual / ED2 or ED4A Target	ED27 Target Met?
Grantee program #9	Mentoring and Wraparound Services	100%	100%	114%	Y
Grantee program #8	Early Warning System	94%	36%	125%	N
Grantee program #10	Attendance and Academic Engagement	75%	91%	156%	Y
Grantee program #11	Academic Engagement and Achievement	70%	99%	51%	N
Grantee program #1	Academic Engagement	50%	46%	171%	Y
Grantee program #13	Project Graduation	49%	51%	132%	Y
Grantee program #7	The Whole Child	45%	0%	24%	N

Notes: This table presents the quotient of targets for outcome performance measure ED27 and output performance measure ED2 or ED4A.

Performance Measure Definitions:

ED2 = Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs.

ED4A = Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period.

ED27 = Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement.

Exhibit reads: Grantee program #9's target for ED27 was 100 percent of its target for ED2 or ED4A. In other words, it expected that 100 percent of students who completed participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps would demonstrate improved academic engagement. Grantee program #9's results for ED27 were 100 percent of its results for ED2 or ED4A. In other words, 100 percent of students who completed participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities demonstrated improved academic engagement. The number of students who completed participation in AmeriCorps was 114 percent of the expected figure. The program met its ED27 target.

D.3.   Administrative Data Synthesis

Looking across the member activity data and grantee progress reports, several trends emerge. Grantee programs that offered 5, 9, or 10 services generally achieved a higher percentage of their ED2 targets than programs that offered 1 or 2 services. Programs with 1,700 or more service hours per member had fewer service hours per student than most of the programs with fewer service hours per member. Also, several of the programs that reported the lowest member enrollment rates had difficulty providing student and member counts for the member activity data.

Exhibit D-9: Synthesis of Administrative Data

Data Source	MAD	MAD	MAD	MAD	GPR	GPR	GPR	GPR	GPR	GPR
Grantee Program	Student served	Service hours/ member	Service hours/ student	Services/ activities offered	Percent of ED2 target achieved for ED5 PM	ED5/ED2	Percent of ED2 or ED4A target achieved for ED27 PM	ED27/ ED2 or ED4A	Member enrollment rate	Member retention rate
Grantee program #1	1,797	1,228	65	9	142%	42%	171%	46%	102%	95%
Grantee program #2	2,437	1,700	27	1	96%	34%	N/A	N/A	54%	95%
Grantee program #3	448	1,472	46	1	73%	37%	N/A	N/A	88%	79%
Grantee program #4	1,451	1,700	23	2	37%	77%	N/A	N/A	95%	85%
Grantee program #5	1,874	1,769	23	1	65%	72%	N/A	N/A	117%	79%
Grantee program #6	missing	missing	missing	missing	140%	84%	N/A	N/A	38%	74%
Grantee program #7	248	missing	missing	10	221%	25%	24%	0%	43%	39%
Grantee program #8	1,339	1,305	48	1	N/A	N/A	125%	36%	107%	86%
Grantee program #9	342	107	9	5	118%	68%	114%	100%	103%	80%
Grantee program #10	587	1,574	48	9	N/A	N/A	156%	91%	90%	94%
Grantee program #11	388	992	84	missing	51%	36%	51%	99%	94%	78%
Grantee program #12	685	1,583	95	1	100%	0%	N/A	N/A	100%	90%
Grantee program #13	1,808	1,353	14	10	N/A	N/A	132%	51%	83%	60%

Notes: MAD = Member Activity Data; GPR = Grantee Progress Reports

See Exhibit II-10 for Performance Measure definitions

Exhibit reads: During the 2014–15 academic year, grantee program #1 served 1,797 students, provided 1,228 service hours per AmeriCorps member and 65 service hours per student, and offered 9 services/activities (as defined in Exhibit D-1). Grantee program #1 achieved 142 percent of its ED2 target for the performance measure linked to ED5, and had 42 percent as many students meet the ED5 (outcome) performance measure as met the ED2 (output) performance measure. Grantee program #1 achieved 171 percent of its ED2 or ED4A target for the performance measure linked to ED27, and had 46 percent as many students meet the ED27 (outcome) performance measure as met the ED2 or ED4A (output) performance measure. Grantee program #1 had an AmeriCorps member enrollment rate of 102 percent and an AmeriCorps member retention rate of 95 percent.

APPENDIX E. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The Year 2 data collection instruments were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on October 26, 2015 under OMB control number 3045-0164. In Year 2, the study team made *minor* substantive modifications to some of the Year 1 data collection instruments as well as non-substantive modifications to improve the clarity of the instruments. The substantive changes were made to accommodate changes to the modified research design and research questions to enable the Year 2 evaluation to build on findings from Year 1.

Appendix E.21 includes a list of the Year 1 data collection instruments. These were delivered as a separate document from the Year 1 final evaluation report. CNCS did not post this document publicly, and can make the Year 1 data collection instruments available upon request.

E.1. Grantee Telephone Interview Protocol: Fall 2015

1. Are you working in the same schools this year as last year? If not, what changes were made and why?

2. What is the process for selecting and placing members in partner schools? How do you work with districts to determine which and how many members will be placed in certain schools?

3. Can you describe the key activities your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are implementing this school year (2015-16)? Of these activities, which focus on specific students, which focus on specific grades, and which focus on the entire school?

4. If and how do school improvement goals influence the focus of the program and what members do? As applicable, explain how members' activities fit into the broader scope of the turnaround initiatives of the schools where they serve.

5. What worked well last year (2014-15) and why? Which strategies were more helpful in supporting schools' turnaround efforts? (As needed) Why do you say that?

6. What was one specific issue you overcame last year related to members' work in schools (e.g., not a grant administration problem)?
    - [Follow up if did make changes]: Why did you make these changes? How did you communicate with the school(s) about any changes?

7. [Grantee with SIG exiter] Have any of your schools successfully exited SIG status since the start of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps Program? If so, why do you think the school(s) was effective in addressing turnaround goals? To what extent did AmeriCorps members contribute to that success?
    - Note to Interviewer: Successfully exiting SIG status means they met the goals in their turnaround plan – and probably those were related to improvements in academic performance and closing the achievement gap for certain groups.

Partnerships with Schools and Districts

8. Can you please describe your current relationship with the schools and school districts taking part in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps implementation? Have there been any changes in the partnership over time?

9. What challenges have you faced partnering with school(s)? How have you addressed these challenges?

10. How would you characterize the relationships between AmeriCorps members and school staff members last year? Has your organization or the school(s) done anything to help members fit into the school community?
    - Are there differences in the relationships between members and certain kinds of staff members, such as principals, counselors, teachers, and administrative staff?

11. Please describe for me the process of coming up with your partnership agreement with your partner school(s).
    - How did you determine the primary roles and responsibilities of your organization and the school(s) as outlined in your partnership agreement? Did you discuss what these roles and responsibilities would be with the school(s) before drafting the agreement? Who wrote, read, and approved of the partnership agreement(s)?
    - Ask grantee to send you their Partnership and/or Data Sharing Agreement for their schools to you within the week. (Follow through with PA email after the call)

12. How effective do you think the partnership agreements are overall?
    - Has the partnership agreement been a helpful tool when discussing and implementing the program in schools? Have you revised the agreement since the beginning of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program and if so, how and why?
    - Have you experienced any issues with lack of buy-in into program by school leaders despite having partnership agreement? If so, how did you address these issues?

E.2. Grantee Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

1. Were there any changes in the key activities members engaged in at your School Turnaround AmeriCorps school(s) during the year? Why did you make these changes?

2. What worked well this year? Were there any activities that were effective this year that were not as effective last year?

3. What did not work as well this year? Were there any activities that were challenging this year that were not challenging last year (e.g., new challenges)? If possible, what changes would you make to the design of your program going forward?

4. We talked in the fall about your partner schools' turnaround goals. How effective do you feel the program was in helping schools meet those goals this year? Are there goals in particular you think the program helped address and if so, why?
    *   Probe: school goals could include academic achievement, socio-emotional health, improving attendance, improving graduation rates.

5. Who served as the primary supervisor of member activities at the school sites this year? Was that person a school staff member or from your organization? What were the supervisor's responsibilities? What about this role worked well and what did not work as well?

6. Were there any [other] major personnel or other changes in the schools you are working with? If so, did it have any impact on the program and how did you address these changes the year?

7. Can you please describe your relationship with leadership in the schools and school districts taking part in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps implementation this year? Did anything change about your relationship from last year to this year?

8. Did any new challenges arise in maintaining your partnership with the school(s) you are working with? How did you address them?

9. What can your organization do to improve your relationship with your school partners? What can the school(s) do to create a better relationship between school staff and your organization?

10. What else should we discuss that is important for understanding how your organization interacts with school(s) engaged in this turnaround effort?

Note to interviewer: Ask grantee to send you their Partnership and/or Data Sharing Agreement for their schools to you within the week. (Follow through with PA email after the call)

E.3. Grantee Survey: Spring 2016

1. Did your organization's relationship with the school(s) your grant is operating in exist before you established a partnership agreement for the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?

    ____ Yes, with all schools

    ____ Yes, with some schools

    ____ No

2. How many years total has your organization collaborated with the school(s), including this year?

    ____ Less than 6 months

    ____ 6 months to less than one year

    ____ One year

    ____ Two years

    ____ Three or more years

    ____ Varies by school (please check all that apply above)

3. To the best of your knowledge, do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide direct services to individual students, to the whole classroom, or to all students in the school during the 2015-16 school year? *(Check all that apply.)*

    ____ AmeriCorps programming was targeted to individual students

    ____ AmeriCorps programming supported the whole classroom(s)

    ____ AmeriCorps programming supported all students in the school

    ____ Varies by school (please check all that apply above)

    ____ I don't know

4. Do you know which students were served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members ?

    Yes: _____   No: _____   Some, but not all _____

5. For the purpose of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program, how does your organization define program completion for a particular student?

