



Focused Leadership

What Matters Most

Georgia Department of Education
Division of School and District Effectiveness

Bryan Goodwin
President & CEO
McREL International

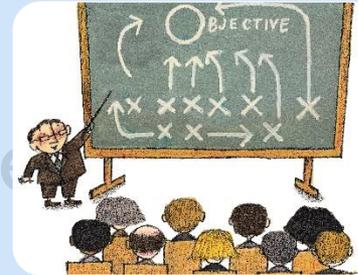
Who is McREL?



We turn
information



...into
inspiration
and ideas



...and help
people turn
ideas into
action



...so they
and their
students
can flourish

The objectives



Provide you with insights about the pathways schools and systems follow on their journey to success



Help you focus your school or school system on the right *next steps* for *your* journey



Inspire you to take a first step to help your students *and teachers* flourish as lifelong learners

Consider a talent you've developed



What basic routines did you master?



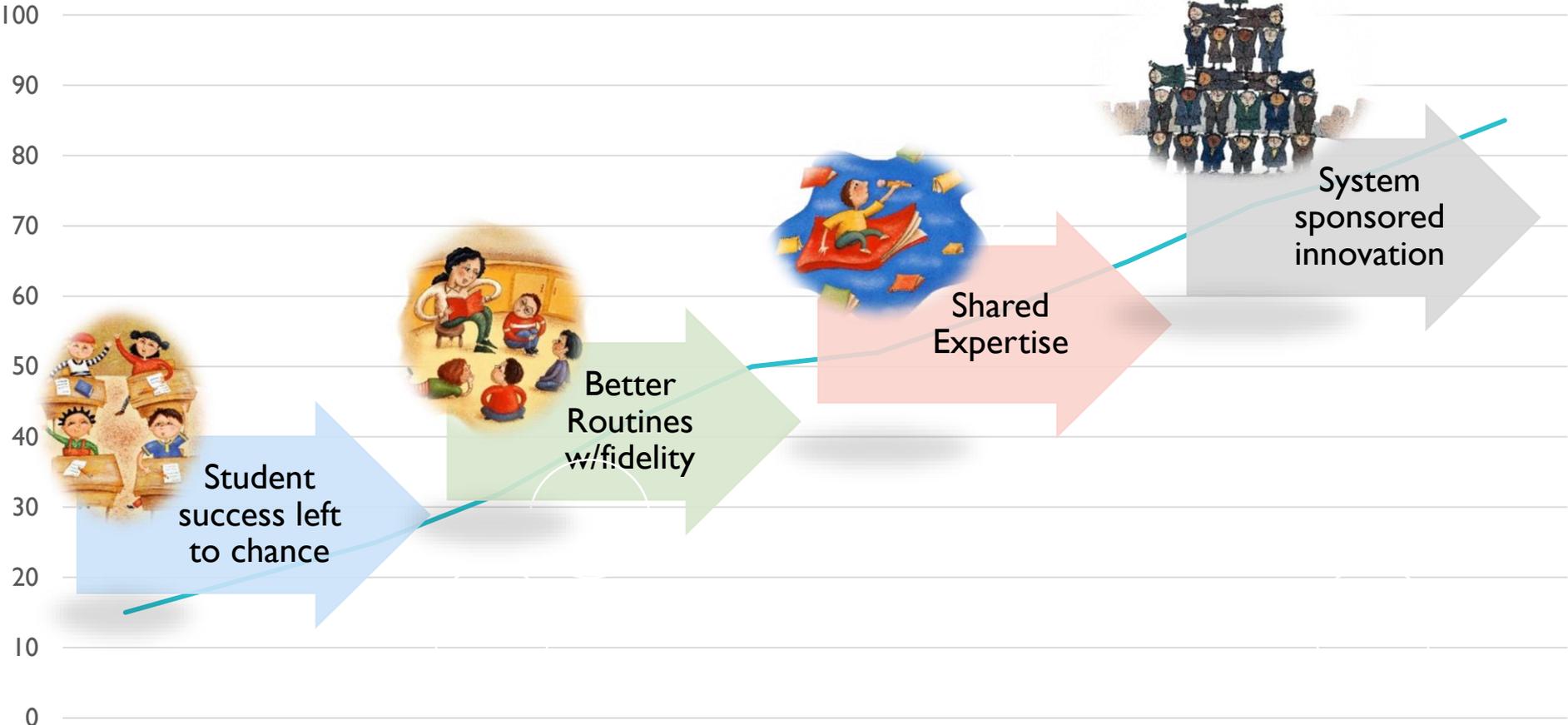
How did you develop your expertise?



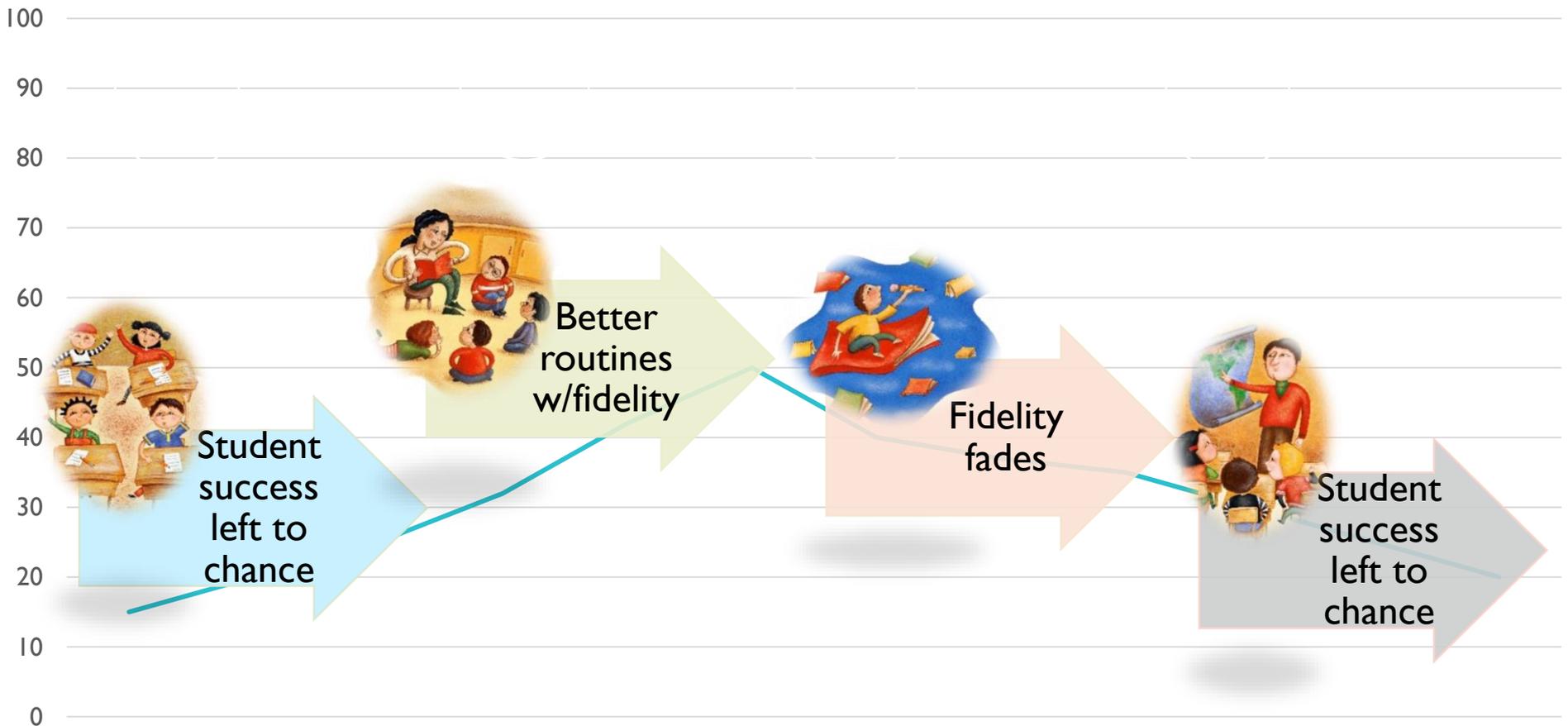
How did you develop your own unique style?

How did you get there?

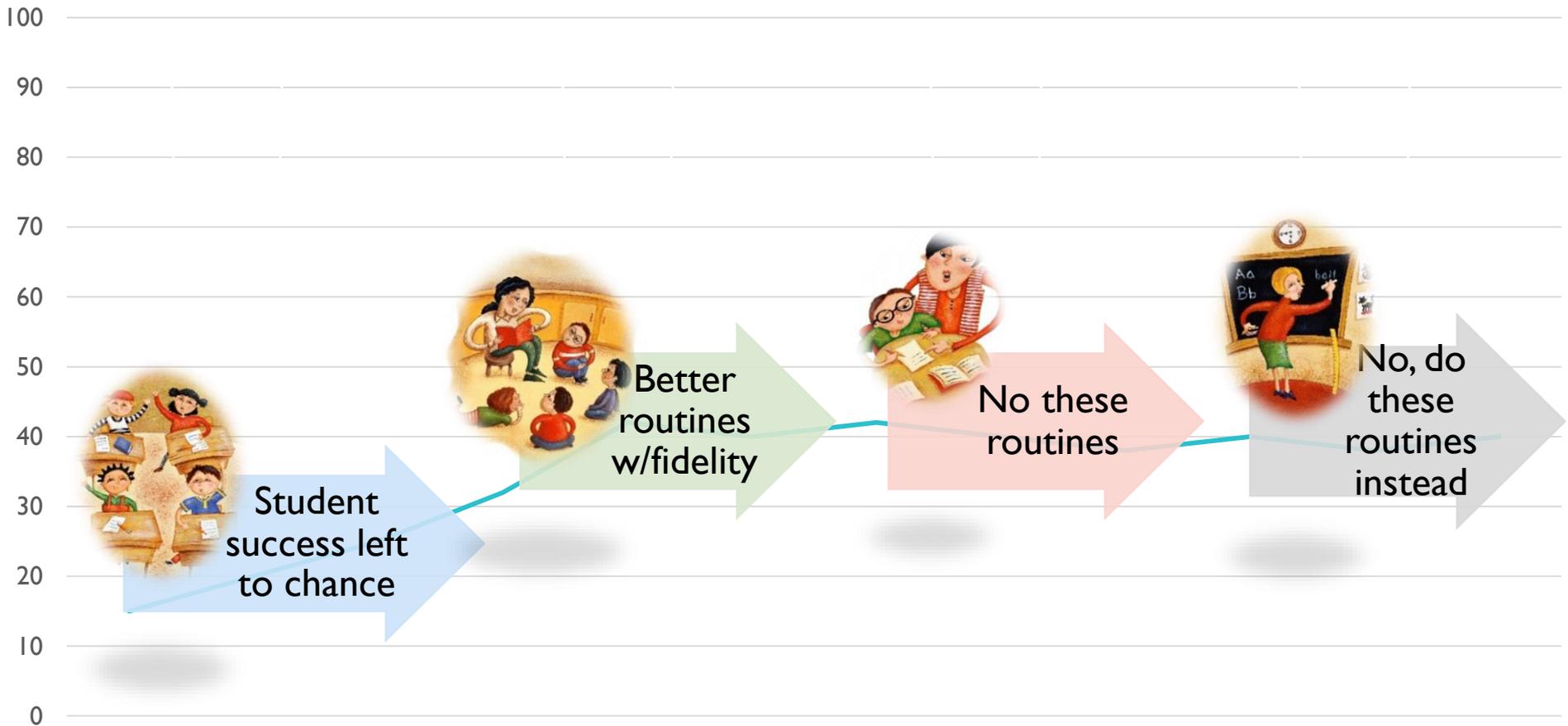
Success is a journey



But it's easy to slide backwards



It's also easy to get stuck



Many education systems get stuck.



