



Catherine Barbour (Senior Advisor and Project Director) is a managing director at AIR who



currently serves as the director of the State Support Network, leads the School Turnaround team for the District and School Improvement Center, and provides leadership technical assistance to the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders. She is a credentialed School Turnaround Leader, earning her certificate from the Darden/Curry Partnership for Leaders in Education. She leads project teams in the design and development of products and services to support states, districts, and schools in their improvement efforts, specifically in school turnaround and transformation. Barbour has led project teams to design and develop school improvement plans for school districts in Illinois, Missouri, New York, and Virginia, which resulted in submitting awarded applications. Barbour provides consulting to states, districts, and schools in designing, implementing, and evaluating school reform initiatives, which may include

district- and school-level leadership training to lead turnaround, developing implementation monitoring indicators and tools, and building systems for sustaining reform initiatives.

Previously, Barbour was an independent consultant working with schools and districts to provide training and support in the implementation of PLCs, school improvement leadership coaching for principals and school teams, and curriculum development. She has led three successful school turnarounds as a principal, one each in an urban, a rural, and a suburban district. Barbour's focus is on turnaround leadership and providing support to states and districts to implement successful turnaround and transformation services. She received her master's degree in elementary administration at The College of William and Mary.



Johnette H. Burdette (Leadership Coach Advisor) is a principal consultant for school turnaround at AIR. She leads project teams in the design and development of products and services to support states, districts, and schools in their improvement efforts, specifically in school turnaround and transformation. Burdette has led project teams to design and develop school improvement plans for Buffalo Public Schools. Burdette provided leadership coaching and support to the Norfolk and Lynchburg Public Schools, which included designing, implementing, and evaluating school reform; providing leadership training to lead turnaround; developing implementation monitoring indicators and tools; and building systems for sustaining reform initiatives. Burdette has worked on the New York State Curriculum Audits through document reviews and the facilitation of co-interpretationsSM. As lead facilitator, she guided an innovative approach to multivariate data collection and collaborative interpretation to help districts and schools in corrective action use data to develop concrete action plans for improvement. Previously, Burdette was the executive director for a national educational consulting firm specializing in school turnaround. She specializes in policy and procedure, building and sustaining relationships, climate and culture, leadership development, best practices, data analysis, and cohesive teaming. Burdette is currently working on her doctoral degree (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), with a research concentration in school improvement. She received her master's degree in administration and supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University.





Patricia García-Arena, Ph.D. (Leadership Coach)



Dr. García-Arena is a principal researcher at the American Institutes for Research. Dr. García-Arena has more than 15 years of experience in educational research and technical assistance. Her research experiences and interests have included such topics as human development, literacy, cross-cultural child development studies, language socialization, assessment development, and the educational attainment of minority students. As a project director, she has extensive experience managing large federal contracts with the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). For instance, from 2016 to 2018, Dr. Garcia-Arena was the project director of the IES-funded *Multisite Randomized Controlled Trial of Descubriendo la Lectura (DLL) Study* and the *Project MELD: Math and English Language Development for English Language*

Learners. Along with extensive research experience, Dr. García-Arena has also applied her research knowledge education to technical assistance initiatives to support minority children and their families. From 2018-2019, she applied research to practice as a project director of the National Clearinghouse of English Language Acquisition (NCELA) commissioned by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) at the U.S. Department of Education.

Prior to her position at AIR, Dr. Garcia-Arena experiences include teaching graduate courses focused on social-emotional development and teaching middle school. During her doctoral studies at Stanford, Dr. García-Arena worked on research studies that investigated the relationship between bilingual language use and social emotional development for bilingual students. She received her Ph.D. in psychological studies in education with an emphasis in child and adolescent development from Stanford University. She holds an Ed.M. from Harvard University in human development and psychology and a B.A. in child development and psychology from Tufts University.



Ursula Hill, Ed. D. (Leadership Coach), is a senior consultant for school turnaround at AIR. She



has more than 22 years of experience in public education as a special educator and school administrator, with substantial knowledge of and experience working with Title I schools and transformation initiatives. As a senior turnaround consultant, Dr. Hill has served as an AIR on-site coordinator and special education coach, assisting school improvement efforts in Virginia. She also worked on the project team supporting Buffalo Public Schools as a leadership coach, assigned to schools receiving federal school improvement funds. Dr. Hill used her experience as a turnaround principal specifically to aid school leadership teams in analyzing student performance data and in aligning teaching practices to improve instructional delivery, and to conduct instructional rounds. Dr. Hill engaged in tiered leadership

coaching with school principals; she guided principals in differentiated professional development, strategies for instructional coaching, school/family connections, and ongoing progress monitoring on school turnaround initiatives. Dr. Hill has trained Oklahoma's state, district, and local school officials on student learning goals and objectives. She participated in the New York City Department of Education School Renewal Assessment project as a member of the document review and report development teams. Dr. Hill also has performed intentional data reviews for academic and perception data using AIR's co-interpretation methodology for that project and for the Illinois Center for School Improvement for various schools throughout that state. Currently, Dr. Hill serves as the South Carolina liaison for AIR's Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) and supports other states within the SECC network. In her role at the SECC, she works to build the capacity of state education agencies with their efforts toward supporting districts and schools. Dr. Hill received her undergraduate degree from Virginia Union University, a master's degree in elementary administration and supervision from the University of Virginia, and a doctor of education degree in leadership and policy studies from The George Washington University.