    _____

    _____

6. Please review the list below to confirm the schools to which your organization assigned School Turnaround AmeriCorps members. Fill in the targeted number of students that you expect to serve and complete the program (as defined above in Question 4) this school year (2015-16). If you don't know, please write in "DK."

E.4. Partnership Agreement Follow-up Email

Hello [Grantee Name],

Thank you for chatting with me about how the grant is supporting school turnaround efforts at your schools. As mentioned in the interview I am collecting Partnership Agreements and/or Data Use Agreements from all grantees. In case you are not familiar with either I've included a little information about each below so that you have an idea of what documents we are collecting.

Partnership Agreement- written agreements with schools in which AmeriCorps members are serving and designed to describe how the program and the school will collaborate

Data Use Agreement level and type of data collected and/or extracted, how it can be used and who it can and cannot be shared with

My hope is to collect this from you within the week by **[date]**. If that timing does not work please let me know and I we can figure out another time.

Again thank you for your time, you have been very helpful throughout this process and I wanted to let you know that I really appreciate your help.

Sincerely,
[NAME]

E.5. Member Activity Data: Online Form

Page 1

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Online Tracking Form   ✖

As you are aware, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) since 2014 has contracted the independent research firm, Abt Associates, to study the implementation of School Turnaround AmeriCorps and conduct the National Evaluation of School Turnaround AmeriCorps.

We are collecting information that you use to track the services and activities that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide in schools. Please provide information you already track about your program; you will not be expected to collect new information. We understand that grantees vary in how they track AmeriCorps member services and activities and ask that you include as much detail as possible about your experiences in this form. *As a reminder, please <u>do not</u> provide any personally identifiable information (PII).*

Your data will help inform CNCS and the U.S. Department of Education about how AmeriCorps members support schools in implementing their turnaround efforts. Your responses will go directly to the research team and are confidential.

<div align="center">

Thank you for your continued participation throughout the evaluation!
Please proceed to the next page and begin.

Contact Djaniele Taylor, the Data Collection Coordinator throughout this process at 617-520-2729 or via email at
Djaniele_Taylor@abtassoc.com with any questions about the tracking form.

</div>

Page 2 (school names pre-filled)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Section 1: School Information ✖

In this section provide School Turnaround AmeriCorps member tracking information for EACH school that participated in the **2014-2015** evaluation.

Q1 ✖

Please let us know whether these schools participated in the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program during the 2014-2015 school year.

Select "Yes" or "No" for each school listed below

	Yes	No
{{ invite.School_1 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_2 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_3 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_4 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_5 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_6 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_7 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_8 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_9 }}	◯	◯
{{ invite.School_10 }}	◯	◯

Page 3 (school names pre-filled)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Q2   ✖

Enter the total number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members who served at each school.

If a member worked in more than one school, include that member in the school total where they provided the MOST services *(provide an unduplicated count)*.

	Total Number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members who served in this school in 2014-2015
{{ invite.School_1 }}	
{{ invite.School_2 }}	
{{ invite.School_3 }}	
{{ invite.School_4 }}	
{{ invite.School_5 }}	
{{ invite.School_6 }}	
{{ invite.School_7 }}	
{{ invite.School_8 }}	
{{ invite.School_9 }}	
{{ invite.School_10 }}	

Q3   ✖

Enter the total number of service hours that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members served in each school.

The total should include all hours by AmeriCorps members that could qualify as service in each school. It should exclude hours of members serving in other, non-School Turnaround AmeriCorps programs operated by the grantee, if any.

	Total Number of AmeriCorps SERVICE HOURS provided in this school in 2014-2015
{{ invite.School_1 }}	
{{ invite.School_2 }}	
{{ invite.School_3 }}	
{{ invite.School_4 }}	
{{ invite.School_5 }}	
{{ invite.School_6 }}	
{{ invite.School_7 }}	
{{ invite.School_8 }}	
{{ invite.School_9 }}	
{{ invite.School_10 }}	

Page 4 (school names pre-filled)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Q4   ✖

Enter the total number of *unique* students who received School Turnaround AmeriCorps services at each school.

In the first column, please provide the total number of students who received *any* School Turnaround AmeriCorps services, even if they dropped out of the program or left the school midway through the year.

In the second column, please provide the number of students who *completed* participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps for the purposes of Performance Measures ED2 and/or ED4A.

Provide an unduplicated count in each column

	Number of students who received *any* AmeriCorps services in this school in 2014-2015	Number of students who *completed* participation in AmeriCorps in 2014-2015
{{ invite.School_1 }}		
{{ invite.School_2 }}		
{{ invite.School_3 }}		
{{ invite.School_4 }}		
{{ invite.School_5 }}		
{{ invite.School_6 }}		
{{ invite.School_7 }}		
{{ invite.School_8 }}		
{{ invite.School_9 }}		
{{ invite.School_10 }}		

Page 5 (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}.)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Section 2: AmeriCorps Member Activity   ✕

In this section we would like to find out more about the services/activities in EACH of the schools participating in the 2014-2015 evaluation.

Q5   ✕

Select the Service/Activity categories that closely represent the types of services and activities AmeriCorps members performed in {{ Q1 }}.

Below are definitions of services and activities. If AmeriCorps members engage in sessions that involve multiple services/activities select the primary service/activity and provide details on the next page. If there are services/activities that do not clearly fit into these categories, please select "Other Service/Activity", name the new category and describe it on the next page.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Members keep parents and community members informed about school functions and activities to promote their involvement in the community; engage students in service-learning opportunities in their community
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT: Members provide family engagement activities that improve families' knowledge and awareness of the school itself, communicate with parents about their child's progress
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING: Members provide after school activities that combine tutoring/homework help with recreational activities (e.g. cooking, crafts)
ATTENDANCE: Members check in on students regularly to understand the importance and encourage them to attend
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT: Members help to craft the school's behavioral culture by developing positive relationships with students and encouraging them to improve their attitudes about and behaviors in school (e.g. improve discipline and self-regulation, not be disruptive in class, treat others with respect, resolve conflicts constructively, have a positive attitude about learning, become more engaged in school)
MENTORSHIP: Members provide support to and build relationships with students needing help for specific issues
COLLEGE READINESS: Members help students prepare for college entrance exams, apply for financial aid, and provide college readiness activities
TUTORING: Members provide specialized attention to students giving extra time on subjects with which they need supplemental help
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES: Students are provided non-academic services such as health services
SCHOOL CLIMATE: Members work with teachers, students and families to set a positive tone in the school and create a supportive educational experience for students, which may include fostering safety, promoting a supportive academic, disciplinary, and physical environment, and encouraging and maintaining respectful, trusting, and caring relationships throughout the school community

☐ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
☐ PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT
☐ AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING
☐ ATTENDANCE
☐ BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT
☐ MENTORSHIP
☐ COLLEGE READINESS
☐ TUTORING
☐ SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
☐ SCHOOL CLIMATE
☐ OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity [_____]
☐ OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity [_____]
☐ OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity [_____]

Page 6 (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

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Q6   ✖

Enter information that better describes how your AmeriCorps members provided services/activities in {{ Q1 }}.

Please explain how you tracked each category and/or if members engaged in sessions that involved multiple services/activities and provide details about those multiple activities, if applicable.

Service/Activity Notes (if applicable)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT	
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING	
ATTENDANCE	
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	

Page 6 (continued) (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

MENTORSHIP	
COLLEGE READINESS	
TUTORING	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	
SCHOOL CLIMATE	
SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	
SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	
SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	

Page 7 (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown).

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Q7a

Select the level(s) in which members typically provided this service/activity at {{ Q1 }}.

Select all that apply in each category (row).

	Individual students	Targeted small group of students	Whole classroom	All students in the school	Individual parents/families	Targeted small group of parent/families	All parents/families in the school	Other	Please specify, if applicable
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
ATTENDANCE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
MENTORSHIP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
COLLEGE READINESS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
TUTORING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
SCHOOL CLIMATE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Page 7 (continued) (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

Q7b ✖

Select the appropriate performance measure(s) that each service type at {{ Q1 }} contributed to.

Below are definitions of each performance measure. Please select the performance measure(s) that apply in each service/activity (row):

ED1: Number of students who start in a CNCS-supported education program

ED2: Number of students that completed participation in CNCS-supported K-12 education programs

ED3A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that are commenced by CNCS-supported programs

ED4A: Number of disadvantaged youth/mentor matches that were sustained by the CNCS-supported program for at least the required time period

ED5: Number of students with improved academic performance in literacy and/or math

ED6: Number of students that improved their school attendance over the course of the CNCS-supported program's involvement with the student

ED7: Number of students with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions over the course of the CNCS-supported programs' involvement

ED9: Number of students graduating from high school on time with a diploma

ED10: Number of students entering post-secondary institutions

ED27: Number of students in grades K-12 that participated in the mentoring or tutoring or other education program, including CNCS-supported service learning, who demonstrated improved academic engagement

SIG 1: Number of minutes within the school year

SIG 2: Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., AP/IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes

SIG 3: Dropout rate

SIG 4: Truants

	ED1	ED2	ED3A	ED4A	ED5	ED6	ED7	ED9	ED10	ED27	SIG 1	SIG 2	SIG 3	SIG 4
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ATTENDANCE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MENTORSHIP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
COLLEGE READINESS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
TUTORING	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SCHOOL CLIMATE	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page 7 (continued) (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

Q7c ✖

Enter the number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members who provided this service/activity type and their total number of service hours at {{ Q1 }}.

