# Course Description

The application of theory and experience to school and school district improvement, including effectively supervising instruction, managing internal and external influences, models of school turnaround, and changing the culture of schools to student-centered professional learning communities are critically examined.

**University Learning Outcomes (ULO)**

* **ULO1**: Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
* **ULO2**: Intellectual and Practical Skills
* **ULO3**: Personal and Social Responsibility
* **ULO4**: Integrative and Applied Learning
* **ULO5**: Immersed in the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

# Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

* **PLO1:** Articulate an educational organization's mission, goals, and guiding principles that distinguish the organization from others. (ULO1, 4)
* **PLO2:** Understand the foundational base of organizational theory, and demonstrate the ability to bridge theory and practice. (ULO1, 2, 4)
* **PLO3:** Given scenarios of conflict, choose ethical courses of action consistent with Gospel values. (ULO3, 5)
* **PLO4:** Synthesize and analyze data to reveal relations and causality, and convert raw data into actionable information. (ULO2, 4)
* **PLO5:** View problems and challenges through the lens of a scientist, seeking evidence-based conclusions. (ULO1, 2, 4)
* **PLO6:** Practice and model steward leadership in transforming organizations to better serve all constituents. (ULO3, 4, 5)
* **PLO7:** Demonstrate facility in the application of technology to solve problems, analyze and synthesize data, and manage information. (ULO1, 2, 4)

# Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

* **CLO 1**: Analyze the overall effectiveness of schooling in the US for students of all backgrounds, demographics, and abilities.
* **CLO 2**: Analyze and evaluate the impact of recent federal school reform legislation.
* **CLO 3**: Examine forces that influence school reform legislation and practice in a critical manner.
* **CLO 4**: Evaluate the effectiveness of current school reform models.
* **CLO 5**: Craft a theory of school turnaround based on research.

**Student Expectations**

Students are expected to:

* ask probing and insightful questions related to course content.
* make meaningful and relevant connections and application to their own learning process.
* be productive and contributing members of class discussions.

# Required Course Materials

Cross, C. T. (2014). *Political education: Setting the course for state and federal policy* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

ISBN: 978-0-8077-5586-0.

Fullan, M. (2006). *Turnaround leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7879-6985.

Ravitch, D. (2014). *Reign of error: The hoax of the privatization movement and the danger to America's public schools*. New York, NY: Vintage.

ISBN-13: 978-0-345-80635-2.

Zavadsky, H. (2012). *School turnarounds: The essential role of districts*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

ISBN: 978-1-61250-134-5.

# Suggested Point Values

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|  | **Assessment** | **Point Value** | **Due** |
| **Week 1** | |  |  |
|  | Discussion Question: School Effectiveness | 35 |  |
|  | Assignment: School Comparison Essay | 50 |  |
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| **Week 2** | |  |  |
|  | Wiki Assignment: State Educational Initiatives | 50 |  |
|  | Assignment: Annotated Bibliography for New Orleans School Turnout | 50 |  |
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| **Week 3** | |  |  |
|  | Discussion Question: Comparing Political and Corporate Reformers | 35 |  |
|  | Journal: Reflection on School Reform | 50 |  |
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| **Week 4** | |  |  |
|  | Discussion Question: Non-Governmental Organizations | 35 |  |
|  | Wiki Assignment: Non-Governmental Organizations | 50 |  |
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| **Week 5** | |  |  |
|  | Journal: Purpose and Foundational Beliefs of Traditional Neighborhood Schools | 35 |  |
|  | Discussion: Comparing Traditional Neighborhood and Charter Schools | 35 |  |
|  | Assignment: Research Based Examination of Charter and Traditional Neighborhood School Outcomes | 50 |  |
|  | Assignment: Final Annotated Bibliography | 50 |  |
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| **Week 6** | |  |  |
|  | Wiki Assignment: NGO Strategies and Research Base | 50 |  |
|  | Assignment: The Impact of NGOs and their School Reform Strategies and Education Advocacy | 50 |  |
|  | Assignment: Theory of Individual School Reform | 165 |  |
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| **Week 7** | |  |  |
|  | Discussion Question: School Turnaround | 40 |  |
|  | Culminating Project: New Orleans School District Review | 170 |  |
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| **Total Points** | | **1000** |  |

# Course Schedule

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| **Week** | **Start** | **End** |
| One | <insert start date> | <insert end date> |
| Two |  |  |
| Three |  |  |
| Four |  |  |
| Five |  |  |
| Six |  |  |
| Seven |  |  |