Virginia turnaround schools improved 3 years, then plateaued



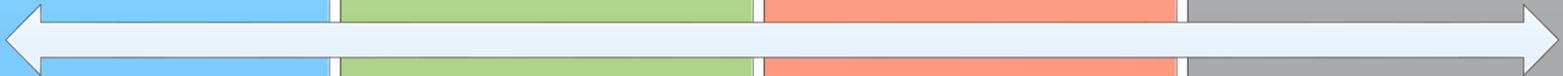
High-stakes testing drove performance gains in Texas before leveling off



Testing pressure drove gains in 25 states, followed by plateau or decline

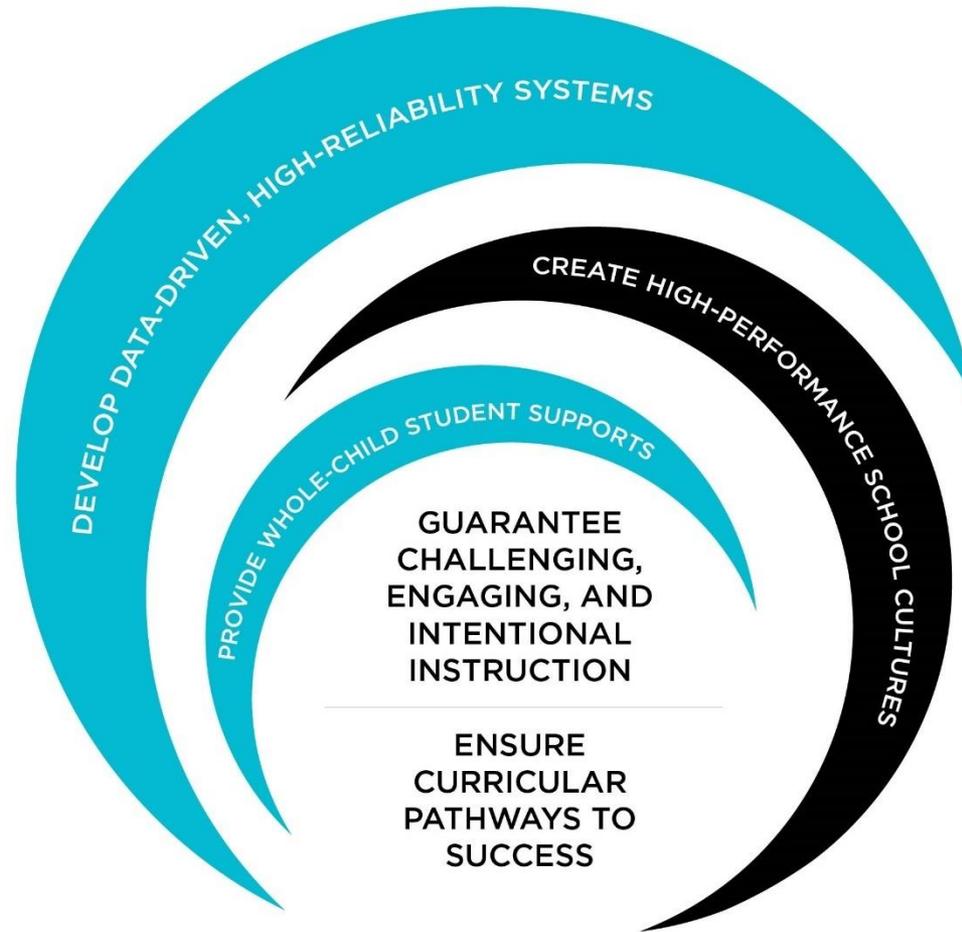


Worldwide, systems show pattern of a steep rise followed by a plateau



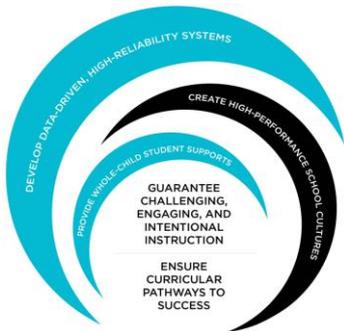
How do they get unstuck?