	Total number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps MEMBERS who provided this service/activity type in 2014-2015	Total number of SERVICE HOURS School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provided for this service/activity type in 2014-2015
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT		
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT		
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING		
ATTENDANCE		
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT		
MENTORSHIP		
COLLEGE READINESS		
TUTORING		
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES		
SCHOOL CLIMATE		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity		
Total		---

Page 7 (continued) (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

Q7d   ✖

Enter the total number of students who participated in *any* aspect of this service/activity type at **{{ Q1 }}**. Please include students who dropped out of the program or left the school midway through the year.

Provide an unduplicated count in each column

	Number of students who participated in *any* aspect of this service/activity type in 2014-2015
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT	
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING	
ATTENDANCE	
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	
MENTORSHIP	
COLLEGE READINESS	
TUTORING	
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	
SCHOOL CLIMATE	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	

Page 7 (continued) (Repeated for every participating school. School name substituted for {{ Q1 }}. Only activities performed in the school are shown.)

Q7e

Did you establish a minimum amount of service (dosage) students must have received for each service/activity type at {{ Q1 }} for the purposes of Performance Measures ED2 and/or ED4A? If yes, what was the minimum dosage, and how many students received the minimum dosage?

Indicate if you established a minimum amount of service or "dosage" students must have received to count each service/activity type toward meeting your performance measure targets.

	Minimum dosage established?		Minimum dosage amount	Total number of unique students who received the minimum dosage in 2014-2015
	Yes	No		
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	○	○		
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT	○	○		
AFTER-SCHOOL & EXTENDED LEARNING	○	○		
ATTENDANCE	○	○		
BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	○	○		
MENTORSHIP	○	○		
COLLEGE READINESS	○	○		
TUTORING	○	○		
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES	○	○		
SCHOOL CLIMATE	○	○		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 1: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	○	○		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 2: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	○	○		
OTHER SERVICE/ACTIVITY 3: Please provide a brief name for this service/activity	○	○		

Page 8

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection (2014-2015)

Q8

Additional Information

Please include information that you would like to share with us that was not captured in the form

[text box]

Thank you for your time. We greatly appreciate your participation!

Please contact Djaniele Taylor at 617-520-2729 or via email at Djaniele_Taylor@abtassoc.com with any questions.

E.6.   Member Activity Data: Instructions

School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Activity Data Collection

Instructions: Please submit AmeriCorps member activity data for BOTH the full 2014-15 academic year and the first half of the 2015-16 academic year by <u>February 4th</u>**.**

- We suggest that you provide data in an excel file or modify a template that you already use to track member activity to include the requested data

- Once your data is complete upload it to the File Transfer Portal (FTP) website

- Please <u>do not</u> provide personally identifying information (PII) of members and students. Examples of PII are names, identification numbers, addresses, birth dates, and phone numbers.

1. **School Information:** Provide school names and information for EACH school that received School Turnaround AmeriCorps services in the 2014-15 academic year and is receiving School Turnaround AmeriCorps services in the current 2015-16 academic year. Add details about each school, if necessary.

Example:

School Name (2014 2015)	Notes, if applicable
Brand High School	This school is no longer a part of grant as of the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year
Hunter Elementary School	NA
Campbell TECH	NA

School Name (2015 2016)	Notes, if applicable
Hunter Elementary School	NA
Campbell TECH	NA

2. **AmeriCorps Member Information:** Provide AmeriCorps member activity data for EACH school that received School Turnaround AmeriCorps services during the full 2014-15 academic year and is participating in the current 2015-16 academic year. Please provide aggregate member counts for each school and make sure to <u>not</u> provide member names or identification numbers.

Please provide the:

   a) **Total number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members who serve at each school.** *If a member works in more than one school, include that member in the school total <u>where they provide the most services</u> (provide an unduplicated count).*

   b) **Total (Target) number of service hours that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members serve (will serve) in each school.** *The total should include all hours by AmeriCorps members that could qualify as service in each school. It should exclude hours of members serving in other, non-School Turnaround AmeriCorps programs operated by the grantee, if any.*

Example:

School Name (2014 2015)	Total Number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members Serving this school in 2014 2015	Target Number of AmeriCorps SERVICE HOURS that will be provided in this school in 2014 2015
Brand High School	4	4060
Hunter Elementary School	7	6560
Campbell TECH	5	5245

School Name (2015 2016)	Total Number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps Members Serving this school in 2015 2016	Target Number of AmeriCorps SERVICE HOURS that will be provided in this school in 2015 2016
Hunter Elementary School	6	6445
Campbell TECH	6	6445

3. **Student Information:** Provide the total number of *unique* students who received School Turnaround AmeriCorps services at each school *(provide an unduplicated count)*. Please provide aggregate student counts for each school and make sure to <u>not</u> provide student names or identification numbers.

Please provide the:

a) **Total number of students who received any School Turnaround AmeriCorps services**, even if they dropped out of the program or left the school midway through the year.

b) **The number of students who are expected to complete participation in School Turnaround AmeriCorps** for the purposes of Performance Measures ED2 and/or ED4A*

*Performance measure definitions can be found in Appendix A

Example:

School Name (2014 2015)	Number of students who received any AmeriCorps services in this school in 2014 2015	Number of students expected to complete participation in AmeriCorps in 2014 2015
Brand High School	185	50
Hunter Elementary School	289	70
Campbell TECH	337	100

School Name (2015 2016)	Number of students who received any AmeriCorps services in this school in 2015 2016	Number of students expected to complete participation in AmeriCorps in 2015 2016
Hunter Elementary School	200	65
Campbell TECH	285	85

4. **Service/Activity Information:** Provide the service/activity category (definitions found in Appendix B), service level, performance measure, service hours, student count, and minimum dosage for EACH school. See questions and an example below.

Please provide:

a) **The service/activity categories (definitions found in Appendix B) that closely represent the types of services and activities AmeriCorps members perform in EACH school.** *If AmeriCorps members engage in sessions that involve multiple services/activities, provide the* ***primary*** *service/activity along with details. If there are services/activities that do not clearly fit into these categories, please name the new category and provide details.*

b) **The level at which members typically provide each service type at EACH school based on the categories below.** *If there is a level that does not clearly fit into these categories, please name the new level and provide details:*

<div align="center">

Individual students
Targeted small group of students
Whole classroom
All students in the school
Individual parents/families
Targeted small group of parents/families
All parents/families in the school
Other (provide name and details)

</div>

c) **The performance measure(s) that each service type at EACH school contributes to.** *Performance measure definitions can be found in Appendix A.*

d) **The number of School Turnaround AmeriCorps MEMBERS who provide each service/activity type.**

e) **The total number of SERVICE HOURS for each service/activity type provided by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members at EACH school.**

f) **The total number of STUDENTS who received this service/activity type at EACH school.** *Please include students who dropped out of the program or left the school midway through the year.*

g) **Did you establish a minimum amount of service (dosage) that students must receive for each service/activity type at EACH school for the purposes of Performance Measures ED2 and/or ED4A?**

   If yes, what was the minimum dosage, and how many students received the minimum dosage?

E.7.   School Leader Survey: Spring 2016

1. What is your title/role?
    ____ Principal
    ____ Assistant Principal
    ____ Site Director
    ____ Other: please specify _____

2. How many years total have you worked at this school, including this year (2015-16)? _____
    If this is your first year at this school, enter 1.

3. Briefly describe the activities in your school's turnaround plan.

4. What School Improvement Grant (SIG) change model does your school follow this year (2015-16)?
    (*Check only one.*)
    ____ Turnaround
    ____ Transformation
    ____ Restart
    ____ Not applicable (please explain_____)

5. As of today, how many AmeriCorps members are serving at your school as part of the School
    Turnaround AmeriCorps program? ____

6. To the best of your knowledge, do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide direct services
    to individual students, to the whole classroom, or to all students in the school during the 2015-16
    school year? (*Check all that apply.*)
    ____ School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming is targeted to individual students.
    ____ School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming supports the whole classroom.
    ____ School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming supports all students in the school
    ____ Don't know

7. Do you know which students are served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school
    year (2015-16)?
    Yes: _____   No: _____   Some but not all: _____

8. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with each of the elements listed below for this school year (2015-16): *(Mark one response in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. Teachers in this school are supportive of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program.					
b. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are integrated into regular staff meetings and communication.					
c. The principal and/or school leadership team communicates a clear vision of turnaround to School Turnaround AmeriCorps members.					
d. The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of implementation of turnaround activities at this school.					
e. The principal and/or school leadership team monitors performance and progress of students and shares this information with School Turnaround AmeriCorps members.					

9. How important are the following to successfully implementing your School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in your school(s)?

