

The Role of Proactive and Adaptive Leadership in the Adoption and Implementation of the Common Core State Standards in Elementary Schools

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THE ESPOUSED POLICY THEORY OF ACTION: SIMPLIFIED



**Three Disruptive Innovations:
CCSS, APPR, & DDI**

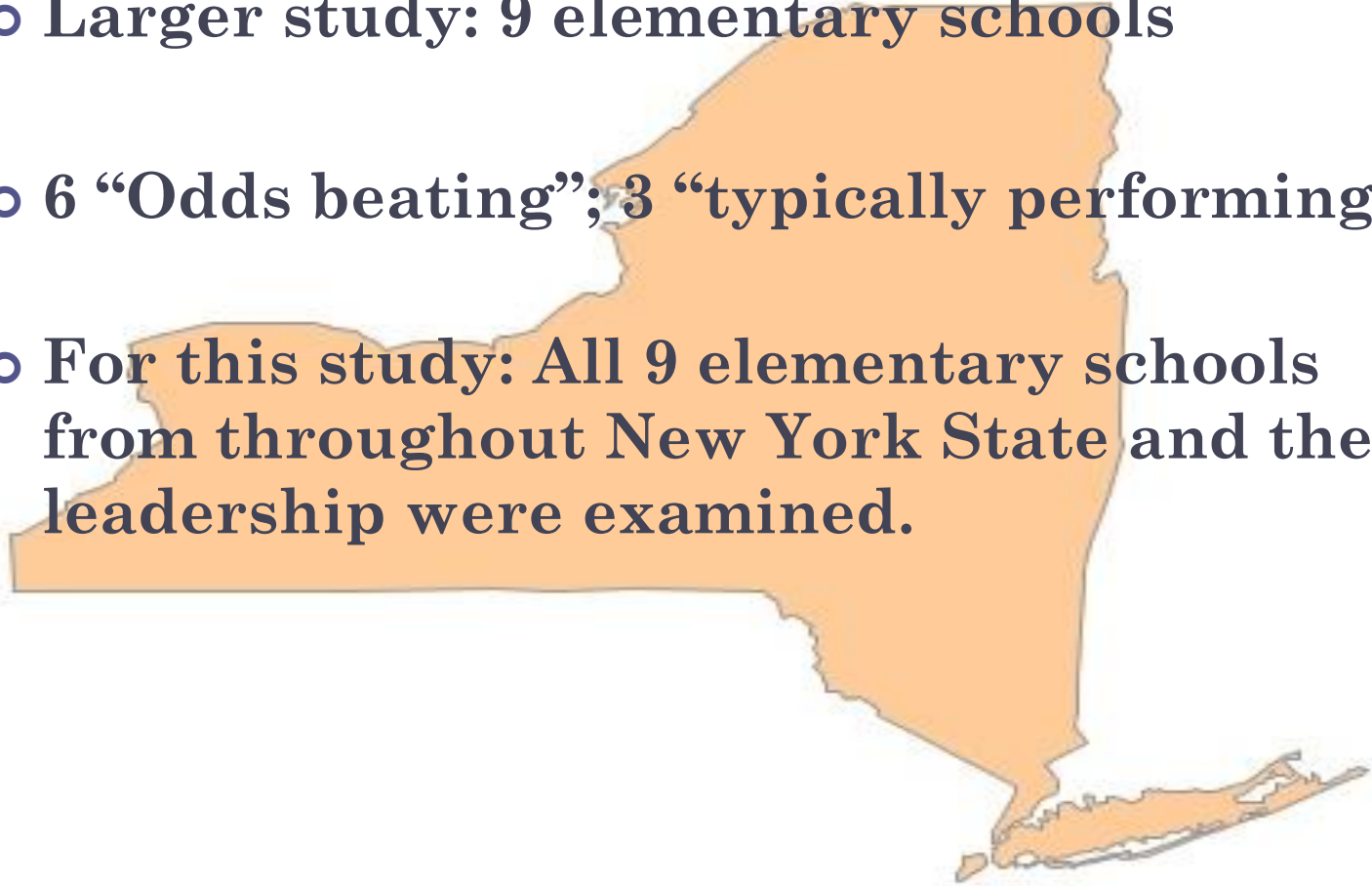
Implementation Moves from District Offices to Schools & Results in Performance Adaptations

Students Gain Equitable Access to Teachers, Learning Resources & Gain Important Knowledge

More College- and Career-ready Students Graduate from High School with Demonstrated Competencies

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

- **Larger study: 9 elementary schools**
- **6 “Odds beating”; 3 “typically performing”**
- **For this study: All 9 elementary schools from throughout New York State and their leadership were examined.**



