

A CASE STUDY OF:  
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF THE TURNAROUND PRINCIPAL

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## Abstract

When George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2002, each state sought to individually address the challenges of higher standards and more stringent accountability measures. While NCLB and state accountability programs are clear about the student performance results that schools are expected to achieve, they often do not provide schools with much guidance in terms of how to accomplish these objectives. Schools that fail to meet NCLB accountability standards in Virginia are at risk of a plethora of interventions. One of these sanctions is the installment of a turnaround principal to a low-performing school.

The context of turnaround schools is a relatively new area of research and, as such, contains little by way of additive data on the subject. The purpose of this descriptive case study was to determine through principal interviews, teacher focus group interviews, observations and document review, whether the major instructional leadership practices identified in the research as impacting student achievement (setting direction, communication, curriculum and instruction, collaboration and shared leadership, family and community connections, and organizational structure) were evident in the practices of the turnaround principal.

Findings of the study revealed that all of the major instructional practices identified in the research as impacting student achievement were evident in the practices of the turnaround principal. Two additional leadership practices were identified as a result of this study's findings.

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