

Imagine
2014

Renaissance Schools

Briefing for School Reform Commissioners

May 12, 2010



Renaissance Schools

Uniting Schools and Communities for Student Success

- Implementation Timeline
- Renaissance School Advisory Board
- Selection of Renaissance Schools
- Recruitment and Selection of Turnaround Teams
- Formation of School Advisory Councils
- Matching process for Schools and Turnaround Teams
- School Transition and Opening

Renaissance School Implementation Timeline

Dates	Activity
Aug. – Nov. 2009	Renaissance School Advisory Board: City-wide council developed recommendations for Renaissance Schools implementation; District hosted 8 community forums to collect feedback on recommendations.
Jan 27, 2010	Announce Implementation Plan, Eligible Schools, and Turnaround Team RFQ
Jan. – March	Selection of Renaissance Schools: Conducted school quality reviews in 14 eligible schools, reviewed multi-year performance data; selected 5 Promise Academy schools and 9 Renaissance Schools to participate in Turnaround Team matching process.
Jan. – April	Recruitment and Selection of Renaissance Turnaround Teams: Conducted two phase process for selecting Turnaround Teams; selected 6 organizations as Turnaround Team finalists on April 13, 2010.
March – April	Formation of School Advisory Councils: Established school-based councils consisting of school parents and community members through extensive recruitment. Each Council began weekly meetings on March 20.
April – May	Turnaround Team matching process and Council recommendations: Council members reviewed turnaround team proposals, visited turnaround team schools, reviewed school data and conducted community meetings to inform recommendations.
May	SRC Approves School Matches with Turnaround Teams: Superintendent presents matching recommendations at May 12 meeting. SRC to finalize matches in May vote.
June – Aug	School Transition: District collaborates with Turnaround Teams for smooth school opening.

- In August 2009, Superintendent Ackerman convened the Renaissance School Advisory Board in order to provide recommendations on how to best implement the Renaissance Schools initiative
- The Advisory Board included over 60 individuals representing a diversity of perspectives and communities across Philadelphia
- The Advisory Board conducted 10 sub-committee meetings and 3 full-committee meetings between the dates of August 20 and October 8
- A summary of recommendations was presented to the School Reform Commission on October 21
- District collected feedback on recommendations from parents, students and other members of the Philadelphia community as part of 8 community feedback sessions conducted between November 2 and November 24, 2009

- January 27: District announced list of 14 eligible Renaissance Schools
 - Schools selected based on multiple years of student academic performance data and other school quality indicators
 - In February and March; District conducted comprehensive school reviews to provide qualitative data about school quality
- March 30: District announced final selection of Renaissance Schools
 - 5 Promise Academy schools
 - 9 Renaissance Schools selected to participate in Turnaround Team matching process
- Final selection of schools was based on the following factors:
 - Student academic growth and performance over multiple years
 - Findings from independent school reviews conducted at each school
 - Number and types of turnaround team proposals that were qualified in Phase I of the selection process
 - District analysis of Promise Academy application submitted by schools

Overview of Renaissance Schools

Renaissance School	Renaissance Model	Grades Served	Enrollment (SY 2009-10)
Bluford Elementary School	Renaissance Matching Process	K-6	487
Daroff Elementary School	Renaissance Matching Process	K-8	674
Frederick Douglass	Renaissance Matching Process	K-8	490
Harrity Elementary School	Renaissance Matching Process	K-8	644
Mann Elementary School	Renaissance Matching Process	K-5	375
Potter-Thomas Elementary	Renaissance Matching Process	K-8	476
Smedley Elementary School	Renaissance Matching Process	K-5	561
Stetson Middle School	Renaissance Matching Process	5-8	620
West Philadelphia High School	Renaissance Matching Process	9-12	858
Clemente Middle School	Promise Academy	5-8	683
Dunbar Elementary School	Promise Academy	K-8	185
Ethel Allen Elementary School	Promise Academy	K-8	390
University City High School	Promise Academy	9-12	814
Vaux High School	Promise Academy	9-12	410

- District conducted a two-phased process to recruit and select Renaissance turnaround teams
 - Turnaround proposal were reviewed by a team of District leaders and external reviewers
 - Turnaround Teams must demonstrate a clear plan for running school and a record of running great urban schools
- Six (6) turnaround teams were qualified through both phases of the selection process
 - Five teams operate successful charter schools in Philadelphia
 - Johns Hopkins/Diplomas Now team operates a turnaround model in Baltimore and Chicago
- District also issued a Request for Information (RFI) to solicit proposals from organizations that have the capacity to support school transformation
 - Turnaround Teams will be required to partner with at least one community-based support applicant
 - Over 150 support applicant proposals were shared with the Turnaround Teams