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. Orientation and training of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members before they serve at the school					
b. Comprehensive trainings of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and program support staff during their year(s) of service					
c. Clearly defined multi-layered supervisory structure to ensure fidelity of program implementation					
d. Clearly defined framework (e.g. RTI) to guide instructional choices and allow for the assessment of program effectiveness					

		Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
e.	Highly defined set of research-based interventions to improve desired student-level outcomes					
f.	Alignment of School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities to the strategies outlined in the school's turnaround plan					
g.	AmeriCorps member recruitment and selection process that effectively identifies and selects members with characteristics/skills aligned with the program's objectives					

10. What do you consider to be the most important school turnaround outcomes for students <u>over the next two years (2016-17 and 2017-18)</u>? *Please rank from 1 up to 9, with 1 being most important. Please only rank an outcome if you believe it is important.*

   ___ Enhanced academic achievement

   ___ Improved grades

   ___ Improved completion of assignments

   ___ Increased motivation

   ___ Increased self-esteem

   ___ Improved attendance

   ___ Improved socio-emotional health

   ___ Improved behavior

   ___ Other. If other, please specify_____

   ___ Not applicable

Note: If Q10_NA is selected, none of the others should be ranked

11. Please fill in the following table about student outcomes.

	Was there improvement in this area for students at your school served by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this year (2015 16)?	If you marked "Yes," what were the outcomes with the greatest degree of improvement, across the school(s)? Rank from 1 to 9, with 1=Greatest improvement, to 9=least improvement. Do not rank outcomes where you marked "No."
Enhanced academic achievement, as measured by standardized assessments	___Yes ___No	
Improved grades	___Yes ___No	
Improved completion of assignments	___Yes ___No	
Increased motivation	___Yes ___No	
Increased self-esteem	___Yes ___No	
Improved attendance	___Yes ___No	
Improved socio-emotional health	___Yes ___No	
Improved behavior	___Yes ___No	
Other (please specify): _____	___Yes ___No	

12. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school during the 2015-16 school year. *(Mark one response in each row.)*

My school …	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
a. Offers students a supportive and inviting environment within which to learn.					
b. Sets high standards for academic performance for all students.					
c. Promotes academic success for all students.					
d. Emphasizes helping students academically when they need it.					
e. Provides adequate counseling and support services for students.					
f. Emphasizes teaching lessons in ways relevant to students.					
g. Offers staff a supportive and inviting environment within which to work.					
h. Promotes trust and collegiality among staff.					
i. Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to do your job effectively.					
j. Provides the materials, resources, and training (professional development) needed to work with special education (IEP) students.					
k. Encourages opportunities for students to decide things like class rules.					
l. Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussions or activities.					
m. Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities.					

My school …	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
n. Gives all students equal opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities.					
o. Gives students opportunities to "make a difference" by helping other people, the school, or the community (e.g., service learning).					
p. Encourages students to enroll in rigorous courses (such as honors and AP), regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality.					
q. Emphasizes using instructional materials that reflect the culture or ethnicity of our students.					
r. Has staff examine their own cultural biases through professional development.					
s. Considers closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap a high priority.					
t. Fosters an appreciation of student diversity and respect for one another.					
u. Emphasizes showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices.					
v. Clearly communicates to students the consequences of breaking school rules.					
w. Handles discipline problems fairly.					
x. Effectively handles student discipline and behavioral problems.					
y. Is a safe place for students.					
z. Is a safe place for staff.					
aa. Is welcoming to and facilitates parent involvement.					
bb. Makes information and resources available to parents/guardians about how they can support their children's education.					
cc. Has clean and well-maintained facilities and property					
dd. Has sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of students.					
ee. Has sufficient support staff to meet the needs of students.					

13. Please indicate whether the following topics represent challenges in your school this school year (2015-16). (Mark one response in each row.)

	Not a challenge	Moderate challenge	Severe challenge
a. Student academic performance			
b. Student behavior and discipline			
c. Student engagement in school			
d. Student attendance			
e. Student safety			
f. Student aspirations for college and/or career			
g. Student fatigue/lack of sleep			
h. Student alcohol and drug use			
i. Student tobacco use			
j. Harassment or bullying among students			
k. Physical fighting between students			
l. Disruptive student behavior			
m. Racial/ethnic conflict among students			
n. Student depression or other mental health problems			
o. Lack of respect of staff by students			
p. Cutting classes or being truant			
q. Gang-related activity			
r. Weapons possession			
s. Vandalism (including graffiti)			
t. Theft			

14. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about your school this school year (2015-16). *(Mark one response in each row.)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Students take their school work seriously.				
b. Students treat each other with respect.				
c. Students treat teachers with respect.				
d. Students treat AmeriCorps members with respect.				
e. Teachers and other school staff communicate and collaborate.				
f. Families play an active role in our school.				

15. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements about community involvement and partnerships with your school this school year (2015-16). (Mark one response in each row.)

This school works with organizations in the community to …	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to community involvement and partnerships in this school)
a. Provide academic enrichment, extended learning time or other academic supports to students.					
b. Make appropriate support services available to students with special needs.					
c. Deliver wraparound services and non-academic (social/emotional) supports to students.					
d. Increase awareness about and access to health resources/services (e.g. targeting drug use, mental health, teen pregnancy).					
e. Expose students to post-secondary education opportunities and increase student interest in and knowledge about college.					
f. Connect parents/guardians to information and resources to help them support their children's education.					

16. For this school year (2015-16), please indicate your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with each of the elements listed below. *(Mark one response in each row.)*

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. Overall quality of School Turnaround AmeriCorps programming					
b. Communication and collaboration between teachers and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members					
c. Communication and collaboration between school leadership and School Turnaround AmeriCorps members					
d. Communication between school leadership and grantee staff					
e. Implementation of the roles and responsibilities outlined in the school partnership agreements					
f. Placement of members in meaningful service activities					
g. Referral of students to receive services offered by School Turnaround AmeriCorps members					
h. Matching of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members to students in need of academic strengthening and social/emotional supports					

17. In your opinion, how successful is the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in the following areas this school year (2015-16)? (Mark one response in each row.)

	Very Unsuccessful	Somewhat Unsuccessful	Somewhat Successful	Very Successful	Not applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. Overall success of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program					
b. School Turnaround AmeriCorps program's success in improving student academic achievement					
c. School Turnaround AmeriCorps program's success in improving student socio-emotional health					
d. School Turnaround AmeriCorps program's success in improving school climate					
e. School Turnaround AmeriCorps program's success in improving the school's capacity to implement its turnaround model					

18. Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements this school year (2015-16). (Mark one response in each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members offer supports that are beneficial to the teachers in this school.					
b. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide helpful support to the students in this school.					
c. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members engage parents/guardians to become involved in their children's school.					
d. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members provide access to information and resources to parents/guardians about how they can support their children's education.					
e. School Turnaround AmeriCorps activities occur frequently enough to be valuable.					
f. School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are important partners in improving student outcomes.					

19. Which School Improvement Grant (SIG) strategies are influenced the most by the School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this school year (2015-16)?

        Please rank on a scale of 1 to 6, where 1=Most influenced Most and 6=Least Influenced.

        ___ Family and community engagement

        ___ School culture and environment

        ___ Academic achievement

        ___ Graduation rates

        ___ College enrollment rates

        ___ Increased learning time

        ___ Not applicable – we are not receiving a School Improvement Grant this school year.

20. Please indicate the level of influence School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have over the following elements of your school's turnaround goals? (Mark one response in each row.)

	No influence	Minimal influence	Some Influence	Substantial influence	Not applicable (e.g., activity does not apply to how AmeriCorps members serve in this school)
a. Improving academic performance in ELA and/or math					
b. Increasing rates of high school graduation					
c. Increasing college readiness and enrollment rates					
d. Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement					
e. Establishing a school culture and environment that fosters school safety, attendance, and discipline					

In order to send you a $25 check as a thank you for completing the survey, we will need to mail it to your home address. Please provide your address or indicate if you're not interested in receiving the check. The checks will be mailed in April or May.

        o   Please do not send me a check.

Name: _____

Street # and Name:_____

Apt #: _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Thank you very much for your time. We greatly appreciate your participation.

E.8. Principal Group Telephone Interview Protocol: Fall 2015

1. I'd like to start by giving each of you a minute to introduce yourself. Please tell us
    *   Your name
    *   Your school name, type (elementary, middle, etc.) and location
    *   The number of years you have been a principal – total and in this school

2. Please describe the key activities School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are engaging in at your school this year? What do they do?
    *   Is their role clearly understood by others at the school? Why or why not?

3. What is your relationship like with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee (organization) with which you partner? How have you collaborated with the grantee, if at all?
    a. Is there ongoing communication between the grantee and yourself? Do you feel you have enough information about the program?
    b. Did you have a role in drafting your partnership agreement?
    c. How effective has the partnership agreement been overall?

4. How did the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program first come to your school (*if known*)?

5. In general, how useful do you think external partners are in supporting your school's improvement needs? How can external partners/resources best be used?

6. Do your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have an on-site supervisor, or some other kind of supervision? If so, is that person from the AmeriCorps organization or your school? What are the supervisor's roles and responsibilities? What is your role in relation to supervising and supporting AmeriCorps members? Is the supervision of members adequate?

7. Please describe the relationship between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and your school staff? To what extent are they integrated into the school community?
    *   *If not very integrated*, how could they better be integrated into the community? What barriers get in the way of integration?
    *   *If very integrated*, what are some examples of how they are integrated into the school community? How did you accomplish this?

8. What training do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members receive (*both initially and during the year*)? How could members have been better trained/prepared to serve at your school?

9. How effective do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have been in helping your school address its turnaround goals?
    *   *If not effective,* why not?
    *   *If effective*, in what ways?

10. What about the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program has worked particularly well at your school? What aspects did not work well or what were the biggest challenges? What lessons have been learned about implementing the program at your school that might be helpful to other sites/schools?