THE SCHOOLS

Odds-Beating	% Economically Disadvantaged Students	% White Students
Eagle Bluff	>43%	>89%
Spring Creek	18-43%	>89%
Starling Springs	18-43%	<73%
Yellow Valley	>43%	<73%
Bay City	>43%	<73%
Goliad	>43%	<73%
Typically Performing		
Wolf Creek	18-43%	>89%
Sun Hollow	18-43%	73-89%
Paige City	>43%	73-89%



From Management to Leadership

(Johnson, Marietta, Higgins, Mapp,
& Grossman, 2015, Knapp,
Copland, Honig, Plecki, & Portin,
2014)

Adaptive Leadership

(Hargreaves & Fink, 2005; Heifetz,
Grashow, & Linsky, 2009; Honig &
Hatch, 2004; Spillane, 2013)

Framing This Study

Bridging, Buffering, and Brokering Leadership Strategies

(Elmore, 2000; Honig & Hatch,
2004)

Proactive Leadership

(Weiner, 2009)



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

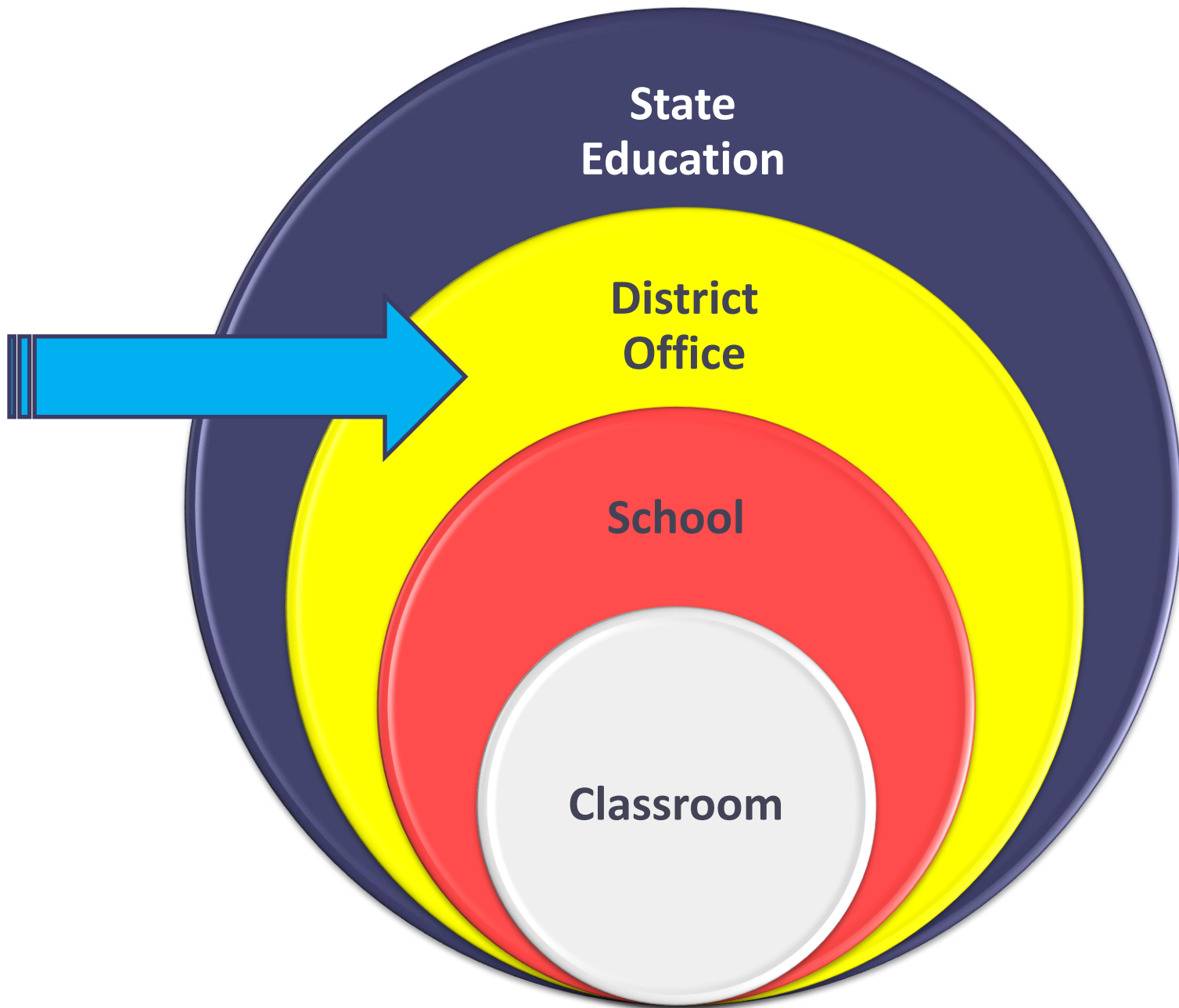
1. Do district level leaders for odds-beating elementary schools engage in proactive and adaptive leadership?
2. Do they rely on bridging, buffering, and brokering strategies? If so, under what conditions and toward what ends?