Focus on the right work



What Matters Most® for Student Success

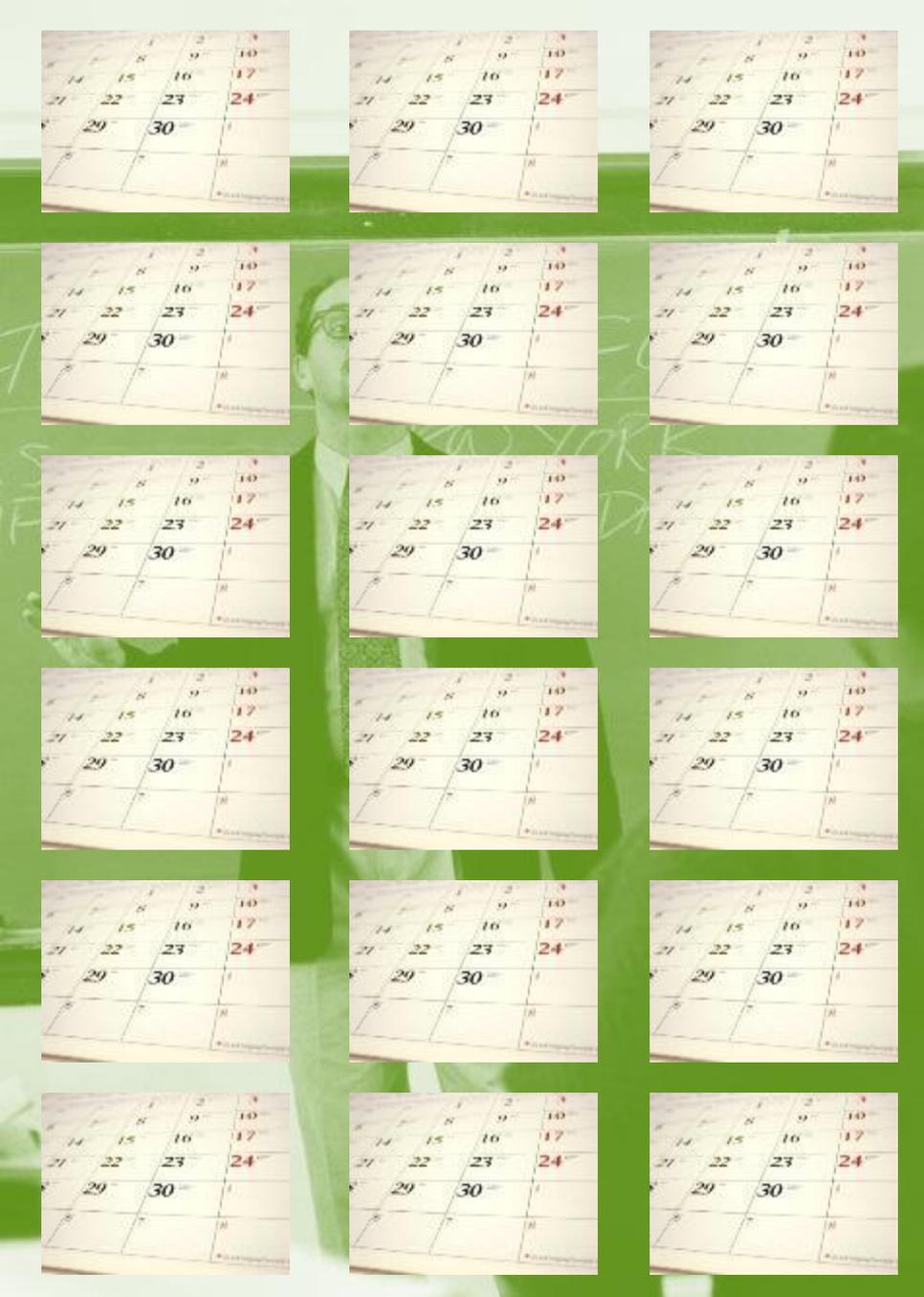
Teaching



Guarantee challenging, engaging,
and intentional instruction



Bottom Fifth



Top Fifth

Three imperatives

Be demanding

- *Know why you're doing what you're doing*



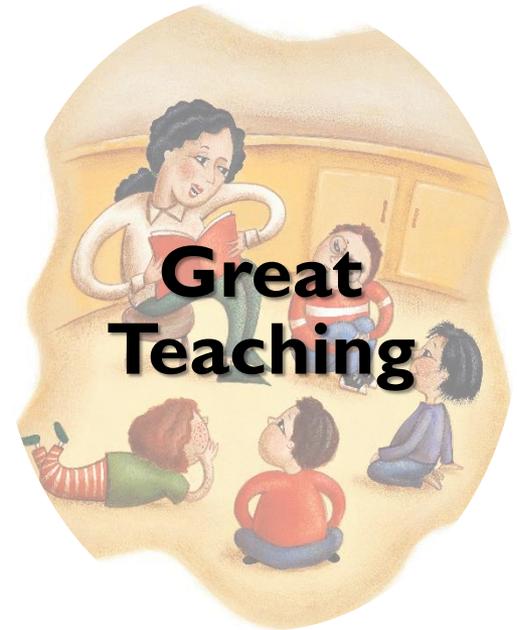
Be supportive

- *Provide a nurturing environment*



Be intentional

- *Align teaching with high expectations for learning*



Great teaching

High expectations

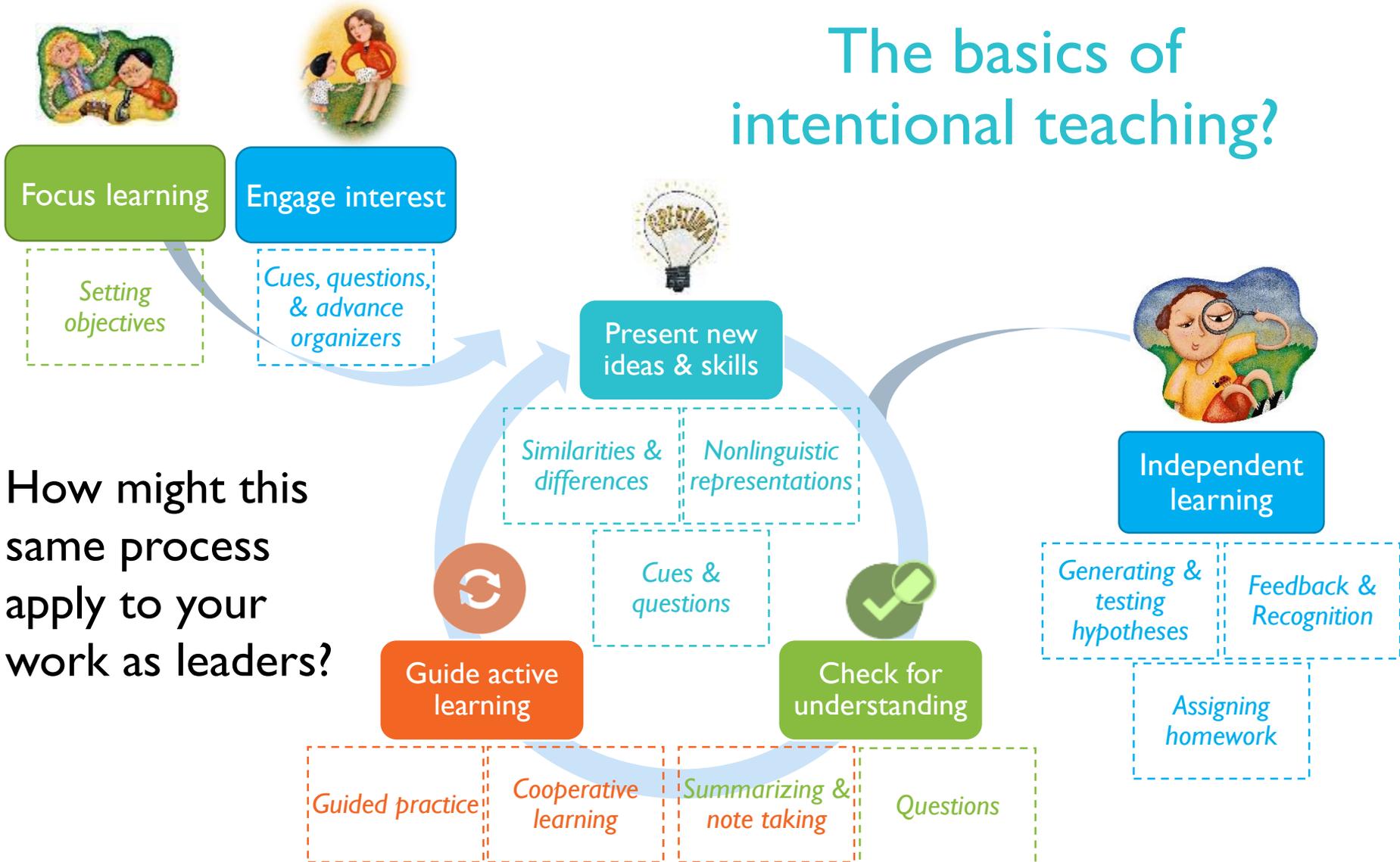
Supportive environments

Intentional instruction



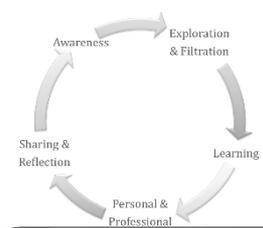
Not so **Great teaching**

The basics of intentional teaching?



Reflection

Where are we on this journey to success?



Disorder and inconsistency

- We have some good teachers, but overall, teaching is fairly weak and/or inconsistent

Adopted routines

- Our teaching is consistent, but still mostly rudimentary, may even be compliance oriented

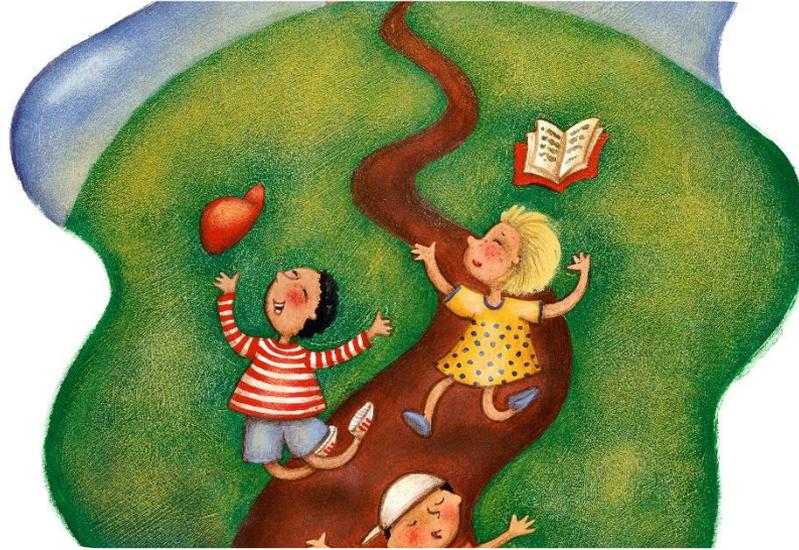
Expert adaptation

- Teachers are expertly able to address student learning needs, but not entirely innovative

Rapid-cycle innovation

- Our teachers collaboratively design learning experiences that unleash student curiosity

Curriculum



Ensure curricular pathways
to success

Pop quiz

Question: What school factor has the strongest link to achievement?

Answer: Opportunity to learn



Clearly articulating a curriculum

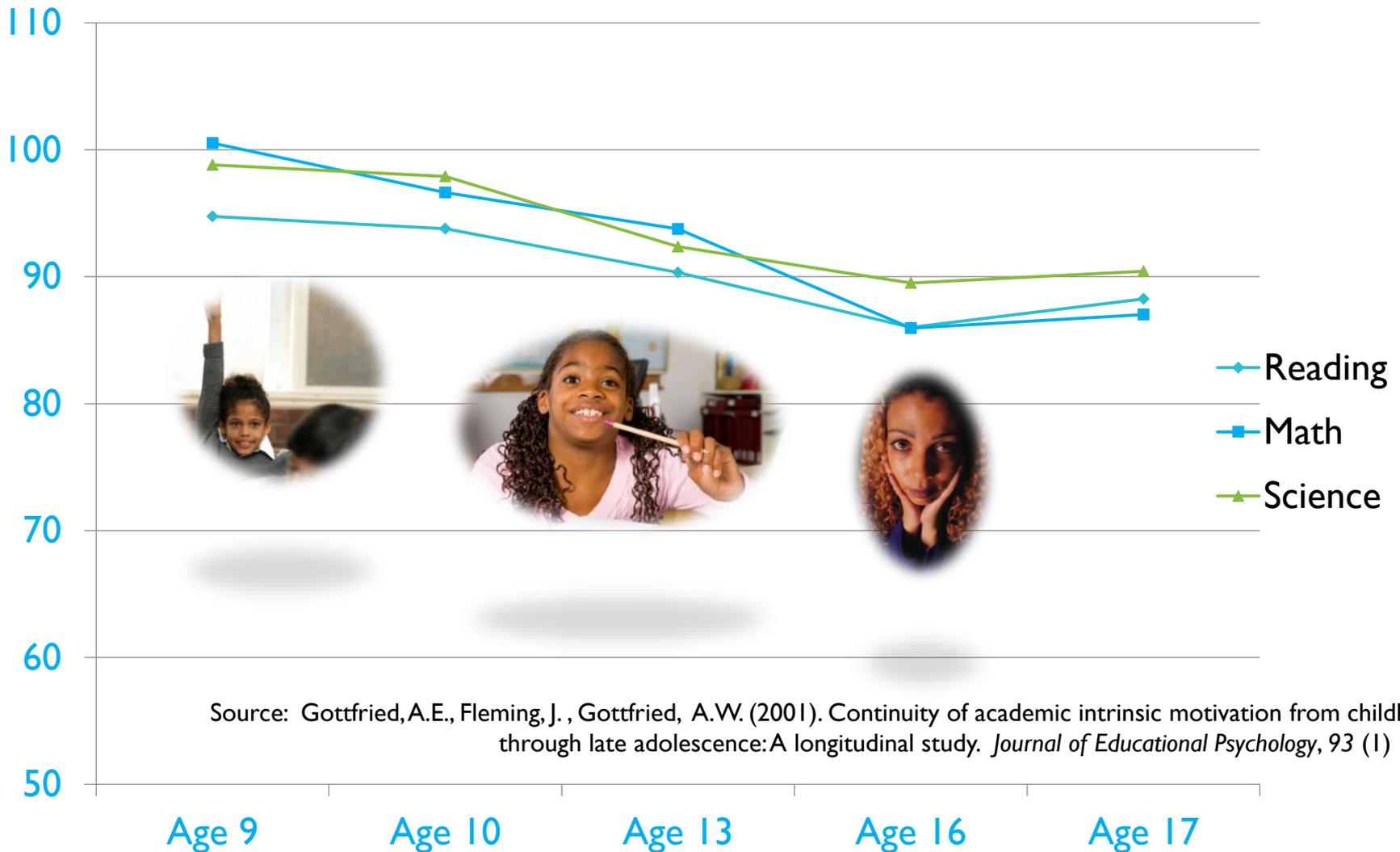


Monitoring its implementation



Aligning it with assessment

Student motivation decreases



Source: Gottfried, A.E., Fleming, J., Gottfried, A.W. (2001). Continuity of academic intrinsic motivation from childhood through late adolescence: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93 (1) 3-13.

For some the pattern is worse

110

100

90

80

70

60

50



✓ Low expectations (66%)

✓ Not inspired or motivated to work hard (69%)

✓ Classes not interesting (47%)

Bridgeland, J. M., Dilulio, J., Morison, K. B. (2006). *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts*. Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises.