    Potential Probes (use only as needed to help generate discussion about what is/is not working well, based on the roles members are playing):
    - Affecting relationships between students and staff?
    - Involving families (e.g. in attending school events, providing access to information and resources to support their child's education, helping students complete homework, volunteering in child's classroom)?
    - Improving the school environment and climate?
    - Helping to set school goals and monitor progress?
    - Supporting the academic needs of specific groups of students?
    - Supporting the behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs of specific groups of students?
    - Providing before school, after school, or extended learning time programming, if known

11. If you could use only one word, how would you describe the AmeriCorps members at your school? Why did you choose that word?

12. In closing, what additional (other) supports from AmeriCorps members or other external partners would benefit your school and its turnaround efforts, if any?

Anything else you'd like to share about the program or your experience?

E.9.   School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR AMERICORPS MEMBERS

NOTE: Telephone interviews with a sample of AmeriCorps members who serve at case study schools will be conducted in winter 2016.

MEMBERS' DUTIES

1. Can you please describe your role and duties at the school where you serve this school year (2015-16)?
   [Probe]: At how many schools do you serve? How many hours per week on average do you serve across all schools—and how many at [CASE STUDY SCHOOL]?

2. Have your activities changed throughout the school year (2015-16)? If so, how and why?

3. What have you been told about the reasons that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are needed in your school? Who told you this information and how?
   [Note]: this may include the grantee organization, school leader, other school staff, students, written materials, etc.

4. Are you familiar with your school's improvement goals and/or turnaround plan? What are some of those goals?
   [Note]: School improvement goals = Formal goals communicated by school leadership

5. What are the ways that AmeriCorps members (yourself or as a whole) contribute to the school's capacity to address its turnaround goals? Please give me some details about what you mean by this. (If there are multiple ways, list the top 3 for me.)
   * *Note: Interviewer, probe for details about each way they improve the school's capacity.*
   * *If needed,* how did you help the school build capacity through…
       o Affecting relationships between students and staff.
       o Involving families (e.g. in attending events, providing access to information and resources to support their child's education, helping students complete homework, volunteering in child's classroom).
       o Supporting the academic needs of specific groups of students.
       o Supporting the behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs of specific groups of students.
       o Improving the school environment and climate.
       o Supporting teachers in the use of data/assessments.
       o Providing before-school, after-school or extended learning time programming.
       o Other activities and contributions.

6. Are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff working at your school? Do you interact at all with these other partners?
   * If there are other external partners, how are there activities similar to what you are engaging in? How are they different?

RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL

7. Please describe for me how your work is structured in relation to other work that happens at the school. That is, is your work stand-alone or do you work closely with other school staff? How involved are you in school operations like faculty meetings, professional development, or other initiatives?

8. What types of supports have you received, or are available to you, to implement your planned activities at the school?
   [Probe]: Supports might include (but aren't limited to) training, other people, and materials.
   - Are there any ways that you could have been better prepared to do your work at the school?

9. Now I'd like to hear about your relationships with the staff and faculty at [School name]. What was the general reaction among school staff and faculty to your presence at the school when you first began serving? How did perspectives, collaboration, and/or relationships with the school staff (principal/teachers/counselor/school leaders) change throughout the year, if at all? How well do you feel school staff understand your role at the school?

10. What are your relationships like with the students you work with directly?

PERCEIVED IMPACT

11. In your opinion, is your AmeriCorps program successful in helping students you work with directly at this school to improve in the following areas? If so, how? How have you determined this?

    Probe specifically for
    - Academic achievement?
    - Academic engagement?
    - Behavior?
    - Attendance?
    - Socio-emotional health?

12. *[As needed, if not already covered]* How helpful do you think the services that <u>you are involved with</u> are to the students you directly work with at this school? Why?

13. Are there additional supports that you think need to be put in place in order to help students succeed? Are there additional supports or supervision that would help you better meet the needs of students?

14. I want to go back now to the specific services you provide to students to understand exactly what you're doing in the school. Please describe your three most important activities/responsibilities at the school (the activities that require the greatest amount of your time)? (*If at multiple schools, focus on the case study school.*) For each of these, I'd like to know with whom you collaborate to carry out the activity, who the target audience is, how frequently the activity takes place, and approximately what percentage of time you spend on the activity.

> *Probe:* Who do you collaborate with to carry out the activity?

> *Probe*: Who is this activity intended to help or support?

> *Probe*: What is the frequency and amount of time you spend on the activity?

> *(If member serves at more than one school, percentage of time should refer to percentage of total hours across schools. Frequency is based on member's time, not per student.)*

	Activity	Collaboration	Targeted Audience	Frequency	Hours per Week &/or Percentage of Time
a.					
b.					
c.					

15. What lessons have you learned from serving as an AmeriCorps member at this school that might be helpful to other schools/organizations implementing the program?

> *FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS: Thank you so much for your time today! We really appreciate it. As a "thank you," we would like to send you a check for $25. In order to do this, we will need your first/last name and mailing address.*

Name:
Mailing Address:

> *Would you like to write down our phone number and/or email address to reach the study team in the event that you don't receive the check?*

If yes: SchoolTurnaround@abtassoc.com and 844-868-4994

E.10. School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Group Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

1. Please tell us your first name and how long you've worked in this school.

2. To get started, I'd like to get a better understanding of exactly what kind of work you're doing here in this school, I'd like you to list off important activities/responsibilities that you're involved with at this school.
   [Moderator note: write these on an easel. Continue until they stop free-listing.]

   [Choose probes as appropriate] Can I see a show of hands for how many of you do [activity name]?

   - Do all members here do the same activities?
   - If not, how and why do activities differ for different members?

3. Now I'd like to get some more details about these activities.
   [Moderator note: go through activity by activity. If there are a lot of activities, poll the room for the top 3 activities and only do those.]

   - Probe**:** Who do you collaborate with to carry out the activity?

   - Probe: Who is this activity intended to help or support?

   - Probe: What is the frequency and amount of time you spend on the activity? *(If member serves at more than one school, percentage of time should refer to percentage of total hours across schools. Frequency is based on member's time, not per student.)*

[SAMPLE OF HOW AN EASEL PAD MIGHT LOOK AT THE END OF THIS DISCUSSION]

Activity	Collaboration	Targeted Audience	Frequency	Hours per Week &/or Percentage of Time
a.				
b.				
c.				

4. Have your activities changed throughout the school year (2015-16)? If so, how and why?

5. Please describe for me how your work is structured in relation to other work that happens at the school. [*As needed*: That is, is your work stand-alone or do you work closely with other school staff? How involved are you in school operations like faculty meetings, professional development, or other initiatives?]

6. What types of supports have you received, or are available to you, to implement your planned activities at the school? *[Supports might include (but aren't limited to) training, other people, and materials.]*
   - Probe: Are there any ways that you could have been better prepared to do your work at the school?

7. What have you been told about the reasons that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are needed in [School Name]?
   - Probe: Who told you this information and how?
   - *Note:* this may include the grantee organization, school leader, other school staff, students, written materials, etc.
   - Probe: Are you familiar with your school's improvement goals and/or turnaround plan? *(Yes/No)*
     If yes, What are some of those goals?

8. Now I'd like to hear about your relationships with the staff and faculty at [School name].
   - Probes [as needed]: What was the general reaction among school staff and faculty to your presence at the school when you first began serving? How did perspectives, collaboration, and/or relationships with the school staff (principal/teachers/counselor/school leaders) change throughout the year, if at all? How well do you feel school staff understand your role at the school?

9. What are your relationships like with the students you work with directly?

10. What are the ways that AmeriCorps members (yourself or as a whole) contribute to your school's capacity to address its school turnaround goals?
    [Moderator note: probe for details about each way they improve the school's capacity.]

As needed [on easel pad or print list in advance in large font, *do not list aloud*]: Here are some ways AmeriCorps members might help the school build capacity – are any of these specifically relevant to your experiences:

a) Affecting relationships between students and staff.
b) Involving families (e.g. in attending events, providing access to information and resources to support their child's education, helping students complete homework, volunteering in child's classroom).
c) Supporting the academic needs of specific groups of students.
d) Supporting the behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs of specific groups of students.
e) Improving the school environment and climate.
f) Supporting teachers in the use of data/assessments.
g) Providing before-school, after-school or extended learning time programming.
h) Other activities and contributions.

11. In your opinion, is your AmeriCorps program successful in helping students you work with directly at this school to improve? How have you determined this?
How about in these areas [on easel pad]:
- Academic achievement?
- Academic engagement?
- Behavior?
- Attendance?
- Socio-emotional health?

12. How helpful do you think the services that you are involved with are to the students you directly work with at this school? Why?

13. What lessons have you learned from working as an AmeriCorps member at this school that might be helpful to other schools/organizations implementing the program?

E.11. Parent Group Interview Protocol (Program Schools Only): Winter 2016

1. To start, please tell us your first name, the grade your child attends at school, and how long you've been part of this school community.

2. What do you like about this school? What do you dislike about it?
    a. To what extent does this school support your child's academic needs? (*What makes you say this*?)

    b. To what extent does this school support your child's social and emotional well-being?

    c. Do families play an active role at this school? Why or why not?

3. How many of you are aware of the (new) School Turnaround AmeriCorps program at this school? The AmeriCorps program here is coordinated by [INSERT GRANTEE NAME] and is called [INSERT LOCAL PROGRAM NAME].
    If no one is aware of the program, ask questions 13, then end the focus group.

4. For those who are aware of it, how did you first hear about the program [LOCAL PROGRAM NAME]? Do you continue to hear about the program or receive any information from the program?