# Week One: Schooling in the United States

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Define school turnaround. | CLO1, CLO3 |
| * 1. Explain how a school may be judged as effective or ineffective. | CLO1, CLO2 |
| * 1. Comparethe effectiveness of traditional, neighborhood schools with charter schools and schools reflecting a current vision of school reform. | CLO1, CLO3 |
| * 1. Describe the effectiveness of US schools in serving diverse populations (e.g., economically disadvantaged, ethnic minorities, English language learners, children with disabilities). | CLO1, CLO3, CLO4 |
| * 1. Assessthe overall effectiveness of a school. | CLO1, CLO2 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Icebreaker Activity | |
| **Welcome** to the first week of the course!  **Create** a wall on Padlet (<http://padlet.com/>) to introduce yourself to your classmates.  **Post** images that represent your educational background, your interests and hobbies, what interests you most about counseling, and your professional goals. Include a short description with each photo.  **Post** a link to your Padlet wall to the Icebreaker Activity discussion forum by Thursday.  **Post** feedback on your classmates’ Padlet walls. | |
| **Alignment:** N/A | **AIE:** N/A |
| **Instructor Notes**  Create your own Padlet. | |

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| Tutorials | |
| During this course you will be asked to use and participate in various technologies to complete activities and assignments.  **Review** the tutorials available on Blackboard as needed.  **Click** the **Student Resources** button from the menu on the left. | |
| **Alignment:** NA | **AIE:** NA |

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| Weekly Participation and Discussion | |
| The purpose of the weekly discussions is to provide you with a way to synthesize the concepts presented in this course. Each week, you will respond to the discussion questions with a substantive post of 200–250 words that addresses all the prompts for the question by 11:59 p.m. EST of the listed due date. By the conclusion of each week, Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST, you will make at least one substantive comment of 100–150 words to three of your classmates’ posts for each assigned discussion question. Your comments must further the discussion by following the RISE Model for meaningful feedback. It is recommended that you check in periodically throughout the week to ensure that you are meeting the participation requirement.  **Review** the [RISE Model for Peer Feedback](http://elwray.squarespace.com/feedback). | |
| **Alignment:** NA | **AIE:** NA |
| **Instructor Notes**  Review the Rubric for Discussions and the RISE Model. | |

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| Week One Reading | |
| **Read** the following chapters of *Turnaround Leadership* (Fullan)*:*   * Ch. 1: The Real Reform Agenda   + Fullan suggests that to reform schools you must reform society. In this chapter, he examines the dynamics of sick social systems and how schools are affected by social malaise. * Ch. 2: Turning Schools Around   + In this chapter, Fullan examines school systems, seeing many of the same conditions that cause social malaise. He then offers thoughts about how sick schools can become healthy.   **Read** the following chapter of *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 1: The Context of School Reform and Turnaround   + In this text, Zavadsky reveals a relationship with the Broad Foundation. Consider what assumptions about school improvement this relationship might suggest.   **Read** the following chapters of *Reign of Error* (Ravitch):   * Ch. 1: Our Schools Are at Risk * Ch. 28: Measure Knowledge and Skills with Care   **Post** any comments or questions to the Week 1 General Discussion. | |
| **Alignment:** 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 | **AIE:** Resource Discussion: 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  Encourage students to post in the General Discussion by seeding discussion points and takeaways from the reading. | |

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| Resource: Educational Reform and School Research | |
| During this course, you will be researching many components of school quality and effectiveness, as well as the impact of programs, reform models, and education legislation on school outcomes. In this module, we will give you a few great resources to start you off on the right foot in researching school reform and related issues. If you discover additional resources during this course, please post them to the related discussion to help other students gather resources!   * United States Department of Education   + Education Reform: <http://www.ed.gov/p-12-reform>   + Race to the Top District: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-district/index.html>   + ESEA Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html> * Pennsylvania Department of Education   + “Report cards” on the schools (test scores and other demographic information): <http://paschoolperformance.org/>   **Post** any additional resources you find through this course to the Educational Reform and School Research discussion. | |
| **Alignment:** 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 | **AIE:** 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  Feel free to seed this discussion with any resources you know of that may help students get started in their research. Encourage students to add their own resources each week – remind them that all students will be able to take these resources into their day-to-day work! | |