METHODS

- Multiple Case Study Design
 - Two-day site visits
 - Larger study included interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, surveys, interpretive memos, documentary evidence, case studies and member checking
 - This Study: Semi-structured interviews
- District leadership with responsibilities for Common Core State Standards implementation
- Analysis using NVivo 10, coding by a priori categories, identification of patterns





FINDINGS

1. District leaders of odds-beating schools demonstrated both proactive and adaptive leadership
2. Odds-beating district leaders employed
 - a) Bridging Strategies
 - b) Buffering Strategies
 - c) Brokering Strategies



DISTRICT LEADERS ARE PROACTIVE

- Adoption of CCSS in their district prior to mandate
 - Anticipated innovations
 - Developed organizational capacity for implementation- Professional development and organizational restructuring

“We were doing those standards before they were called the Common Core...We just didn’t know it was Common Core then. We made the shift long before many districts [in] the region and the state did because we already talked about doing that kind of work.”

– Starling Springs Superintendent



BRIDGING, BUFFERING, BROKERING

School/District	District Leadership
Yellow Valley- OB	B-B-B
Bay City- OB	B-B-B
Eagle Bluff- OB	B-B-B
Starling Springs- OB	B-B-B
Spring Creek-OB	B-B-B
Goliad- OB	B-B-B
Wolf Creek- Typical	Asst Supt -Bridge
Paige City- Typical	Asst Supt- Broker, inconsistent bridging
Sun Hollow- Typical	None evident

BRIDGING STRATEGIES

- Building trust through communication
- Using district resources creatively
- Adapting, not adopting, Common Core State Standards

“We sit down with teacher groups, classroom teachers and with our instructional leaders who are the administrators within the buildings and we ask them what’s working, what isn’t, what are the issues? What are you seeing? And we try to filter that up and adjust where we can. ... we still share that vision learning for all whatever it takes for the most part. It’s just working through it that’s making it a big challenge.” -

Bay City Superintendent



BUFFERING STRATEGIES

- Protecting the Instructional Core
- Flexible CCSS implementation timetables

“So what I said to the teachers was, what do you need, how much time do you need, how do you want to go about this? In other words, do you want release time, work after school, do you want to focus it just on the summer because you've got kids and there's always this balance of how much time can people take out of their classroom and still feel like they're doing their work. I don't dictate how that's to be done, I said the CCLS are here, let's take a look at these and see where are we in terms of what we need to be doing and where are the gaps. So they started looking at that and made the adjustments in the curriculum.”

- Eagle Bluff District Leader



BROKERING STRATEGIES

- Partnerships with other organizations
- Using shared language to coordinate and align efforts

“I've just started working with the board on reviewing and reflecting on the district vision, mission, belief and goals... it's done in tandem with what I call our teacher leadership team, which is made up of all of the administrators and teacher leaders who represent all of our curriculum areas, Pre-K through 12. And then they work with their departments and in their buildings. So what that does is get it deep into the school and everybody gets to inform it as well as react and reflect on what the other groups are doing, so it really does become part of the conversation that's happening in the district.”

- Eagle Bluff Superintendent



CONCLUSION

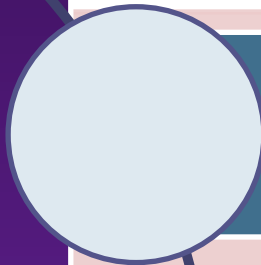
- District leaders relied on both proactive and adaptive leadership to create innovation readiness and capacity
- Leaders employed bridging, buffering and brokering strategies contingently to meet district needs

**District
Leaders
are
proactive
and
adaptive**

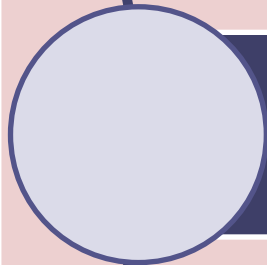
Build Capacity

Develop
Competency

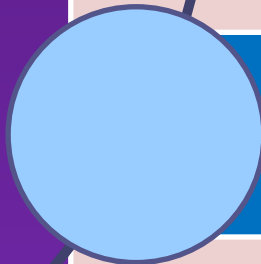
Responsive to
Needs



Bridging Strategies



Buffering Strategies



Brokering Strategies

**FIRST ORDER
CHANGE**



Thank You!

**This presentation and abstract can
be downloaded at:**

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