Dorothy Hutcheson (Leadership Coach) is an education consultant for Capital Advisors & Consulting Services. Her work currently focuses on improving instructional leadership in districts throughout the country through the promotion of individual growth and building leadership capacity within an organization. In partnership with AIR, she provided leadership coaching to the principals of Dr. Lydia T. Wright School of Excellence, BUILD Academy, and North Park Middle Academy in Buffalo, New York, as well as at Perrymont Elementary School in Lynchburg, Virginia. Prior to working with AIR, Hutcheson served as an acting principal and turnaround specialist for the Newbridge Alternative School, where she helped build leadership capacity and developed PLCs. A former experienced turnaround principal, she was the principal of Adams Elementary and Fairfield Middle Schools In Henrico County Virginia. A former Blue-Ribbon School of Excellence recipient, Hutcheson has expertise in school and district leadership, as well as in school turnaround, project management, and professional development. She holds a master's degree in education supervision and is completing a doctoral dissertation in leadership policy through the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.





Melissa Irby-Marshall (Leadership Coach) is a senior consultant for school turnaround at AIR.



She has more than 27 years of experience in education instruction, administration, and supervision. Because of her work as principal in turning around a low-performing middle school, Irby-Marshall was selected by the Virginia Department of Education to join the first cohort of the University of Virginia's Darden/Curry Schools Partnership for certifying school turnaround specialists, receiving her turnaround specialist credentials in 2006. Irby-Marshall has taught at all levels and has served as principal and in district office positions, both in Virginia and Taipei, Taiwan. Since 2006, she has worked with low-performing schools across the United States as a school turnaround leadership coach and trainer. She has led SIG lead partner engagements in Virginia as well as coaching for

the principals of the partner schools. She has been an effective project director and leadership coach in her work in Virginia, aligning state, district, and school division goals; training and supporting school leadership teams; building the capacity of school principals and instructional leaders in the use of data to plan instruction; setting learning targets; and coaching instructional leaders in monitoring instruction and achievement performance of the Virginia Standards of Learning curriculum. In her school turnaround work during the past 7 years, Irby-Marshall has trained and coached principals and leadership teams in classroom walkthrough observations and calibrating and data alignment for decision making, facilitated and trained PLCs from district-level administrators to teacher grade-level teams, and coached school and district administrators through the change process. She has trained teachers and administrators in effective instructional strategies, classroom management, and the use of data to drive instructional decisions.



Robyn Madison-Harris, Ed. D. (Leadership Coach) is a Senior Technical Assistance



Consultant at American Institutes for Research (AIR) where she has been a project lead and/or team member at the former Southeast and Texas Comprehensive Centers; co-liaison to the Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation and College and Career Readiness and Success Center; and co-lead of the SECC Assessment and Accountability Network, SECC Equity Summit, and SECC equity learning journey; and is currently the State Liaison and Partnership Facilitator Lead for the Regional Education Laboratory Southwest Teacher Preparation and Professional Development Partnership in Louisiana and member of the Cultural and Linguistic Competence workgroup. She also explores and pursues business development opportunities aligned with the AIR mission and vision, including partnering with institutes for higher education for program

evaluations and improvement.

In addition to working at AIR, Dr. Madison-Harris previously taught English, African-American Literature and History, and Publications; lead an alternative school; supervised academics in a state education agency (SEA)-run district for students with exceptionalities; and worked in the Communications and Legislative Services and Assessment and Accountability divisions at an SEA, gaining experience in accountability and assessment, career and college readiness, diversity and inclusion, education policy, literacy, school improvement, and serving adjudicated youth in her 24-year tenure as an educator.

Dr. Madison-Harris has a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education, English, and Master of Education in Administration and Supervision, both from Southern University-Baton Rouge, and Doctorate of Education in Organizational Leadership with an Educational Leadership specialization from Nova Southeastern University.



Donna Warthan, Ed. D. (Leadership Coach), is a senior consultant for school turnaround at



AIR. She has more than 25 years of experience in public education as a classroom teacher, instructional specialist, and school principal, with substantial knowledge of and experience working with Title I schools and transformation initiatives. Her current work at AIR includes managing the overall project and budget for a federal SIG project in Virginia, along with providing leadership coaching and on-site coordinator support for other districts in Virginia. She aids school leadership teams in analyzing student performance data and in aligning teaching practices to improve instructional delivery, and she conducts

instructional rounds. She provides differentiated professional development, strategies for instructional coaching, school/family connections, and frequent progress monitoring on school turnaround initiatives. Dr. Warthan earned her bachelor of science degree in elementary education with an endorsement in developmental reading and early education from Longwood College; a master's degree in educational administration from The College of William and Mary; and her doctorate in educational leadership and policy study from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.