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| Culminating Activity: Introduction to the New Orleans School Makeover | |
| The post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans public school system served as a testing grounds for the many theories of school reform being advocated in the United States in 2005. The results of some of those reforms are currently being studied and scrutinized.  In this course, we’ll research and investigate the New Orleans School Makeover, as well as the outcomes of these initiatives, and then you will write a paper explaining the relationship between state, national, and local political and educational forces and entities.  **Read and review** the Culminating Activity: New Orleans School District Review Instructions.  **Read** the following stories to acquaint yourself with the New Orleans public school district and a couple of the viewpoints on their school reform measures:   * “The Myth of the New Orleans School Makeover,” from the *New York Times*: <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/23/opinion/sunday/the-myth-of-the-new-orleans-school-makeover.html?_r=0> * “New Orleans Public Schools History: A Brief Overview,” available from the Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University: <http://www.coweninstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/NewOrleansSchoolHistory.doc> * “New Orleans Parent’s Guide to Public Schools - 2016,” available from the New Orleans Parents Guide website: <http://neworleansparentsguide.org/files/NOPG2016%28ENG%29.pdf> * “New Orleans Plan: Charter Schools, With a Return to Local Control,” from the *New York Times*: <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/10/us/charter-driven-gains-in-new-orleans-schools-face-a-big-test.html?_r=0> | |
| **Alignment:** 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 | **AIE:** n/a |
| **Instructor Notes**  The Culminating Activity document here is identical to the Week Seven Assignment instructions. Feel free to emphasize to students that they should be working on their Week Seven project in advance of Week Seven. | |

# Supplemental Resources and Activities

Explore these optional resources to deepen your understanding.

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| Adobe Connect Live Discussion | |
| **Review** [Adobe Connect Resources](https://sites.gmercyu.edu/student-resources/adobe-connect-resources/).  **Participate** in the scheduled live session with the course instructor. This session will provide an overview of the class and discuss the major assignments in the course.  **Prepare** to ask questions concerning the content of the week and the course as a whole.  Note: A recorded lecture will be made available to those who are unable to attend the live session. | |
| **Alignment:** n/a | **AIE:** 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  Students should post any questions or comments they have to the Announcement forum. The instructor can then use the questions that come up in the first part of the week to tailor the live Adobe Connect class session scheduled in the later part of the week. That one-hour synchronous session will allow students the opportunity to go over any questions they had with the homework and clarify any misconceptions they have about the course content. All Adobe Connect sessions should be recorded and a link to the recording should be posted to the course page so any student who misses the session can review it later in the week.  Note: It is the instructor’s choice as to what day they will schedule the Adobe Connect live session, but it is recommended that they schedule this session for Wednesday of the week so students have plenty of time to review their homework prior to the deadline on Sunday. | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Discussion Question: School Effectiveness (35 Points) | |
| **Respond** to the following question in the School Effectiveness discussion forum by Thursday:   * What makes a school effective or ineffective? Provide examples. * What types of schools are effective?   **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates' posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 1.2 | **AIE:** 2 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  We’re looking for students to really express their own ideas here—there isn’t necessarily a right or wrong answer, but we want students to express their values and think about how they really feel about school reform right off the bat. Feel free to push students to give more full and off-the-cuff answers, in the style of a classroom discussion as opposed to a formal essay. | |

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| Assignment: School Comparison Essay (50 Points) | |
| **Choose** a traditional, neighborhood school that serves a diverse population.  **Research** the school, its distinctive programs (if any), its outcomes, and any applicable benchmarks and school rankings.  **Choose** at least one charter, private, parochial, independent, or magnet school that serves a similar population.  **Research** the school, its distinctive programs (if any), its outcomes, and any applicable benchmarks and school rankings.  **Write** a 350–500-word comparison of the two schools and their effectiveness.  **Submit** this assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 | **AIE:** 30 minutes |
| **Instructor Notes**  Be sure that the populations the students are comparing are similar or comparable. If the second school doesn’t serve special education children, it would be difficult to compare to a traditional school.  Note that for the second school, we avoided the term “non-traditional.” This was intentional, as many of the types of schools we’ve listed are in many ways very traditional. We simply want students to compare a “normal” public school with a school of another type. | |

# Week Two: Impact of Federal School Reform

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Describe federal education policy through iterations of Title I (e.g., No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, Every Student Succeeds Act). | CLO2, CLO3 |
| * 1. Describe the impact of state legislation on education policy. | CLO2, CLO3 |
| * 1. Analyze the impact of state and federal education policy initiatives. | CLO2, CLO3 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Week Two Readings | |
| **Read** the following chapter of *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 2: The Role of Districts in Reform and Turnaround   **Read** the following chapter of *Political Education* (Cross):   * Ch. 8: From Bush to Obama: NCLB live on, power shifts to the executive branch | |
| **Alignment:** 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 | **AIE:** N/A |