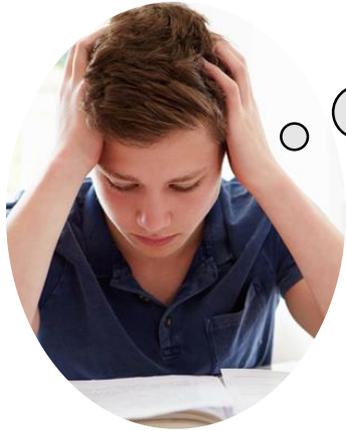
Age 9

Age 10

Age 13

Age 16

Age 17



They make you take
classes that you're
never going to use!

What would keep them in school?

✓ Real-world learning (81%)

Lessons from the field

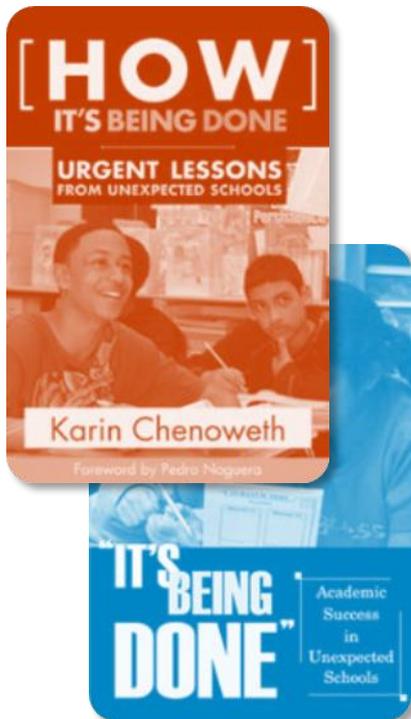
Get your curriculum house in order

Several adopted “off-the-shelf” curricula

Some compiled full year model lesson plans

Got away from the “Burger King” effect – *have-it-your-way*

Over time – **adapted** what they had adopted



Green STEM in Guam



Adopt – Adapt – Innovate

Where are we on this journey to success?



Disorder and inconsistency

- We have a “Burger King” curriculum: Teachers tend to have it their way



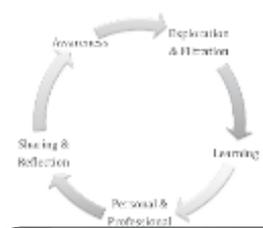
Adopted routines

- Our curriculum is *guaranteed & viable*: We have curriculum guides & we follow them



Expert adaptation

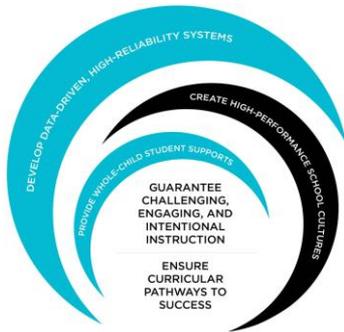
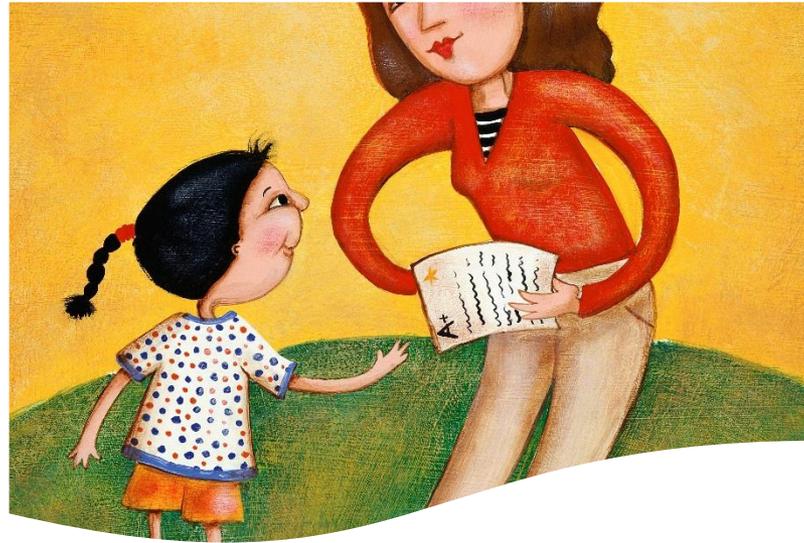
- We find places where we need to *adapt* our *adopted* curricula, & make changes together



Rapid-cycle innovation

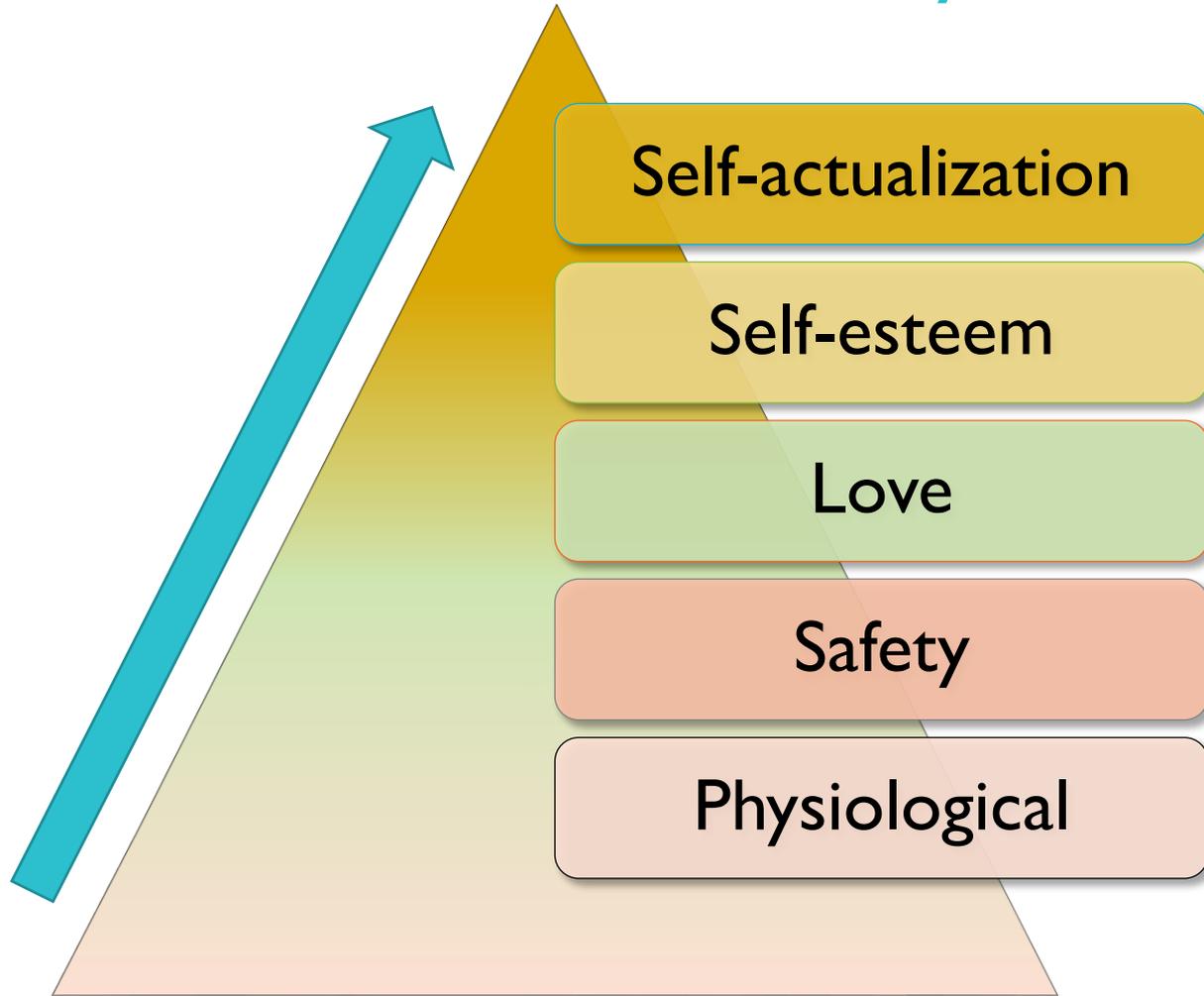
- We collaborate to create challenging, yet personalized learning that engages students