5. Have your children participated in the program this school year (2015-16)?

6. What program activities have your children taken part in this year? (Please describe.)
    Do AmeriCorps activities occur frequently enough to be valuable? Why or why not?

7. What have your children told you about the program, and how do they feel about the program?

8. Have you been involved at all with the program? (In what ways?) How do you interact with the program, if at all?

9. Since your children started participating in the program, have you become more involved in the school? If so, how?

10. What changes have you noticed, if any, since your children started participating in the program (for example, information sent to you from the school, your child's homework, academic performance, the way the school feels (school climate))?

11. Do you have any feedback or comments about the program, either positive or negative?
    a. How successful has the program been overall?
    b. Do AmeriCorps members (*or local name*) provide helpful support to the students in this school? Why or why not? (*If helpful, in what ways? What makes you think this?*)
    c. Are AmeriCorps members (*or local name*) important partners in improving student outcomes? Why or why not? (*If important partners, in what ways? What makes you think this?*)

12. One main goal of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program is to help schools meet their school improvement goals. How, if at all, do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have helped build your school's capacity to address its goals?
    a. Probes: (*Ask each of these if they don't come up naturally but note level of agreement and which outcomes participants feel most strongly about.*)
       - For example, do they affect relationships between students and staff?
       - Involve families?
       - Improve the school climate/atmosphere?
       - Support the academic needs of specific groups of students?
       - Support students' behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs?
       - Provide before school, after school, or extended learning time programming?

13. Is there anything else you'd like to share today about this school or the program [LOCAL PROGRAM NAME]? Do you have any suggestions for improvements?
    *Do you feel like this school is getting better with time or getting worse? (Why?)

E.12. Program School Leader Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS (Program Schools)

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions will target School Principals and Assistant Principals in program schools.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

1. Please describe the community and student population your school serves.

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?

3. *Please describe the major components, goals, and objectives of your school's turnaround plan. Also, state the change model (turnaround, transformation, school closure, restart) that your school follows (*PREPOPULATE and confirm*). Has anything about your turnaround plan changed since last year?

4. Please describe any structural or policy changes you have made at your school to meet your turnaround goals. What other resources have you devoted to addressing your turnaround plan? Have these changes impacted the design or implementation of the program?
   If need clarification: Changes could include turnover in school leadership, a change in school model, the introduction of new major programs or funding sources, changes in curriculum, etc.

5. In addition to your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?
   - How are the activities of external partners similar to those of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members? How are they different?

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

6. *What are the key activities School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are engaging in at your school this year?
   - Have these activities changed over the course of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program? If so, how and why?

7. What is the process for selecting students to receive services from School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?

8. Do your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have an on-site supervisor, or some other kind of supervision? If so, is that person from the AmeriCorps organization or your school? What are the supervisor's roles and responsibilities?
   - *If have on-site supervisor,* How effective is the on-site supervisor? How have they been helpful in managing and implementing the program? Is there anything that could be done to better manage the program?

SCHOOL-GRANTEE RELATIONSHIPS

9. What lessons (both positive and negative) did you learn from the start-up stage of the grant <u>in terms of your school partnership(s)</u> that might be helpful to other grantees and schools? (*May be NA if principal wasn't there for start-up.*)

10. *How effective do you think the partnership agreements are overall? Did you have a role in drafting the agreement (with GRANTEE NAME)?
    *   How did you determine the primary roles and responsibilities of your school and the AmeriCorps organization as outlined in your partnership agreement? Did you discuss what these roles and responsibilities would be with the AmeriCorps organization before drafting the agreement? Who wrote, read, and approved the partnership agreement(s)?
    *   How do you use and apply the partnership agreement, if at all, when discussing and implementing the program in schools?
    *   Have you revised the agreement since the beginning of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program and if so, how and why?
    *   [As needed] How similar or different is the AmeriCorps partnership agreement to how you work with other partners?

11. *What is the relationship like between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school staff this year? How well do you feel staff understand the role of the AmeriCorps members? How has their relationship and understanding changed over time?

12. *Do you feel that members were well-prepared and had the skills necessary to be effective in your school this year? If not, how do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members could be better prepared?

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

13. *One central objective of School Turnaround AmeriCorps is to help schools meet their turnaround goals. How, if at all, have School Turnaround AmeriCorps members helped build your school's capacity to address those goals?

14. *Which of your turnaround goals has the School Turnaorund AmeriCorps program been more helpful in addressing either directly or indirectly? Which of your turnaround goals was the program less helpful in addressing? How so?
    *   What specific member strategies or activities were most successful in addressing turnaround goals? What were less successful?

15. *What additional supports from AmeriCorps members or other external partners would benefit your school and its turnaround efforts, if any?

E.13. Program School Teacher/Counselor Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS (Program Schools)

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions are intended for teachers and counselors at schools served by grantees (Program schools).

SCHOOL & TURNAROUND PLAN CONTEXT

1. Please describe how long you've been at this school, your role, and how long you've been working in education.

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?

3. How aware are you of your school's turnaround plan (*improvement plan/school goals*)? How does your school leadership team provide you with information on the turnaround plan and school progress towards turnaround goals?

4. In addition to your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?
   - How are the activities of external partners similar to those of School Turnaround AmeriCorps members? How are they different?

PROGRAM DESIGN/ACTIVITIES

5. What are the key activities that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members (or LOCAL PROGRAM NAME) are engaging in at your school this year?
   - Have these activities changed over the course of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program? If so, then why?

6. What level of interaction do you have with School Turnaround AmeriCorps members this year? In what capacity, if any, do you work directly with AmeriCorps members?

7. What is the process for selecting students to receive services from School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?

8. If School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are working with students you teach or counsel, how do you communicate with them about the progress of these students?

9. Please describe how School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are supervised at your school.
   - Do your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members have an on-site supervisor, or some other kind of supervision? If so, is that person from the AmeriCorps organization or your school? What are the supervisor's roles and responsibilities?

i. If have on-site supervisor, How effective is the on-site supervisor? How have they been helpful in managing and implementing the program? Is there anything that could be done to better manage the program?

STAFF-MEMBER RELATIONSHIP

10. Do you feel that members were well-prepared and had the skills necessary to be effective in your school this year? If not, how do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members could be better prepared?

11. What is the relationship like between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school staff this year? How well do you feel staff understand the role of the AmeriCorps members? How has this relationship and understanding changed over time?

12. What challenges have you experienced in implementing School Turnaround AmeriCorps members' interventions in your classroom or in student counseling/tutoring programs? How were they resolved?

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

13. One central objective of School Turnaround AmeriCorps is to help schools meet their turnaround goals. How, if at all, have School Turnaround AmeriCorps members helped build your school's capacity to address those goals?
    - Probe: Did they affect relationships between students and staff? Involve families? Improve the school climate? Support the academic needs of specific groups of students? Support students' behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs? Provide before school, after school, or extended learning time programming?

14. Which of your turnaround goals has the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program been more helpful in addressing either directly or indirectly? Which of your turnaround goals was the program less helpful in addressing? How so?
    - What specific member strategies or activities were most successful in addressing turnaround goals? What were less successful?

15. What lessons have you learned from observing and working with the program (and members) that might be helpful to other sites/schools?

    FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS: Thank you so much for your time today! We really appreciate it. As a "thank you," we would like to send you a check for $20. In order to do this, we will need your first/last name and mailing address.

Name:
Mailing Address:

    Would you like to write down our phone number and/or email address to reach the study team in the event that you don't receive the check?

    If yes: SchoolTurnaround@abtassoc.com and 844-868-4994

E.14. Comparison School Leader Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS (Comparison Schools)

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions will target School Principals and Assistant Principals, in schools in the comparison group.

SCHOOL & TURNAROUND PLAN CONTEXT

1. Please describe the community and student population your school serves.

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?

3. Please describe the major components, goals, and objectives of your school's turnaround plan. Also, state the change model (turnaround, transformation, school closure, restart) that your school follows. Has anything about your turnaround plan changed since last year?

4. Have there been any major changes at your school since the beginning of your turnaround plan and if so, can you summarize these? How have these changes impacted your school's ability to meet turnaround goals?
If need clarification: Changes could include turnover in school leadership, a change in school model, the introduction of new major programs or funding sources, changes in curriculum, etc.

5. Please describe any district or school-level structural or policy changes that have been made at your school to meet your turnaround goals. What other resources have been devoted to addressing your turnaround plan?

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GOALS

6. Can you give me more detail on what strategies your school has utilized to address your turnaround goals? Which strategies have involved changes or additional efforts by your school staff?
Probes: this may include more specific description of professional development activities, tutoring, extended learning time, data monitoring, etc.

7. Are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?
   * [If have partners] To what extent have external partners been successful in helping your school meet turnaround goals?
   * [If do not have partners] To what extent could external partners be a useful resource in helping your school address turnaround goals?

8. [If have partners] Can you please describe your collaboration with these partner organizations? How has that relationship changed over time? What has gone well? What challenges have you encountered? How have you overcome any challenges?

9. [If have partners] What is the relationship like between school staff and the external partners? How well do you feel staff understand the role of the partners? How has their relationship and understanding changed over time?

10. [If do or do not have partners] What sort of training or preparation would (do) external partners need to effectively address turnaround goals and the needs of students at your school? [If have partners] To what extent do partners currently have this training or preparation?

PERCEIVED SUCCESS ADDRESSING TURNAROUND GOALS

11. Overall, how successful has your school been in addressing turnaround goals? Which strategies (described in #6) have helped build your school's capacity to address those goals, and why?