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| Resource: State Education Legislation | |
| There are many helpful resources online for learning more about education legislation in each state. Many resources are available on a state-by-state basis (typically from the state’s Department of Education website).  **Review** “State Legislation: by State,” available from the Education Commission of the States website: <http://www.ecs.org/state-legislation-by-state/> | |
| **Alignment:** 2.1, 2.2 | **AIE:** [Log hours estimates here] |
| **Instructor Notes**  Encourage students to share additional resources in the discussions or through email. | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Wiki Assignment: State Educational Initiatives (50 Points) | |
| **Choose** a state other than the one you live in.  **Choose** a piece of legislation related to school reform or charter schools that has been in effect for at least five years in that state.  **Research** the impact of that legislation on education in the state.  **Build** a wiki entry in which you include the following:   * The state's name * The year the legislation became effective * The name of the legislation * The impact of the legislation   **Review** the wiki entries after all students have made entries.  **Write** a short 150–250-word description of thecommon themes of the legislation. | |
| **Alignment:** 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 | **AIE:** 3 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  We want students to accomplish a few different things here—we want students to find unique and impactful legislation, and we want them to summarize the information in a way that is helpful to all other students. Ask students to take care as they create their wiki entries to ensure standardization. | |

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| Assignment: Annotated Bibliography for New Orleans School Turnout (50 Points) | |
| **Research** the school turnaround in New Orleans in the post-Katrina period.  **Write** an annotated bibliography of at least three sources related to school turnaround in New Orleans.  *Note:* In Week Six, you will be required to annotate a total of five sources related to school turnaround in New Orleans. This assignment should prepare you to complete the culminating activity.  **Submit** your assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 4.2, 4.3 | **AIE:** 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  We want to make sure students have made progress here. They should take your feedback and use it to revise their annotated bibliographies before their final submissions at the end of the course. | |

# Week Three: Forces Influencing Federal School Reform

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Explain the political forces driving education reform in the US. | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4 |
| * 1. Explain the private sector forces driving education reform in the US. | CLO1, CLO3, CLO4 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Week Three Reading | |
| **Read** the following case studies from *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 3: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools * Ch. 4: School District of Philadelphia   **Read** the following chapters of *Reign of Error* (Ravitch):   * Ch. 2: The Context for Corporate Reform * Ch. 3: Who Are the Corporate Reformers | |
| **Alignment:** 3.1, 3.2 | **AIE:** N/A |
| **Instructor Notes**  Students will be analyzing the case studies from the *School Turnarounds* reading in this week’s discussion. Review those readings in detail so you can assist students. | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Discussion: Comparing Political and Corporate Reformers (35 Points) | |
| **Respond** to the following question in the Comparing Political and Corporate Reformers discussion forum by Thursday:  **Compare** the political and corporate reformers acting in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Philadelphia school districts.   * How did the political forces in each district attempt to guide reform movements? * Which private sector forces were most influential? * What were the stated and assumed goals of the reformers you’ve identified? * Describe the frame of reference for the corporate reformers—how do they feel about teachers, teacher unions, and the management of schools? * After “reform,” what does schooling look like in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Philadelphia school districts? How are the two experiences alike, and how are they different?   **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates' posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 3.1, 3.2 | **AIE:** 3 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  Read the questions carefully. You may wish to emphasize a different set of these questions as you see the discussion evolving. Feel free to bring questions back to the forefront if they are not being addressed with sufficient rigor. | |

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| Journal: Reflection on School Reform (50 Points) | |
| **Write** a 150–250-word reflective journal that addresses the following questions:   * What has your experience been with school reform and/or what is your view of school reform? * Do you believe that student achievement has improved as a result of school reform? Why or why not?   **Submit** your assignment to your instructor via Blackboard no later than 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 3.1, 3.2 | **AIE:** 30 minutes |
| **Instructor Notes**  Review the Rubric for Reflective Journals. | |

# Week Four: Educational Reform Organizations

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Explain how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) influence education reform. | CLO1, CLO3, CLO4 |
| * 1. Explain the theories and beliefs about change that shape the agenda and practices of non-governmental organizations involved in education reform. | CLO1, CLO3, CLO4 |
| * 1. Analyze the overall impact of school reform strategies advocated by prominent non-governmental organizations. | CLO1, CLO3, CLO4, CLO5 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Week Four Reading | |
| **Read** the following case studies from *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 5: Denver Public Schools * Ch. 6: Sacramento City Unified School District     **Read** the following chapter of *Turnaround Leadership* (Fullan)*:*   * Ch. 3: Change   + Remember the lesson from the Change Game? This chapter is about how to motivate people and how to lead change. Change forces must be commensurate with the transformation sought. | |
| **Alignment:** 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, CLO1, CLO2 | **AIE:** N/A |
| **Instructor Notes**  The case studies from *School Turnarounds* are going to be used as starting points for this week’s assignments. Make sure you review them before students begin working so you can offer background, advice, and other assistance as the week progresses. | |