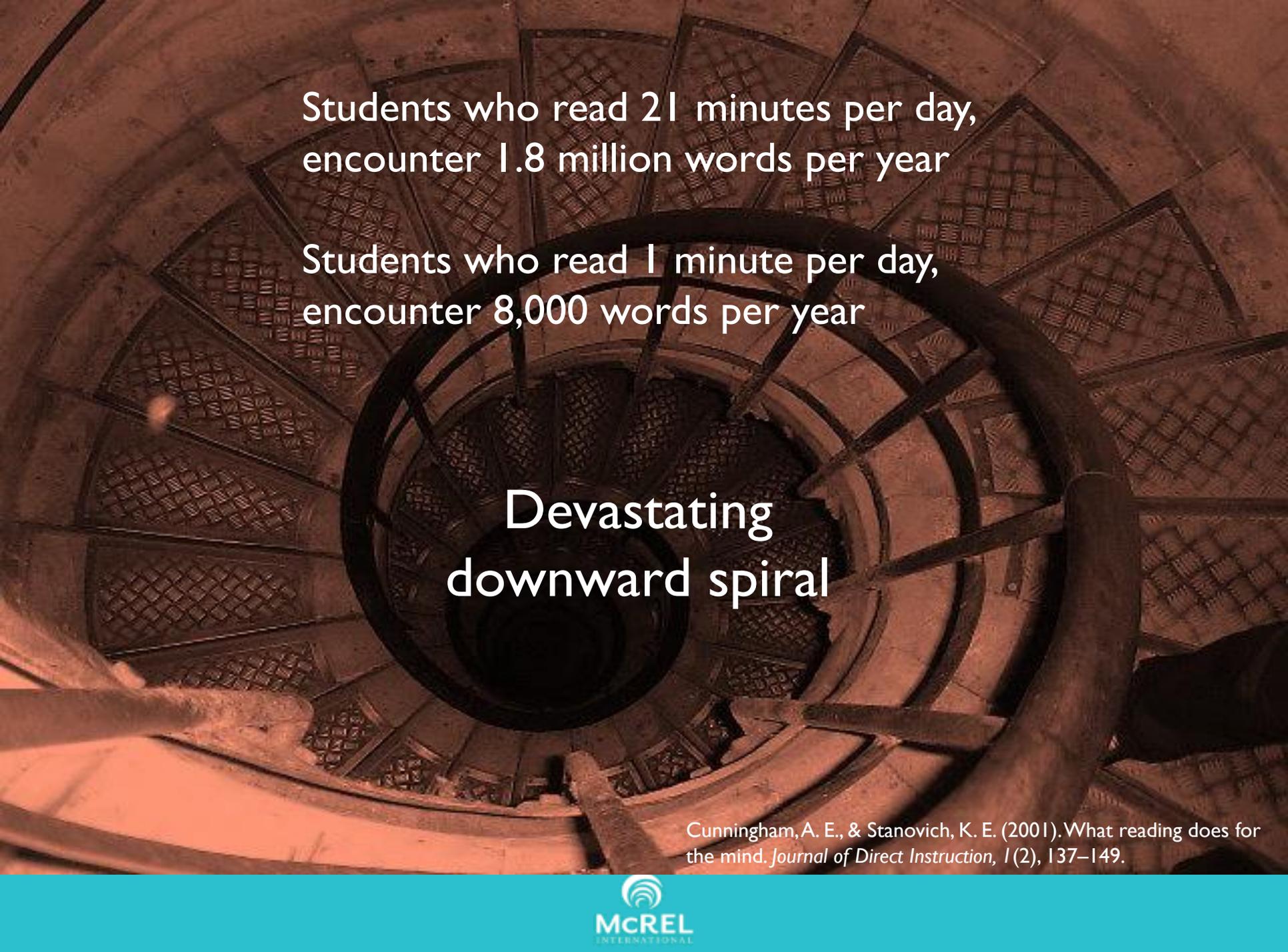
Support



Whole-child student supports

Maslow's Hierarchy



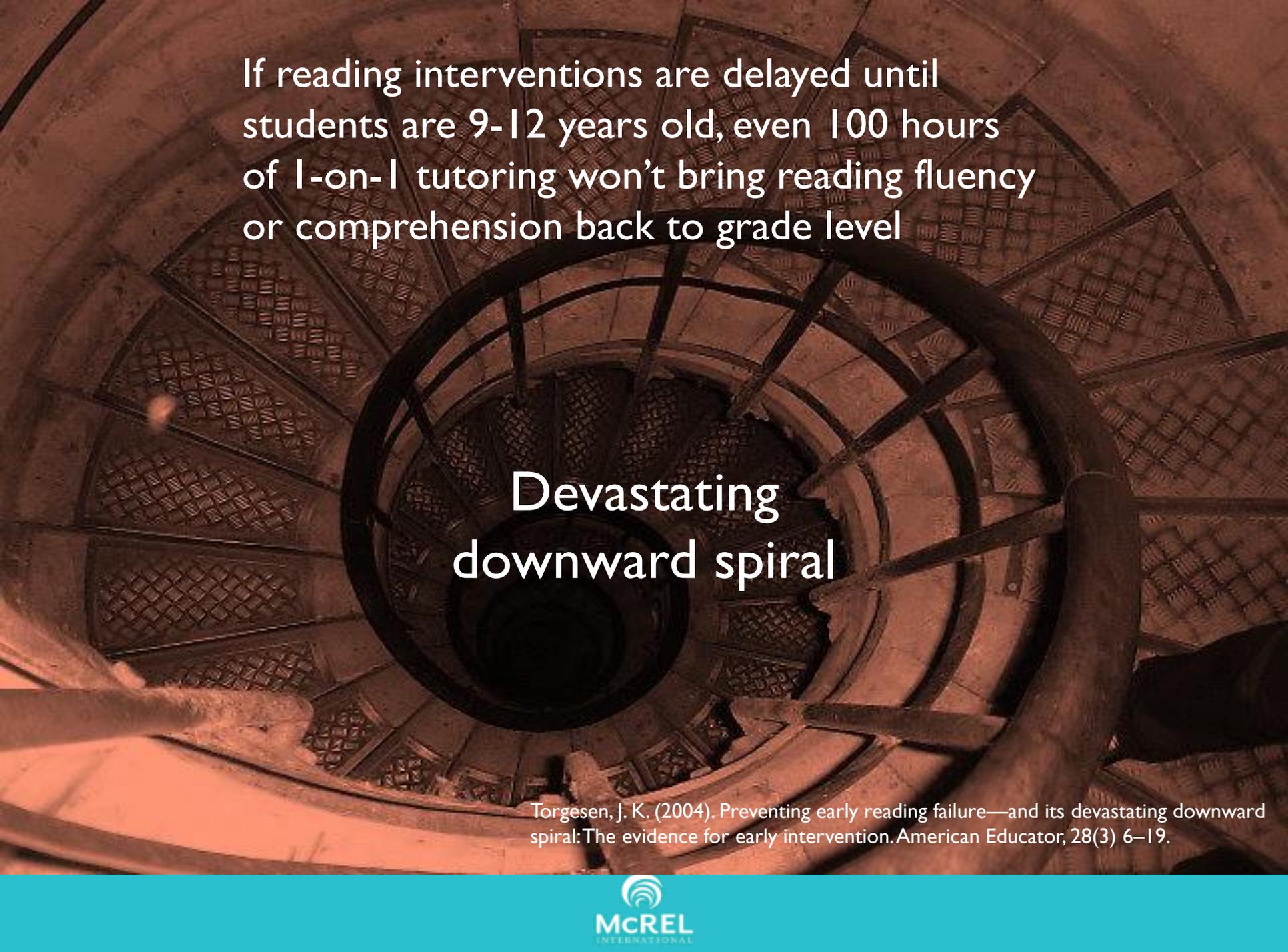


Students who read 21 minutes per day,
encounter 1.8 million words per year

Students who read 1 minute per day,
encounter 8,000 words per year

Devastating downward spiral

Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (2001). What reading does for the mind. *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 1(2), 137–149.



If reading interventions are delayed until students are 9-12 years old, even 100 hours of 1-on-1 tutoring won't bring reading fluency or comprehension back to grade level

Devastating downward spiral

Torgesen, J. K. (2004). Preventing early reading failure—and its devastating downward spiral: The evidence for early intervention. *American Educator*, 28(3) 6–19.

There is a way out

Early intervention

Testing all students' knowledge of phonemes midway through kindergarten and identifying those below the 20th percentile & providing them with intense, small group or one-on-one tutoring can put their decoding abilities back on par with peers.



Torgesen, J. K. (1998). Catch them before they fall: Identification and assessment to prevent reading failure in young children. *American Educator*, 22, (1&2) 32–39.

Fate control

I just can't learn

Luck is more important than hard work

I don't have a chance

When I do try something stops me



Where I am



Where I want to be

Coleman, J.S. (1966) *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Fate control

I can learn.

Hard work is
the key!

When I try
I succeed!!

I do have a
chance!!!



Where I am



Where I
want to be

Coleman, J.S. (1966) *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. Washington, DC:
U.S. Office of Health, Education, and Welfare.



Fate control is stronger than all other school factors combined

Safe – Individualized – Encouraging

Where are we on this journey to success?



Basic needs unmet

- Our learning environments are generally chaotic & we do little to support student needs



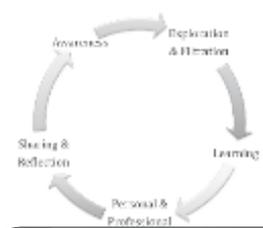
Students feel safe

- Our learning environments are safe & orderly, but we could do more to support student success



Individualized needs met

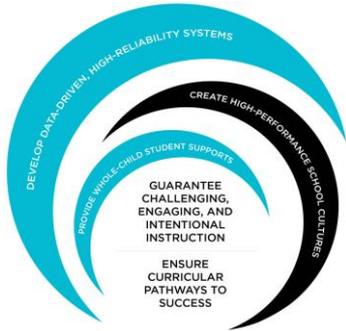
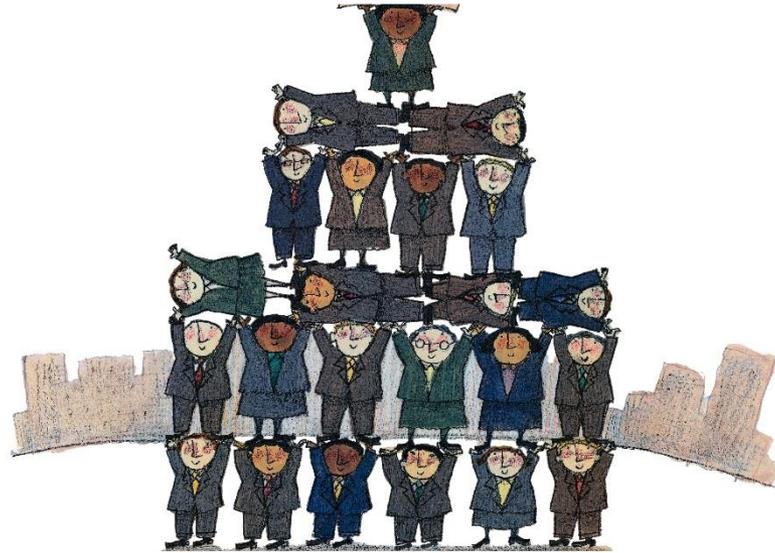
- We identify & respond in real-time to student learning needs, catching them before they fall



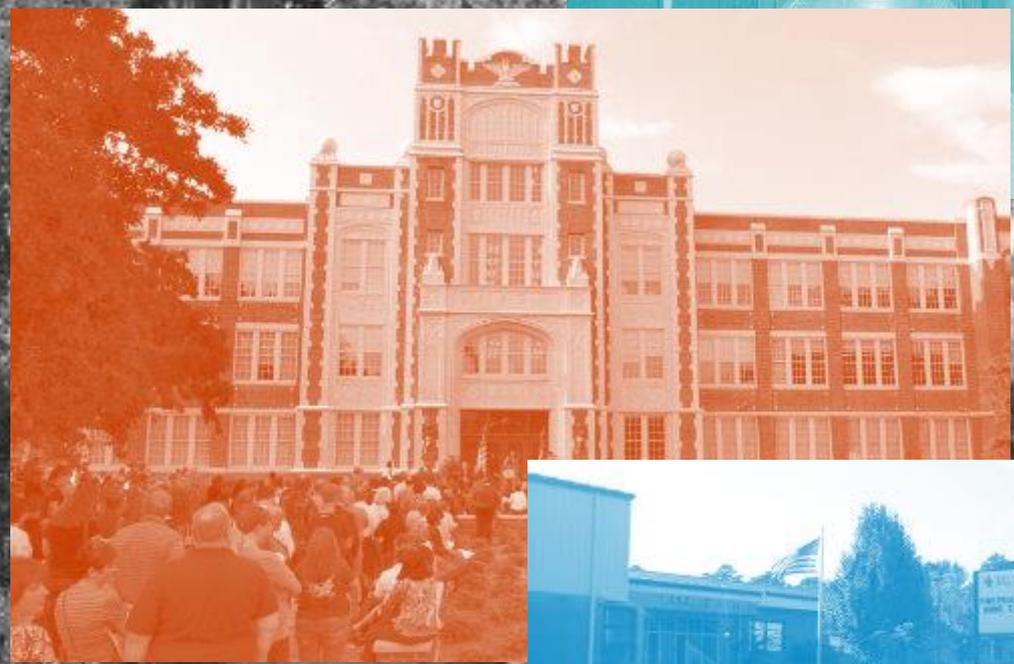
Encouraging and efficacious

- Our environments are safe, supportive & help students develop passion for & persistence with learning