12. What are the biggest challenges your school has faced in addressing turnaround goals?

13. What type of additional supports would benefit your school and its turnaround efforts, if any?

14. What lessons have you learned from your school turnaround strategies that might be helpful to other sites/schools?

15. Is there anything else you'd like to share with me to help us understand your school's experience with its turnaround goals?

E.15. Comparison School Teacher/Counselor Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS (Comparison Schools)

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions are intended for teachers and counselors in the comparison group.

SCHOOL & TURNAROUND PLAN CONTEXT

1. Please describe how long you've been at this school, your role, and how long you've been working in education.

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?

3. How aware are you of your school's turnaround plan (*improvement plan/school goals)*? How does your school leadership team provide you with information on the turnaround plan and school progress towards turnaround goals?

STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS GOALS

4. How has the school's turnaround status affected your role, if at all? How does your school's improvement status and plan affect your responsibilities and focus, if at all? *(Note: This may include activities such as professional development, instructional strategies, tutoring, data monitoring, etc.)*

5. What strategies has your school utilized to address your turnaround goals?

6. How is implementation of particular turnaround strategies going (to the extent that you think of them this way)? What is going well in terms of your school improving and what is more challenging? *(Note: This includes successes or challenges with classroom strategies, perspective on professional development, relationship with administration, morale among teachers, etc.)*

7. Are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?

8. [If have partners] What level of interaction do you have with these volunteers, support staff, or external partners? In what capacity, if any, do you work directly with these individuals?
   - Probes: In what capacity, if any, do these partners work with your students? In your classroom? Please explain how your relationship has been with these external organizations.

9. [If do not have partners] Do you think external partners could be a useful resource in helping your school address turnaround goals? If so, how?

10. [If do not have partners] What sort of training or preparation would external partners need to effectively address turnaround goals and the needs of students at your school?

PERCEIVED SUCCESS ADDRESSING GOALS

11. Overall, to your knowledge, how successful has your school been in addressing turnaround goals?

12. Which turnaround goals have you been more successful in addressing? Which of your turnaround goals have you been less successful in addressing?
    - What strategies or activities have been most successful in addressing turnaround goals? What have been the least successful?

13. To what extent have external partners or other resources influenced or contributed to your school's ability to address turnaround goals?

14. What are the biggest challenges your school has faced in addressing turnaround goals?

15. What type of additional supports would benefit your school and its turnaround efforts, if any?

16. What lessons have you learned from your school turnaround initiatives that might be helpful to other sites/schools? Is there anything else you'd like to share with me to help us understand your school's experience with its turnaround goals?
    FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS: Thank you so much for your time today! We really appreciate it. As a "thank you," we would like to send you a check for $20. In order to do this, we will need your first/last name and mailing address.

Name:
Mailing Address:

Would you like to write down our phone number and/or email address to reach the study team in the event that you don't receive the check?

If yes: SchoolTurnaround@abtassoc.com and 844-868-4994

E.16. Program School Teacher Focus Group Protocol: Spring 2016

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE – TEACHERS/COUNSELORS (PROGRAM SCHOOLS)

INTRODUCTION:

Teachers and school counselors within one school will be asked to participate in focus groups during a site visit. These are designed to create opportunities for idea sharing, provide a sense of the challenges and successes that resonate across respondents, and identify the site-specific and replicable elements of the program's implementation.

NOTES: The focus group is meant to be an open discussion around the key topics we have identified. The probes listed are meant to facilitate the conversation on several broad topics.

1. I'd like to start by giving each individual a few seconds to introduce himself or herself. Please tell us…
   - Your name
   - Grade/content areas that you teach
   - The number of years you have been teaching (total and in this school)

2. In what capacity, if any, do you work directly with AmeriCorps members this school year?

3. What are the key activities School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are engaging in at your school this year? Have these activities changed over the course of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program?

4. Can you describe the relationship between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school staff? Do members and staff get along? Do staff understand the role of AmeriCorps members? Do members attend any school faculty meetings?

5. One central objective of School Turnaround AmeriCorps is to help schools meet their turnaround goals. How, if at all, have School Turnaround AmeriCorps members helped build your school's capacity to meet those goals? What is the added value of members?
   Probes
   - What about the program helps it work well in your school? What allows members to work well with students and support turnaround goals?
   - What <u>specific activities</u> do members engage in that best support turnaround efforts, if any?

6. What barriers or challenges does the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program face in supporting school turnaround in your school(s) this school year?
   Probes
   - What about the program doesn't work well at your school? What prevents members from supporting turnaround goals?
   - What <u>specific activities</u> do members engage in that do not effectively support turnaround efforts, if any?

7. Are members well-prepared, and do they have the skills necessary to be effective in your school this year? If not, how do you think they could be better prepared?

8. Do you feel that, as staff members, you are well-prepared to work with the AmeriCorps members and make use of their services? If not, in what ways do you think staff could be better prepared to work with School Turnaround AmeriCorps members?

9. What are the unmet needs in your school in terms of supporting students' academic achievement and school turnaround efforts? How could AmeriCorps members and other external partners help address those needs?

10. What lessons have you learned from working with members and separately any other partners about implementing the program at [name of site/school] that might be helpful to other sites/schools? What are your recommendations for improvements to the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program in supporting school turnaround?

E.17. Comparison School Teacher Focus Group Protocol: Spring 2016

1. I'd like to start by giving each individual a few seconds to introduce him- or herself. Please tell us…
   - Your name
   - Grade/content areas that you teach
   - The number of years you have been teaching (total and in this school)

2. Is there any information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?

3. How aware are you of your school's turnaround plan? How does your school leadership team provide you with information on the turnaround plan and school progress towards turnaround goals?

4. What strategies has your school utilized to address your turnaround goals?

5. How is implementation of particular turnaround strategies going (to the extent that you think of them this way)? What is going well in terms of your school improving and what is more challenging?

6. Are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?

7. [If do have partners] In what capacity, if any, did you work directly with your school's external partners this school year?

8. [If do have partners] What type of relationships do partners have with school staff? To what extent are they integrated into the school community?

9. [If do have partners] This school year (2014-15), what were the most effective ways that partners supported your school's turnaround work? What was less effective? What barriers did they face in supporting your school's turnaround efforts?

10. [If do not have partners] Do you think external partners could be a useful resource in helping your school address turnaround goals? If so, how?

11. [If do not have partners] What sort of training or preparation would external partners need to effectively address turnaround goals and the needs of students at your school?

12. What are the unmet needs in your school in terms of supporting students' academic achievement and school turnaround efforts? How could AmeriCorps members and other external partners help address those needs?

13. What lessons have you learned from working with partners that might be helpful to other sites/schools looking to use partners to impact turnaround goals?

E.18. SIG Exiter School Leader Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS (Treatment Schools that have Exited SIG Status)

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions will target School Principals and Assistant Principals, Site Directors, School Superintendents, school leadership council members, and district curriculum chairs in schools/school districts that have exited SIG status served by the grantees.

NOTES: Starred questions are the same as those in the non-SIG exiter school leader protocol.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

1. Please describe the community and student population your school serves.*

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?*

3. Please describe the major components, goals, and objectives of your school's turnaround plan during the time that your school was in SIG status. Also, state the change model (turnaround, transformation, school closure, restart) that your school followed.

4. In addition to your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, were there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who supported your school's turnaround efforts? What major changes took place at your school over the course of your turnaround status, which started in [YEAR]? How did these changes affect your school's ability to meet turnaround goals, if at all?

5. Why do you think your school was able to exit SIG status? What happened in your district and/or school that enabled your school to meet its turnaround goals (e.g. longer school day/year, academic supports and/or interventions, non-academic supports and/or interventions, partnerships, new leadership, new staff, professional development, curricular changes)?
   - *[If partnerships mentioned]* Which partners worked with your school during the turnaround period? Do you think they helped your school exit SIG status? If so, how and why?

6. Can you describe any specific strategies your district leadership used to help your school meet its goals and exit SIG status? Strategies used by school leadership? And strategies used by teachers and other school staff?
   - Which strategies were the most effective and why?
   - Which strategies did not help very much and why?

7. Were there any other major changes that you haven't mentioned yet at your school since the time it entered turnaround status?
   If need clarification: Changes could include turnover in school leadership, a change in school model, the introduction of new major programs or funding sources, changes in curriculum, etc.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

8. [If school still has members] What are the key activities School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are engaging in at your school this year?*
    - Have these activities changed over the course of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program? If so, how and why?

SCHOOL-GRANTEE RELATIONSHIPS

9. Can you please describe your collaboration with the School Turnaround AmeriCorps grantee organization and members? How has that relationship changed over time? What has gone well? What challenges have you encountered? How have you overcome any challenges?*

10. Do you think that members were well-prepared and had the skills necessary to be effective in your school this year? If not, how do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members could be better prepared?*

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

11. One central objective of School Turnaround AmeriCorps is to help schools meet their turnaround goals. How, if at all, did School Turnaround AmeriCorps resources affect your school's ability to meet its turnaround goals and exit SIG status?
     - [If members not perceived to contribute to exit] Why weren't they helpful? What could they have done, if anything, to be more helpful?

12. Which of your turnaround *goals* was the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program *more helpful* in addressing either directly or indirectly? Which of your turnaround goals was the program *less helpful* in addressing? How so?*

13. What additional supports from AmeriCorps members or other external partners would have further benefited your school and its turnaround efforts, if any?*

14. [If no longer have members this year] To what extent do you miss the members' contributions this year? To what extent has your school been able to continue the activities they were involved in?