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| Resource: American Legislative Exchange Council, Teach for America, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation | |
| Among the three most influential education facing non-governmental organization in the last decade have been the American Legislative Exchange Council, Teach for America, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. There are extensive resources available online related to their missions and impact, including adulations and criticisms.  **Read** “A Smart ALEC Threatens Public Education,” available from Education Week: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/03/01/kappan_underwood.html>  **Read** “After 25 Years, Teach for America Results are Consistently Underwhelming,” available from Nonprofit Quarterly: <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2015/09/11/after-25-years-teach-for-america-results-are-consistently-underwhelming/>  **Read** “Charitable Plutocracy: Bill Gates, Washington State, and the Nuisance of Democracy,” available from Nonprofit Quarterly:  <http://nonprofitquarterly.org/2016/04/11/charitable-plutocracy-bill-gates-washington-state-and-the-nuisance-of-democracy/> | |
| **Alignment:** 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 | **AIE:** N/A |
| **Instructor Notes**  The three sources here are intended to spark conversation—they are fairly critical in their analysis of each organization. If you’re interested in other types of resources, you can use the following:  **Homepages for each NGO**   * American Legislative Exchange Council: <https://www.alec.org/> * Teach for America: <https://www.teachforamerica.org/> * The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>   **Additional Resources**  Brookings Institute. “ALEC’s Influence over Lawmaking in State Legislatures.” (2013): <http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/2013/12/06-american-legislative-exchange-council-jackman>  Washington Post. “Teach for America Is a Deeply Divisive Program. It Also Works.” (2013): <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/09/10/teach-for-america-is-a-deeply-divisive-program-it-also-works/>  Washington Post. “How Bill Gates Pulled off the Swift Common Core Revolution.” (2014): <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/how-bill-gates-pulled-off-the-swift-common-core-revolution/2014/06/07/a830e32e-ec34-11e3-9f5c-9075d5508f0a_story.html> | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Discussion: Non-Governmental Organizations (35 Points) | |
| **Respond** to the following question in the Non-Governmental Organizations discussion forum by Thursday:   * In your opinion, what is the proper role of a non-governmental organization in regard to education?   **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates’ posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 4.1, 4.2 | **AIE:** 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  [Notes here] | |

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| Wiki Assignment: Non-Governmental Organizations (50 Points) | |
| One of the strengths of using a wiki is that you can combine resources with others to create a database of information on a particular subject. In this assignment, you and all of your classmates will work together to build a wiki about non-governmental organizations that influence education.  **Research** non-governmental organizations that influence, or attempt to influence, education in the United States at a national or local level.  **Choose** at least two of these non-governmental organizations.  **Create** a wiki entry for each of your chosen NGOs, including as much of the following information as possible:   * Name of the NGO * Underlying beliefs and assumptions (frame of reference) * Reform strategies they advocate (e.g., charter schools, elimination of tenure, etc.) * Connection of these agendas to the Denver, Sacramento City, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and Philadelphia school district reform movements * One or two online sources (e.g., news articles) * Commentary (your thoughts on this NGO, with your initials at the end of your commentary)   **Submit** your initial entries into the wiki no later than 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Thursday.  **Review** the initial wiki entries of other students.  **Add** commentary on at least three other students’ entries, providing meaningful feedback, resources, or valuable information, data, or anecdotes about the NGO.  **Complete** your final entries by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 | **AIE:** 4 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  Refer to the Master EDU 824 Wiki Document for information about setting up the wiki assignments for this course. | |

# Week Five: School Reform Models

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Describe the types of charter schools, including for-profit and non-profit. | CLO1, CLO4 |
| * 1. Compare the purpose and foundational beliefs of public schools with for-profit charter schools. | CLO1, CLO2, CLO4 |
| * 1. Differentiate between the outcomes of charter school and traditional neighborhood schools. | CLO1, CLO2, CLO4 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Week Five Reading | |
| **Read** the following case study from *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 7: Long Beach Unified School District | |
| **Alignment:** 5.1, 5.2 | **AIE:** N/A |
| **Instructor Notes**  The case study from *School Turnarounds* is going to be used as starting points for this week’s assignments. Make sure you review it before students begin working so you can offer background, advice, and other assistance as the week progresses. | |