Community



High performing school cultures



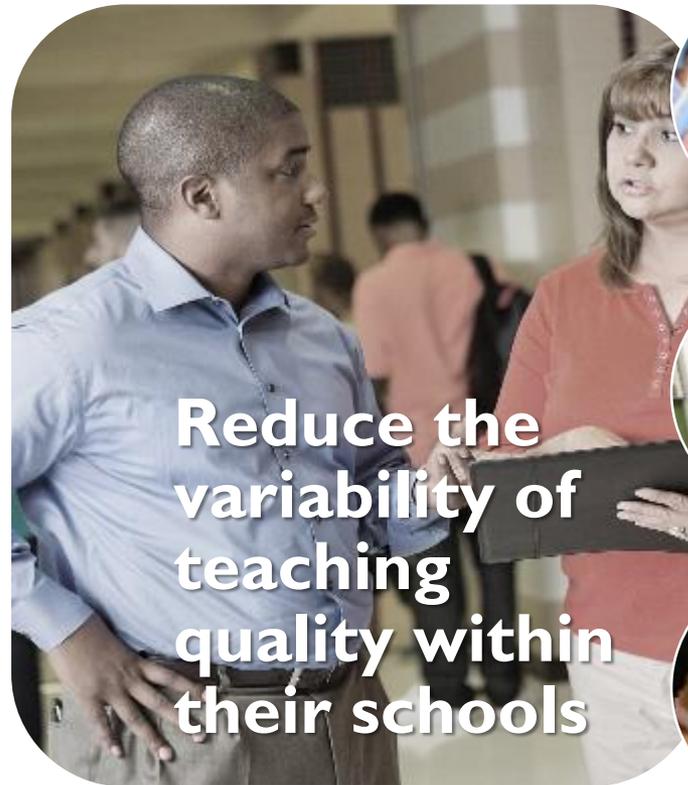
The “Forrest Gump” principle

Classrooms in low-performing schools are like a box of chocolates ...



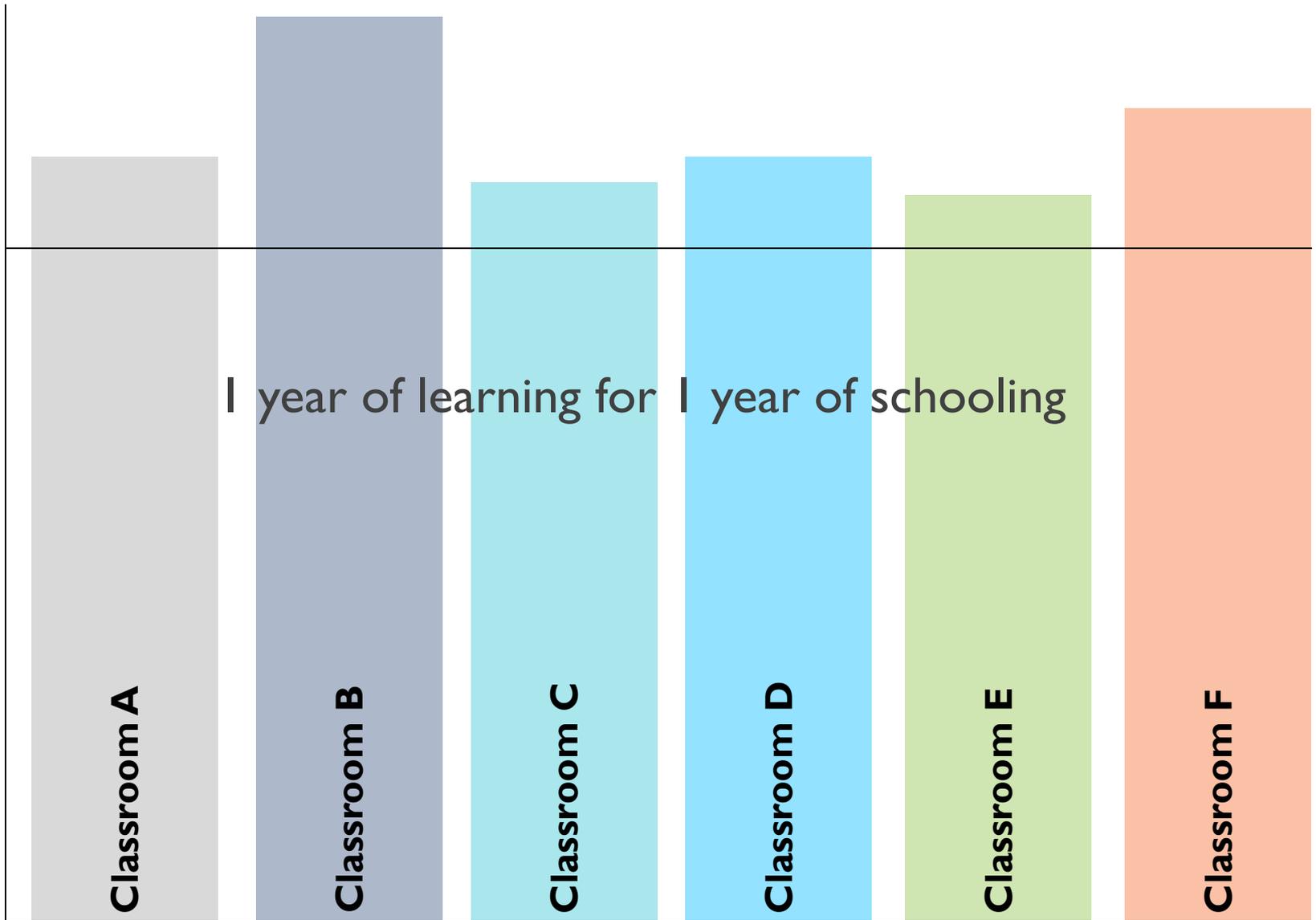
... you never know what you're going to get.

Key job of school leaders



**Reduce the
variability of
teaching
quality within
their schools**





What traits distinguish
beat – the – odds
schools?

High needs. High performing.

Traits of “beat the odds” schools (high needs, high performing)

Instruction

- Structure (*clear learning goals*)
- Individualized, responsive instruction
- Opportunity to learn challenging content

School environment

- Orderly climate
- Assessment & monitoring
- Parent involvement
- Press for achievement

Professional community

- Professional development
- Teacher collaboration (*de-privatizing practice*)
- Teacher influence in school decisions

Leadership

- Shared mission & goals
- Instructional guidance
- Re-designing the organization

These traits stand out

Instruction

- **Structure** (*clear learning goals*)
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School environment

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Professional community

- Professional development
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- **Teacher influence in school decisions**

Leadership

- **Shared mission & goals**
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- Re-designing the organization

What does it add up to?

Instruction

- **Structure** (*clear learning goals*)
- Individualized, responsive instruction
- Opportunity to learn challenging content

Professional community

- Professional development
- Teacher collaboration (*de-privatizing practice*)
- **Teacher influence in school decisions**

School environment

- **Orderly climate**
- Assessment & monitoring
- Parent involvement
- **Press for achievement**

Leadership

- **Shared mission & goals**
- Instructional guidance
- ~~Re-designing the organization~~

Culture of high expectations for learning & behavior

Improvement?

What's the secret sauce?



A high-performing
school culture

What is the recipe?

Stir in **Believing** that change is possible

Add in the **Focus** on what matters & bright spots

Knead in **Agreement** about how to work together

Marinate on **Knowing** why you exist

Optimism & a collective “can-do” spirit

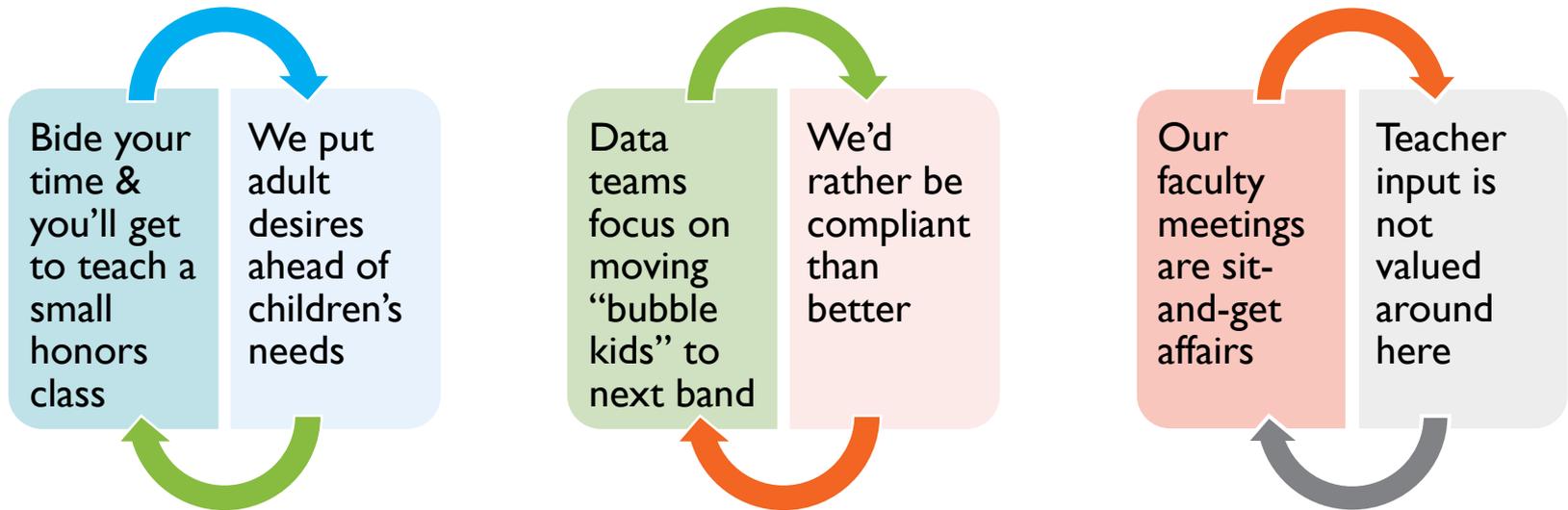
Using asset-based thinking to build on strengths

Optimism & a collective “can-do” spirit

Shared moral purpose & outcomes that matter to all

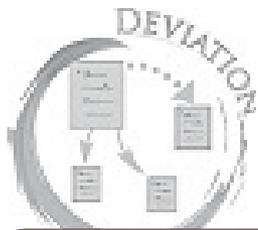
Accidental values in schools

What might these behaviors suggest?