15. What lessons have you learned from observing and working with the program (and members) that might be helpful to other sites/schools?*

E.19. SIG Exiter School Teacher/Counselor Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SIG EXITER TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS

TARGETED RESPONDENT: These interview questions are intended for teachers and counselors at AmeriCorps schools that exited SIG status.

NOTES: Starred questions indicate those that are the same as those in the non-SIG exiter teacher protocol.

SCHOOL & TURNAROUND PLAN CONTEXT

1. Please describe how long you've been at this school, your role, and how long you've been working in education.*

2. Is there any additional information or context that you think is important for understanding your school and community?*

3. Last year (2014-15), how aware were you of your school's turnaround plan? How did your school leadership team provide you with information on the turnaround plan and school progress towards turnaround goals?

4. What major changes took place at your school over the course of your turnaround status, which started in [YEAR]? How did these changes affect your school's ability to meet turnaround goals, if at all?

5. Why do you think your school was able to exit SIG status? What happened in your district and/or school that enabled your school to meet its turnaround goals (e.g. longer school day/year, academic supports and/or interventions, non-academic supports and/or interventions, partnerships, new leadership, new staff, professional development, curricular changes)?
   - [If partnerships mentioned] Which partners worked with your school during the turnaround period? Do you think they helped your school exit SIG status? If so, how and why?

6. Can you describe any specific strategies your district leadership used to help your school meet its goals and exit SIG status? Strategies used by school leadership? And strategies used by teachers and other school staff?
   - Which strategies were the most effective and why?
   - Which strategies did not help very much and why?

PROGRAM DESIGN/ACTIVITIES [assuming school still has AmeriCorps members in 2015-16]

7. [If school still has members] What are the key activities that School Turnaround AmeriCorps members are engaging in at your school this year?*
   - Have these activities changed over the course of the School Turnaround AmeriCorps program? If so, how and why?*
   - To what extent are members still helpful, even though your school has exited SIG status?

8. In addition to your School Turnaround AmeriCorps members, are there other school partners, volunteers, or external support staff with whom you work or are familiar with who support your school's turnaround efforts? If so, who are they and what do they do?*

STAFF-MEMBER RELATIONSHIP

9.   [If school still has members] What is the relationship like between School Turnaround AmeriCorps members and school staff this year? How well do you think staff understand the role of the AmeriCorps members? How has this relationship and understanding changed over time?*

10. What challenges have you experienced in implementing School Turnaround AmeriCorps members' interventions in your classroom or in student counseling/tutoring programs? How were they resolved?*

PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

11. To what extent do you think School Turnaround AmeriCorps members influenced your school's ability to exit SIG status?
    - [If members perceived to contribute to exit] What was most helpful and why? What was the value added of members during your school's turnaround period?
      Probe: Did they affect relationships between students and staff? Involve families? Improve the school climate? Support the academic needs of specific groups of students? Support students' behavioral and/or socio-emotional health needs? Provide before school, after school, or extended learning time programming?

    - [If members not perceived to contribute to exit] Why weren't they helpful? What could they have done, if anything, to be more helpful?

12. What type of additional supports from AmeriCorps members or other external partners would benefit your school, if any?

13. [If no longer have members this year] To what extent do you miss the members' contributions this year? To what extent has your school been able to continue the activities they were involved in?

14. What lessons have you learned from observing and working with the program (and members) that might be helpful to other sites/schools?*

    FOR PHONE INTERVIEWS: Thank you so much for your time today! We really appreciate it. As a "thank you," we would like to send you a check for $20. In order to do this, we will need your first/last name and home mailing address.

Name:
Mailing Address, City, State, Zip Code:

    Would you like to write down our phone number and/or email address to reach the study team in the event that you don't receive the check? If yes: SchoolTurnaround@abtassoc.com *and* 844-868-4994

E.20. Site Visit School Climate Observation Checklist: Spring 2016

SCHOOL CLIMATE OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

This protocol should be used on site visits to augment our other data collection efforts (interviews and focus groups) to help answer the following research questions:

1. How do School Turnaround AmeriCorps members help schools implement their turnaround plans and achieve key turnaround outcomes?
2. Which aspects of grantee-school partnerships appear to be the most promising practices in terms of involvement and satisfaction of the school leadership and the participating AmeriCorps members?
3. Are AmeriCorps members perceived by school leaders and other stakeholders to be more vital in supporting certain SIG/Priority strategies than others?

Instructions: During your site visit, for each question, please indicate "Yes" (Observed), "No" (Not observed), or "DK" (Don't know/Didn't see enough to answer). Then provide any relevant details, especially with the research questions in mind. These observations should be based on a school tour, observation of members' activities (if possible), and/or before/during/after interviews or focus groups. When you have multiple observations about a question (such as during a walk-through and during member observation), note the different sources/people/interactions that are the basis of your assessment. Please be sure to fill in contextual factors like physical environment, etc. about observing members even though they are not in the member observation section.

Question	Yes/No/DK	Details
Physical Environment: School Building Characteristics		
When you enter the school, is there a "welcome" display or sign?		
Is there school spirit information displayed or posted?		
Are student work/projects displayed throughout the school?		
Is a discipline policy or discipline guidelines displayed publicly?		
Is student achievement data displayed on the walls?		
Is the school's mission statement (or goals) posted for all to see?		
Is there information for families posted or publicly available?		

Question	Yes/No/DK	Details
Is there much litter in the hallways, etc.?		
Is there adequate lighting in the hallways and/or rooms?		
Do fixtures/appliances/structural items appear to be in working condition (not broken)?		
Is there visible graffiti in the school?		
Does the school have an observable dress code?		
Summary assessment of school's physical environment: (Can be filled in after site visit)		
Instructional Environment: Support for Learning		
Do classrooms appear to be welcoming spaces (i.e., bright, clean, organized, decorated)? Please provide details.		
Is there a dedicated space for students to be physically active?		
Do students have access to outdoor space for class activities and/or free time?		
Is there a dedicated space for students to engage in the arts and/or music?		

Question	Yes/No/DK	Details
Is there a dedicated space for students to eat?		
Is there a library that appears to be filled with books and resources (vs. having empty shelves or unused space)?		
Are there computers or tablets available for students to use? (i.e. computer lab and/or computers in classroom)		
Summary assessment of school's observable instructional environment: (Can be filled in after site visit)		
School Turnaround AmeriCorps (or other partner for MC) Contributions to School		
Is there visible evidence of an AmeriCorps—or other partner—presence, such as through signs/artwork? If no, describe nature of AmeriCorps presence (i.e., is there a reason the presence is not called out or is it incidental?). *(Branding may use local program name.)*		
Are AmeriCorps members and/or other school partners visible in the school?		*Please detail information about each partner separately, and describe to what extent the partner is visible and where you observed this.*
Observed AmeriCorps activity(ies)	*List activity(ies)*	*Please detail how members conducted the activity, including: the activity (tutoring, mentoring, etc.) setting (in-class, pull-out, etc.), group size, content, method, duration.*
Do interactions between AmeriCorps members and/or other school partners and staff members appear to be positive and collegial?		*Please detail information about each partner separately.*

Question	Yes/No/DK	Details
Do their interactions indicate familiarity and/or trust?		
Is there a dedicated space for AmeriCorps members (or other partner)?		
Summary assessment of observed AmeriCorps—or other partner—activities: (Can be filled in after site visit)		
Relationships: Nature of Interactions		
Do school staff appear to treat each other respectfully?		
Are school staff and student interactions friendly and respectful?		
When/under what circumstances are school staff providing discipline to students? Do staff behavior management strategies appear to be proactive or reactive?		
When disciplining students, do school staff focus on the problematic behavior, not the student as a person?		
Are students well-behaved and respectful to others during transition time? (i.e., orderly, moving from class to class with purpose instead of lingering or roughhousing, etc.)		
Are students' interactions with each other during classes and/or other structured activities friendly and respectful?		
Are students occupied with learning or other structured activities (e.g. not wandering around, loitering)?		

Question	Yes/No/DK	Details
Summary assessment of school's observable relationships: (Can be filled in after site visit)		

Other Observations

Please detail any other observations that are not captured above:

E.21. List of Year 1 Data Collection Instruments

Below is a list of data collection instruments that were used during the first year of data collection (2014-15 school year) and can be found in the "School Turnaround AmeriCorps National evaluations: Year 1 Final Report Technical Appendixes," an accompaniment to the "School Turnaround AmeriCorps National Evaluation: Year 1 Final Report."

The Year 1 data collection instruments were delivered as a separate document from the final report. CNCS did not post the document publicly, and can make it available upon request.

- Grantee Telephone Interview Protocol: Fall 2015

- Grantee Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2016

- Grantee Survey: Spring 2015

- School Leader Survey: Winter 2015

- Teacher and Counselor Survey: Winter 2015

- Parent Telephone Interview Protocol: Winter 2015

- School Leader Telephone Interview Protocol (Non-Case Study): Winter 2015

- School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Group Principal Telephone Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Program School Leader Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Program School Teacher/Counselor Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Comparison School Leader Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Comparison School Teacher/Counselor Case Study Interview Protocol: Spring 2015

- Program School Teacher Focus Group Protocol: Spring 2015

- Comparison School Teacher Focus Group Protocol: Spring 2015

- Site Visit School Climate Observation Checklist: Spring 2015

- Grantee Online Focus Group Protocol: Winter 2015

- School Turnaround AmeriCorps Member Online Focus Group Protocol: Spring 2015