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| Resource: Impact of Charter Schools | |
| The efficacy of charter schools is a matter of some debate. In large part, the effectiveness of a charter school is dependent on a variety of factors, which makes it difficult to generalize. As you read the following articles, consider how charter schools were deployed and how traditional neighborhood schools might have fared in similar circumstances.   * “Charters Generally Perform Better Than Traditional Schools, Not as Well as Magnets,” from the *Los Angeles Times*: <http://www.latimes.com/local/la-me-charters-stats10-2010jan10-story.html> * “Graphic: Types of Charter Schools,” from the *Los Angeles Times*: <http://www.latimes.com/local/la-011010-me-charter_stats-g-graphic.html>   **Compare** the following documents the first is a policy document “debunking myths” about charter schools, while the second document is a rebuttal to the first. Note the way in which research is organized and cited in each:   * “Separating Fact & Fiction: What You Need to Know About Charter Schools,” available from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools: <http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Separating-Fact-from-Fiction.pdf> * “Review of *Separating Fact & Fiction*,” available from the National Education Policy Center: <http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/ttr-charterclaims-mmw-1.pdf> | |
| **Alignment:** 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 | **AIE:** n/a |
| **Instructor Notes**  Feel free to post additional articles for students to read and reflect upon. | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| **Journal: Purpose and Foundational Beliefs of Traditional Neighborhood Schools (35 Points)** | |
| As an educational leader, you may have already spent a considerable amount of time and personal capital advocating for public schools.  **Write** a 150–300-word personal reflection explaining what you believe are the purpose and foundational beliefs of traditional neighborhood public schools in your community/educational sphere.  **Apply** research sources where necessary to justify your beliefs, and cite these sources.  **Submit** your assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 5.2 | **AIE:** Private journal entry – 30 minutes |
| **Instructor Notes**  Focus on students’ reasoning—share your insights with them, or suggest alternative ways to consider traditional neighborhood schools, either from a historical perspective or from recent traditional reform models. | |

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| Discussion: Comparing Traditional Neighborhood and Charter Schools (35 Points) | |
| **Respond** to the following prompt in the “Comparing Traditional Neighborhood and Charter Schools” discussion forum by Thursday:  **Compare** traditional neighborhood and charter schools using the following criteria:   * Purpose and foundational beliefs * Selection and assignment of faculty and administration * Selection and assignment of students * Parental involvement * Access to funding   *Note:* You should not choose the same schools you’ve researched in Week One.  **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates’ posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 5.1, 5.2 | **AIE:** Research based discussion – 2 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  In the first week of the course, we had students compare traditional neighborhood schools with other types of schools. In that assignment, the focus of the comparison was on general outcomes and effectiveness. In this assignment, students should focus on the listed criteria (note that outcomes are not really in play here—we’re looking basically at how schools are structured and how they exist in the community space). At the fundamental level, this discussion should be about how we want schools in our communities to operate. | |

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| Assignment: Research Based Examination of Charter and Traditional Neighborhood School Outcomes (50 Points) | |
| Making a final determination on the differences, if any, in outcomes between charter and traditional neighborhood schools will require a synthesis of a variety of research sources. In this assignment, you will conduct research on the outcomes of both charter and traditional neighborhood schools across a variety of indicators.  **Complete** the Traditional Neighborhood and Charter Schools Outcomes graphic organizer, including the Executive Summary and Conclusions section.  **Submit** this assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 | **AIE:** Research based discussion – 2 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  The graphic organizer asks students to perform research into outcomes in relation to both charter schools and traditional neighborhood schools.  One of the biggest takeaways we want students to get from this assignment is that information availability is not equal between the types of schools they’re studying. Finding credible research for charter schools in the wild is difficult, and what research is available is largely non-independent and sponsored by the organizations that are fighting to create more charters and privatize education. This theme will be present and expanded upon again in assignments in Weeks Six and Seven. | |

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| Assignment: Final Annotated Bibliography (50 Points) | |
| **Research** the school turnaround in New Orleans in the post-Katrina period.  **Complete** your annotated bibliography of at least five sources related to school turnaround in New Orleans.  **Post** your annotated bibliography to the Annotated Bibliography discussion.  **Review** the annotated bibliographies of other students.  **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates’ posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4 | **AIE:** Annotated bibliography, review, and response **=** 2 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  Students are posting their annotated bibliographies because they are intended to see a variety of resources so they can better justify and compose their culminating project policy papers. Encourage students to take a critical eye to both the resources and the conclusions of the bibliographies—the in-depth reviews done now will help their classmates later. | |