Overview of Turnaround Team Finalists

Turnaround Team	Description	Model
Aspira Inc., PA	Currently operates two charter schools in Philadelphia, Antonio Pantoja and Eugenio Maria de Hostos. Both schools are located in North Philadelphia and offer a focus on bi-lingual programs.	Charter
Congreso	Congreso provides a range of community-based services in Latino neighborhoods in Philadelphia. They currently operate Pan-American Charter School in North Philadelphia.	Charter
Johns Hopkins / Diplomas Now	Diplomas Now turnaround combines Communities in Schools, City Year, and Talent Development. Currently operating 3 schools in Chicago (1) and Baltimore(2).	Innovation
Mastery Charter Schools	Currently operating 4 charter schools in Philadelphia. 3 of the 4 charter schools were turnarounds of District Schools.	Charter
Universal Companies	Community based organization that operates a K-8 Charter School in South Philadelphia, and provides academic and student support to 2 District schools.	Charter
Young Scholars Charter School	Young Scholars operates a charter school in North Philadelphia. The school currently serves grades 6-8.	Charter

- Six Renaissance Schools are designated as Promise Academies
- Promise Academies will be developed and overseen by the Superintendent and central office staff, and will be staffed by District employees with union affiliations
- Promise Academies will have the following structure:
 - Longer school day four days/week; including hour for remedial or accelerated instruction and student enrichment activities
 - Saturday school every other week for cultural enrichment, field trips and activities
 - District's core curriculum including corrective reading/math intervention
 - World language study for all grades
 - Parent contracts and on-site parent university classes to strengthen parent involvement
 - College readiness and career counseling for students
 - Safe school programs, student events, and student incentive programs to create a positive school environment for learning and personal growth

- District expects to announce final selection of Promise Academy principals during week of May 17
- School may retain up to 50% of current teaching staff
 - Schools will immediately begin interviewing and selecting teachers after Principals have been selected
 - Site-based committee of stakeholders will participate in selection
 - Non-teaching staff can remain, but have option to opt out of school
- District is working with School Advisory Councils to refine Promise Academy program at each school
 - Councils are developing school pledge, writing parent contracts, establishing community partnerships, visiting high performing schools, and developing other important elements of school design

Formation of School Advisory Councils

- All Renaissance Schools have formed School Advisory Councils
 - Councils are led by parent/guardians who have students in school
 - Membership includes at least 51% parents, students (HS only), community members, and staff members supporting dramatic change in school
 - District accepted all Council applications received by extended deadline of March 9, and continued to add parent members through April
- Councils responsibilities and activities have included:
 - Weekly meetings (minimum) since March 20
 - Reviewed turnaround proposals and visited turnaround team schools (more than 300 school visits conducted by Council members)
 - Hosted community forums to understand community priorities and receive feedback on turnaround team options
- Councils will continue to support school transition and monitor school progress, including annual reports to the Superintendent

- School Advisory Councils recommended turnaround teams that best meet the needs of the school community
 - Each Council hosted a community forum for Turnaround Teams presentations and Q&A (wks of April 26 and May 3)
 - Councils reached decisions and submitted top 3 preferences for turnaround team matches prior to May 11
- District reviewed decisions of councils about matches between teams and schools
 - Superintendent recommendation based on Council preferences and capacity of Turnaround Teams to operate multiple schools

- District will work with Turnaround Teams and school communities to facilitate a smooth transition through the summer
- District will establish charter agreements with clear performance expectations and accountability language (SRC approval vote in June)
- Charter organizations will sign facility license agreements with SDP
- District will work closely with school staff to provide smooth transition into new positions in other District schools
- Turnaround Teams and District must maintain active communication with school communities to maximize student retention and neighborhood enrollment in Renaissance schools
- School Advisory Councils will expand to include new school staff, and will play an ongoing monitoring and support role for school transformation

- The School District of Philadelphia will continue to transform failing schools through the Renaissance Schools process in future years
- The District will modify its process based on lessons learned, but will continue its emphasis on community engagement and partnerships with high performing educators and school operators
- Modifications to future Renaissance School process will include:
 - More time to engage school communities in the decision process
 - More time/resources to identify and incubate school leaders and organizations with a track record of success
 - Earlier school-turnaround team matching process to allow more time to prepare and implement school transition

District Recommendations for Turnaround Team Matches

- The District recommends the following matches between Renaissance Schools and Turnaround Teams:

<u>Renaissance School Name</u>	<u>District Match Recommendations</u>
Bluford	Universal
Daroff	Universal
Douglass	Young Scholars
Harrity	Mastery
Mann	Mastery
Potter-Thomas	Promise Academy
Smedley	Mastery
Stetson	Aspira
West Philadelphia	TBD*

* The District is providing additional time for the West Philadelphia School Advisory Council to submit matching recommendations; District plans to present recommendations at May 26 SRC meeting.