

Executive Director  
Vincent L. Ferrandino  
Deputy Executive Directors  
Gail C. Gross  
Deborah B. Reeve  
Associate Executive Directors  
Doris Belfield  
Frederick N. Brown  
Ernest J. Mannino  
Cheryl Riggins-Newby

**PRINCIPAL**

Leon E. Greene  
Editor  
[lgreene@naesp.org](mailto:lgreene@naesp.org)  
Peter Magnuson  
Senior Editor  
[pmagnuson@naesp.org](mailto:pmagnuson@naesp.org)  
Rebecca J. Kesner  
Managing Editor  
[bkesner@naesp.org](mailto:bkesner@naesp.org)  
Candice Johnson  
Associate Editor  
[cjohnson@naesp.org](mailto:cjohnson@naesp.org)  
Mary Rita Brown  
Administrative Assistant  
703-684-3345

**EDITORIAL ADVISORS**

Martine G. Bates  
Decatur, Alabama  
[mgbates@morgank12.org](mailto:mgbates@morgank12.org)  
Frank Buck  
Talladega, Alabama  
[buck@mail.talladega\\_cs.net](mailto:buck@mail.talladega_cs.net)  
Nancy Lubarsky  
Asbury, New Jersey  
[nlubarsky@comcast.net](mailto:nlubarsky@comcast.net)  
Rita R. Martinez  
Chandler, Arizona  
[rmartinez@kyrene.org](mailto:rmartinez@kyrene.org)  
Scott A. Miller  
Horicon, Wisconsin  
[smiller3@horicon.k12.wi.us](mailto:smiller3@horicon.k12.wi.us)  
Paula Neidlinger  
Plymouth, Indiana  
[pneidlinger@plymouth.k12.in.us](mailto:pneidlinger@plymouth.k12.in.us)  
Christopher J. Peal  
Walled Lake, Michigan  
[peal@walledlake.k12.mi.us](mailto:peal@walledlake.k12.mi.us)  
Jeff Walker  
Huntingtown, Maryland  
[walkerj@calvertmet.k12.md.us](mailto:walkerj@calvertmet.k12.md.us)  
Sharon Weber  
Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania  
[sweber@punxsy.k12.pa.us](mailto:sweber@punxsy.k12.pa.us)  
Cathie West  
Granite Falls, Washington  
[CathieWest@msn.com](mailto:CathieWest@msn.com)

**ADVERTISING SALES**

Tim McCormack, Jayna Franco  
PRINCIPAL c/o Ascend Media  
11600 College Blvd.  
Overland Park, KS 66210  
913-469-1110 • FAX 913-344-1417  
[tmccormack@ascendmedia.com](mailto:tmccormack@ascendmedia.com)  
[jfranco@ascendmedia.com](mailto:jfranco@ascendmedia.com)

# Turning Around to Get Ahead



**W**hat's the difference between an effective principal and a turnaround principal?

That's a tough question. As Daniel Duke points out, "The principal who is ideal for opening a new school or improving an already high-performing school may not necessarily possess the qualities needed to turn around a persistently low-performing school."

With the threat of sanctions hovering over hundreds of schools found to be "in need of improvement" by NCLB guidelines, it is imperative for their principals to develop and apply the skills needed to turn their schools around—or possibly give way to turnaround specialists. Duke describes a state-approved pilot program in Virginia to train a corps of such specialists in strategies used to revive ailing businesses. They will then be assigned to low-performing schools for as long as it takes to start the turnaround process before moving on.

For innovative effort to turn a school around, few can match the multifaceted approach described by J. Harrison Coleman, who initiated a series of major changes after inheriting the lowest-performing school in her urban district. She first created an orderly environment by introducing a military-style regimen that included addressing students as cadets. She then organized her teachers into teams of instructional facilitators; divided the school into separate Pre-K–2 and 3–5 sub-schools; conducted classroom checks several times a day to see if students were on task; established frequent assessment procedures; arranged to have students attend remedial programs before school and on Saturdays; and bolstered student pride by displaying samples of their best work throughout the building.

Not many principals have that kind of energy and determination, but there are a number of proven ways to improve student performance and meet NCLB's adequate yearly performance benchmarks. In this issue, you will read about an ambitious program to upgrade 20 low-performing schools in Fairfax County, Virginia, by introducing direct instruction and a year-round schedule. You will also learn of a four-level pyramid of intervention that addresses remediation efforts upward from identification and diagnosis of needs to intensive instructional support.

"For the turnover principal, there is no substitute for simple wisdom," says Daniel Duke. "There are no shortcuts in turning around low-performing schools. They can only be turned around one student at a time."

We've made some changes that should please those of you who like to access NAESP publications online. Look for two or more Web Exclusive articles to appear with articles published in *Principal* on [www.naesp.org/webexclusives](http://www.naesp.org/webexclusives). This month's bonus articles are "Don't Let Good Data Go to Waste," by James Hoover, and "Surviving and Thriving as a New Principal," by Shirley Curtis.

Two NAESP newsletters will be available exclusively online this year. Look for *Middle Matters* and *Student News Today* (renamed *Student and Community News Today*) to arrive by e-mail. They will also be archived at [www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org).