# Week Six: Education Reform and Non-Governmental Organizations

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Describe the school reform strategies and the research base that supports them advocated by prominent non-governmental organizations (NGOs). | CLO2, CLO3, CLO4 |
| * 1. Explainthe impact of NGOs and their school reform strategies and education advocacy on the American educational system. | CLO2, CLO3, CLO4, CLO5 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Week Six Reading | |
| **Read** the following chapter of *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 9: Learning from Turnarounds   **Read** the following chapter of *Political Education* (Cross):   * Ch. 9: Observations and Lessons Learned   **Read** the following chapter of *Turnaround Leadership* (Fullan)*:*   * Ch. 4: Turning a Whole System Around   + This is the systems chapter, also related to learnings from the Change Game. Here Fullan focuses on leadership, stating that these school systems “…[don’t need] the leader who can come into town and save a single school (temporarily), but leaders whose very actions change the systems they work in.” In this regard, he offers his view of what is needed to address what should be today’s reform agenda. | |
| **Alignment:** 6.1, 6.2 | **AIE:** N/A |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Wiki Assignment: NGO Strategies and Research Base (50 Points) | |
| In this assignment, you will research non-governmental organizations’ stances related to education and look for the sources of the research they use to justify their stances. You will use your research to help add content to a class wiki that can be used as a reference for future assignments.  **Research** non-governmental organizational school reform strategies and the research base that supports their programs.  **Complete** an entry in the NGO Strategies and Research Base wiki by 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Thursday.  **Review** all entries in preparation for other assignments. | |
| **Alignment:** 6.1, 6.2 | **AIE:** Guided Research and Collaborative Wiki Creation = 4 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  Refer to the Master EDU 824 Wiki Document for information about setting up the wiki assignments for this course.  Help students build the first few lines for this resource, and demonstrate how they should be contributing. Students will be using this information to help them complete their Week Six and Seven assignments. | |

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| Assignment: The Impact of NGOs and Their School Reform Strategies and Education Advocacy (50 Points) | |
| **Review** the research and claims of non-governmental organizations about school reform strategies.  **Write** a 250–450-word examination of these claims, responding to the following questions:   * Are the research and claims of NGOs credible? Why or why not? * Has the overall impact of NGO advocacy on the US educational system been positive or negative? Why? * What is the state of research on education in America?   **Apply** research sources where necessary to justify your beliefs, and cite these sources.  **Submit** your assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 6.1, 6.2 | **AIE:** 30 minutes |
| **Instructor Notes**  This is the culmination of all the educational research assignments—we want students to examine the quality of available research and draw some conclusions. | |

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| Assignment: Theory of Individual School Reform (165 Points) | |
| **Suppose** you were invited to become the principal of a newly constituted charter school in downtown Philadelphia.  **Begin** with the following assumptions:   * Test scores are among the lowest in the city. * You will be expected to hire a brand new staff at the school and bring in your own administration team. * The charter’s major quality benchmark for you will require you to significantly improve state test scores within two years.   *Note:* Feel free to create or establish any non-defined information (e.g., specific demographics).  **Write** a 1,000–1,500-word Improvement Plan for this school, outlining strategies you will implement (include time tables).  **Include** the following information within the improvement plan:   * Specific interventions related to instructor quality * Educational benchmarks related to improving educational outcome quality * Reflection on improving the overall student experience   *Note:* If you believe that good schools are more than just schools with high test scores, your improvement plan should include qualitative outcomes and a description of how you will know you have met them. For example, if you wish to increase student motivation, you will need to describe the desired outcome and the way you will measure that outcome over time.  **Submit** this assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 6.1, 6.2 | **AIE:** Guided research and improvement plan creation = 4 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  This is one of the lynchpin assignments for this course. If students can successfully write this plan and provide good evidence and support, they will have fulfilled half of the course objectives. | |

# Week Seven: Conceptualizing School Reform

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| **Learning Objectives** | ***Alignment*** |
| * 1. Compare and contrast the benefits of competing theories of school turnaround. | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4, CLO5 |
| * 1. Design a research-based theory of school turnaround. | CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4, CLO5 |

# Resources, Activities, and Preparation

Complete these modules to prepare for your graded assignments.

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| Instructor Facing: Week 7 Announcement | |
| This week, the only assignment for students is the Culminating Activity, the review of the New Orleans School District. Make sure students are aware of the rubrics for this assignment and understand how they should go about answering the questions in the assignment.  Feel free to make an announcement early this week in order to elicit feedback from students about questions and concerns they have. Make sure to remind students of the resources they’ve created throughout this course, as well as other resources that they might find useful. Also feel free to make this point in the mandatory Adobe Connect session. | |
| **Alignment:** N/A | **AIE:** N/A |

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| Week Seven Reading | |
| **Read** the following chapter of *School Turnarounds* (Zavadsky):   * Ch. 8: Comparing Approaches: External Partner-Led, District-Led, and Charter Partners   **Read** the following chapter of *Political Education* (Cross):   * Ch.10: What Lies Ahead: The Evolving Federal and States Roles | |
| **Alignment:** 7.1, 7.2 | **AIE:** N/A |

# Supplemental Resources and Activities

Explore these optional resources to deepen your understanding.