From calibration to collaboration

Where are we on this journey to success?



Disorder inconsistency

- We're a big, *unhappy* family—full of dysfunction & mistrust



Adopted routines

- We've achieved consistency in teaching practices, primarily through close monitoring



Expert adaptation

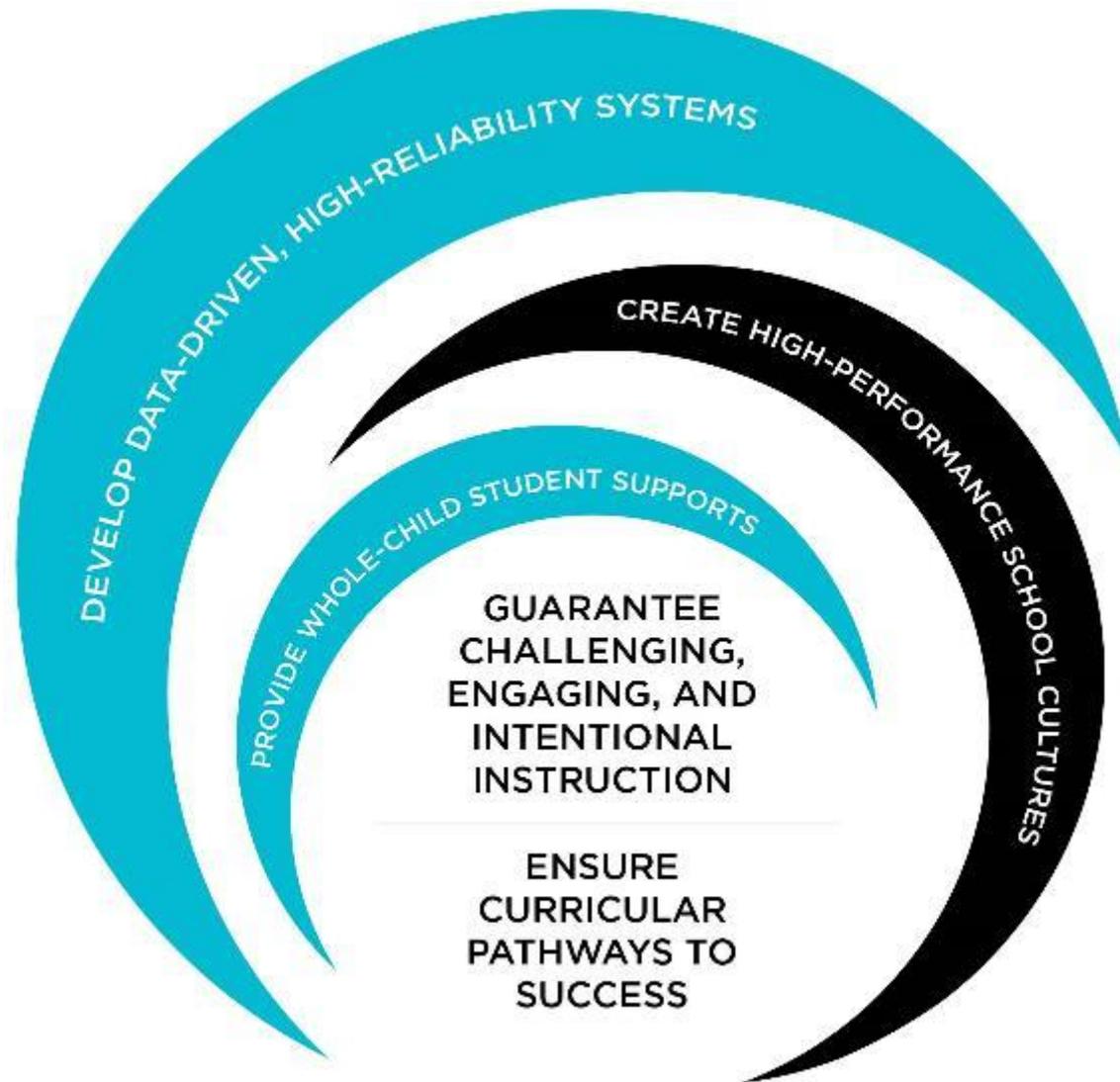
- We've achieved *precision without prescription* via peer coaching & shared decision-making



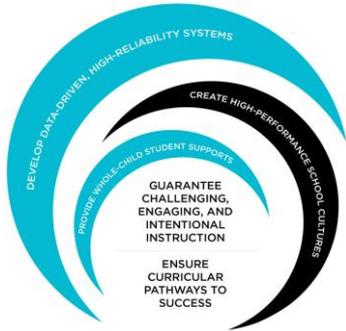
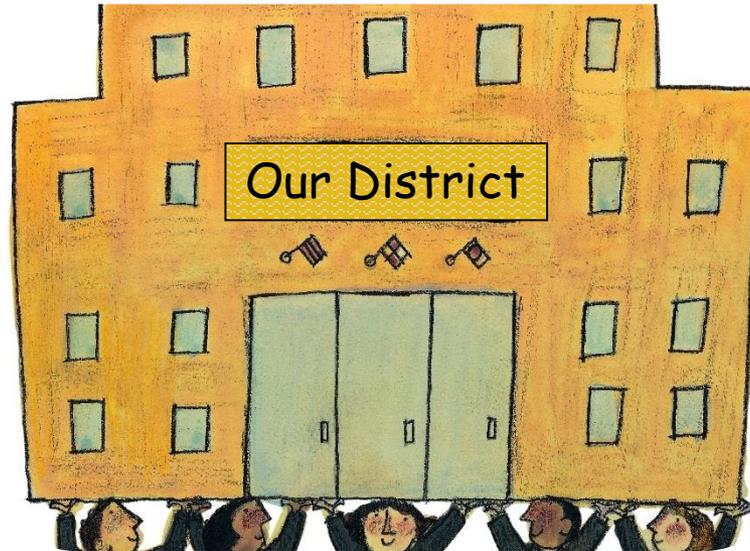
Rapid-cycle innovation

- Teachers anticipate & solve problems together, using action research to develop & test everyday innovations

Moving toward a high-reliability system

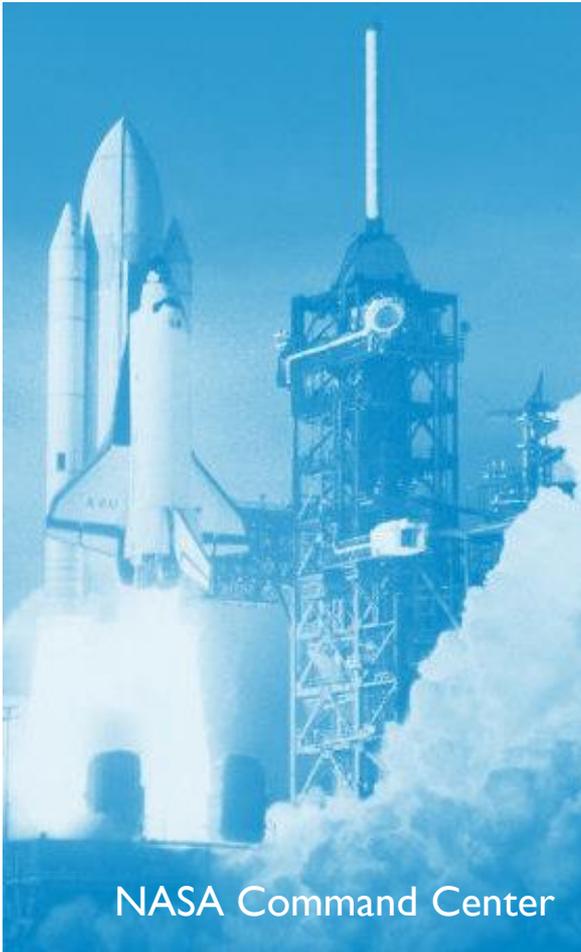


Systems



Data-driven high-reliability organizations

How do some organizations get it right nearly every time?



NASA Command Center



Wild Land Fire Fighting



Air Traffic Control Centers

Standard operating procedures (SOPs)

- Examples of SOPs in aviation**
- ❑ Checklists (100s of them)
 - ❑ Silent cockpits
 - ❑ Odd flight levels for eastbound
 - ❑ Even flight levels for westbound
 - ❑ Language (alpha, bravo, charlie)



People in high-reliability organizations are empowered to anticipate, recognize and respond to errors



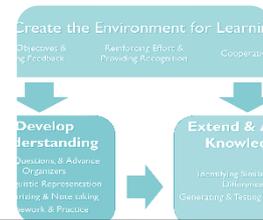
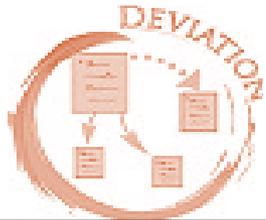




Developing a healthy relationship with data

Data through a dysfunctional <i>window</i>		Data in a high-performing <i>mirror</i>	
What it says about someone else	Wow, the kids really blew that!	What it says about me	Boy, I didn't teach that well.
What others should do	Call in the reading specialist!	What I should do	I'll have to change my approach.
How do we fix the data?	How many kids are on the bubble?	How do we fix the real problem?	We're not teaching XYZ skills.
How do we cover up our mistakes?	Who can we exempt from testing?	How do we learn from our mistakes?	Let's observe each other's classrooms to get better.

What Matters Most Improvement Pathways



Curricular pathways to success

<input type="checkbox"/> Misaligned or poorly implemented curricula	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum enacted but not engaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum adapted, yet not personalized	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal learning pathways being created
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Guarantee Challenging, Engaging & Intentional Instruction

<input type="checkbox"/> Weak or inconsistent teaching quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching consistent, but still mostly rudimentary	<input type="checkbox"/> Teaching is individualized, but limited in innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers collaborate to design engaging learning
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Whole-Child Student Supports

<input type="checkbox"/> Chaotic environment w/o student support	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe climate & student supports w/o expertise	<input type="checkbox"/> Students are supported, but not always inspired	<input type="checkbox"/> Students are persistent & passionate learners
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High-Performance School Cultures

<input type="checkbox"/> Dysfunction & mistrust in school culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Directive coaching with few shared decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer coaching supports precision w/o prescription	<input type="checkbox"/> Teachers anticipate & solve problems together
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Data-driven, High-reliability Systems

<input type="checkbox"/> No shared goals, data use or collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular, but not reflective, use of data	<input type="checkbox"/> Data drives teaching, but innovations are isolated	<input type="checkbox"/> Innovations are shared, studied & scaled up
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School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



Curriculum
isn't aligned!