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| Adobe Connect Live Discussion | |
| **Review** [Adobe Connect Resources](https://sites.gmercyu.edu/student-resources/adobe-connect-resources/).  **Participate** in the scheduled live session with the course instructor. This session will provide a summary of the course’s themes and engage in questions about the final culminating assignment.  **Prepare** to ask questions concerning the content of the week and the course as a whole.  *Note:* A recorded lecture will be made available to those who are unable to attend the live session. | |
| **Alignment:** n/a | **AIE:** 1 hour |
| **Instructor Notes**  Students should post any questions or comments they have to the Announcement forum. The instructor can then use the questions that come up in the first part of the week to tailor the live Adobe Connect class session scheduled in the later part of the week. That one-hour synchronous session will allow students the opportunity to go over any questions they had with the homework and clarify any misconceptions they have about the course content. All Adobe Connect sessions should be recorded and a link to the recording should be posted to the course page so any student who misses the session can review it later in the week.  Note: It is the instructor’s choice as to what day they will schedule the Adobe Connect live session, but it is recommended that they schedule this session for Wednesday of the week so students have plenty of time to review their homework prior to the deadline on Sunday. | |

**Graded Assignments**

Complete these for-points assessments by the end of week unless specified otherwise.

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| Discussion Question: School Turnaround (40 Points) | |
| **Respond** to the following question in the School Turnaround discussion forum by Thursday:   * Evaluate the following statement on school turnaround:   + “Looking back on the history of school turnaround efforts, the first and most important lesson is the ‘Law of Incessant Inertia.’ Once persistently low performing, the majority of schools will remain low performing despite being acted upon in innumerable ways.”     - Smarick, A. “The Turnaround Fallacy.” EducationNext. (2010). <<http://educationnext.org/the-turnaround-fallacy/>>   **Post** constructive criticism, clarification, additional questions, or your own relevant thoughts to three of your classmates’ posts by Sunday. | |
| **Alignment:** 7.1 | **AIE:** 1 hour |

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| Culminating Activity: New Orleans School District Review (170 Points) | |
| The New Orleans School District is thought to operate with the largest percentage of charter schools and students enrolled in charter schools of any major urban district in the nation (estimated to be 91% of students). It is a curious amalgam of governance, with a few schools still run by the board of education in traditional relationships, a number of charter schools operated directly by the district board of education, and most charters operating independently.  “School reform” was underway in New Orleans well before Hurricane Katrina. Special legislation created a “recovery” school district consisting of the schools with the lowest test scores before the hurricane had a chance to destroy many school buildings and render the school district all but dead. Before Katrina, the district enrolled about 70,000 students. In the wake of the hurricane, the school district stopped operating. Tens of thousands of residents were dispersed throughout the South, many never to return. Nearly the entire teaching staff was furloughed. When schools reopened that spring, only some 5,000 students showed up for class. “Emergency” state-controlled governance was established to manage the rebuilding of schools in the city.  The teaching force today does not resemble that of pre-Katrina times in demographics or background of experience.  During the decade after Katrina, enrollment has returned to near pre-Katrina numbers. In 2016, the state legislature is preparing to return some semblance of local control to the school board.  **Write** a 1,500–2,500-word policy paper (plus references) describing what you believe should be the relationship between the local board of education and charter schools given what you have learned about school reform and school turnaround.  **Reflect** on the following questions in your essay:   * What powers and authority should be reserved to the board of education? * What powers and authority should be reserved to each school? * What powers and authority should be shared between them? * How might this work, and what might it look like in practice?   **Generalize** your judgments regarding school turnaround to create a model that you would advocate for all urban communities.  **Cite** sources to support your arguments. ­  **Submit** this assignment to your instructor via Blackboard. | |
| **Alignment:** 7.1, 7.2 | **AIE:** 4 hours |
| **Instructor Notes**  This is the second of the course outcome assessments. Students who can complete this assignment, in conjunction with the previous week’s assignment, are prepared to practice these evaluative skills in the real world. Students should be working on this assignment throughout the course. | |

# Breakdown of Academic Instructional Equivalencies

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| **Week 1** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4.5 hours |
| Supplemental |  | 1 hour |
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| **Week 2** |  |  |
| Required |  | 4 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
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| **Week 3** |  |  |
| Required |  | 3.5 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
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| **Week 4** |  |  |
| Required |  | 5 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
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| **Week5** |  |  |
| Required |  | 6.5 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
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| **Week 6** |  |  |
| Required |  | 8.5 hours |
| Supplemental |  |  |
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| **Week 7** |  |  |
| Required |  | 5 hours |
| Supplemental |  | 1 hour |
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|  |  |  |
| **Total Required Hours** |  | 37 hours |
| **Total Supplemental Hours** |  | 2 hours |
| **Total Hours** |  | 39 hours |