School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



Curriculum
isn't enacted!

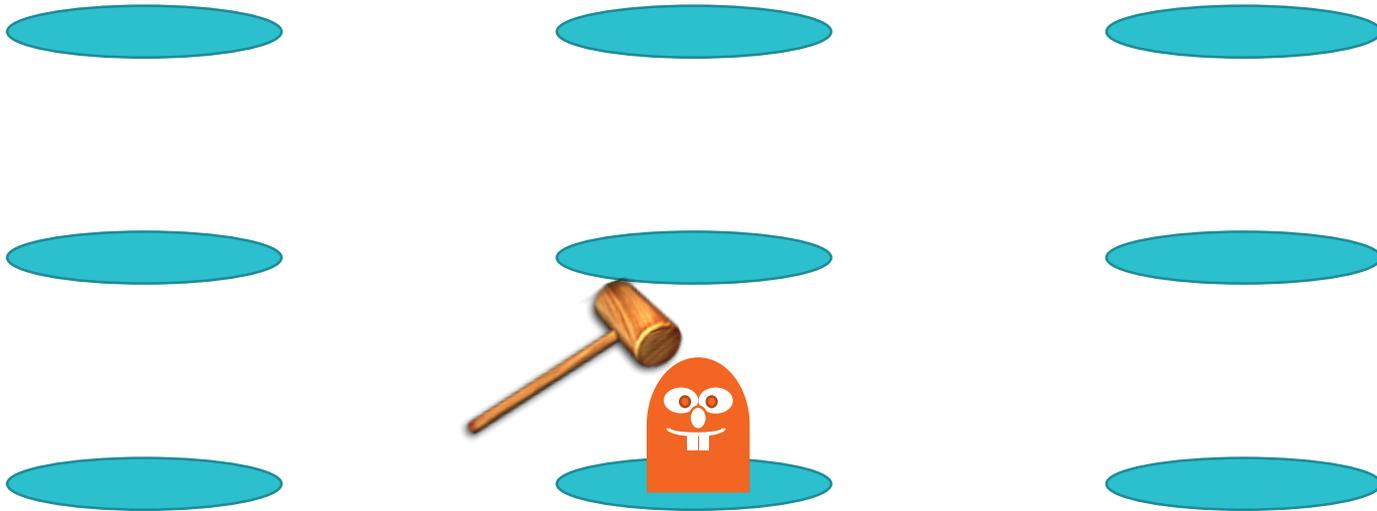
School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



Teachers need
new skills!



School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



We need to
create time to
peer coach!

School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



We don't like
being
observed!



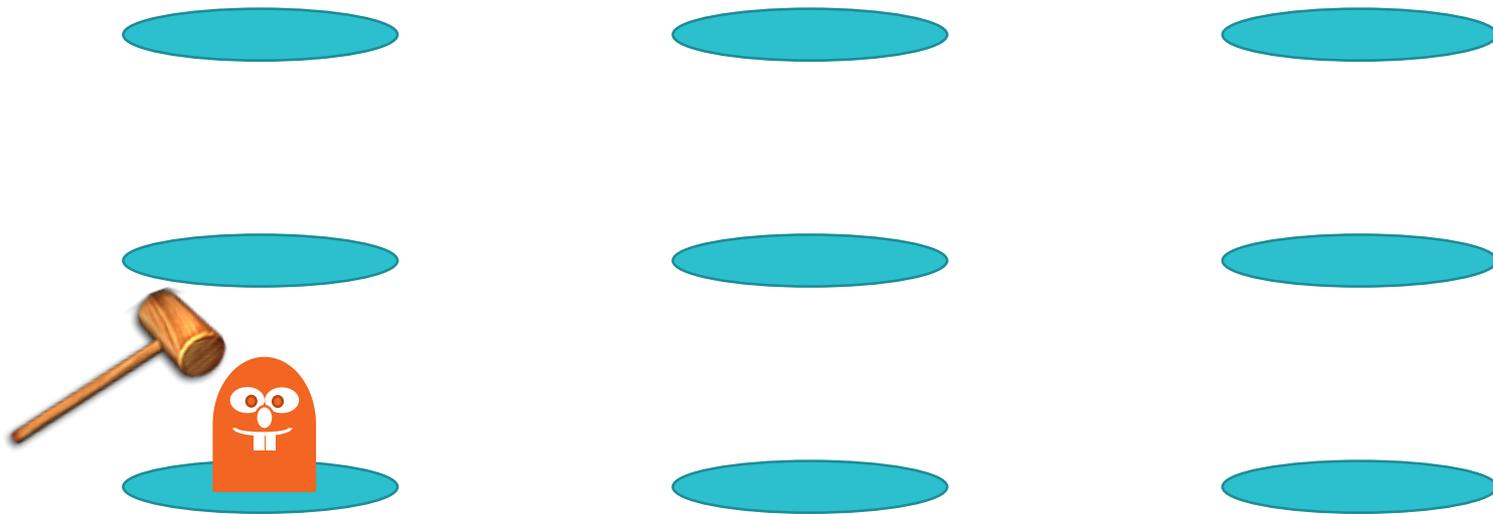
School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



Students need
help!



School Improvement Whack-a-Mole



Parent's don't
get what we're
doing!

Could we anticipate the “moles” beforehand?



Technical solutions



Collegial learning



Student supports



Expertise needed



School culture



Parent & family engagement

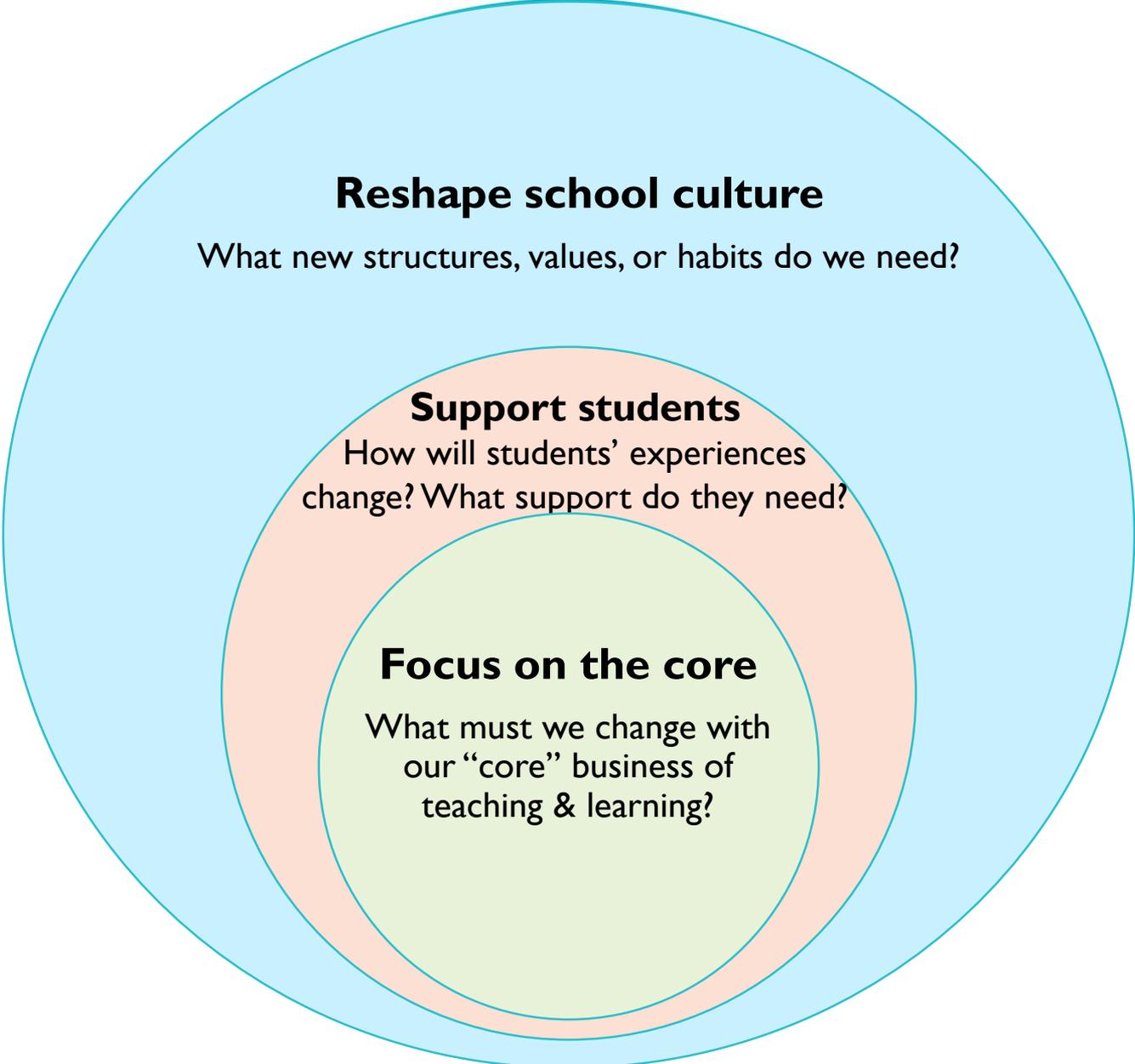


Resource (time) allocation



Consistency of implementation

Everything is connected



Reshape school culture

What new structures, values, or habits do we need?

Support students

How will students' experiences change? What support do they need?

Focus on the core

What must we change with our "core" business of teaching & learning?



Thank You

Contact me

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Stay connected



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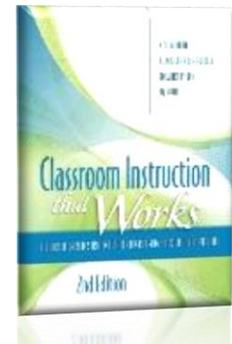
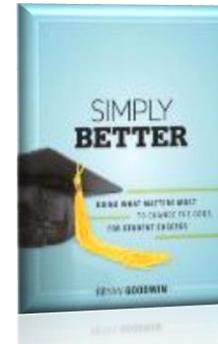
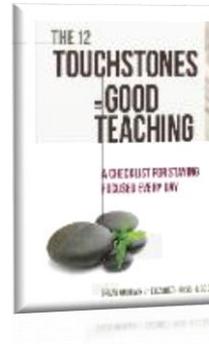
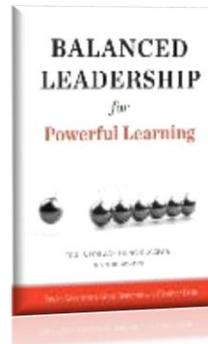


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