

BEATING THE ODDS WITH POVERTY- CHALLENGED YOUTH: SCHOOLS GETTING BETTER AT GETTING BETTER

KRISTEN CAMPBELL WILCOX
& HAL A. LAWSON
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

CASDA, RENSSELAER NY, FEBRUARY 1, 2017



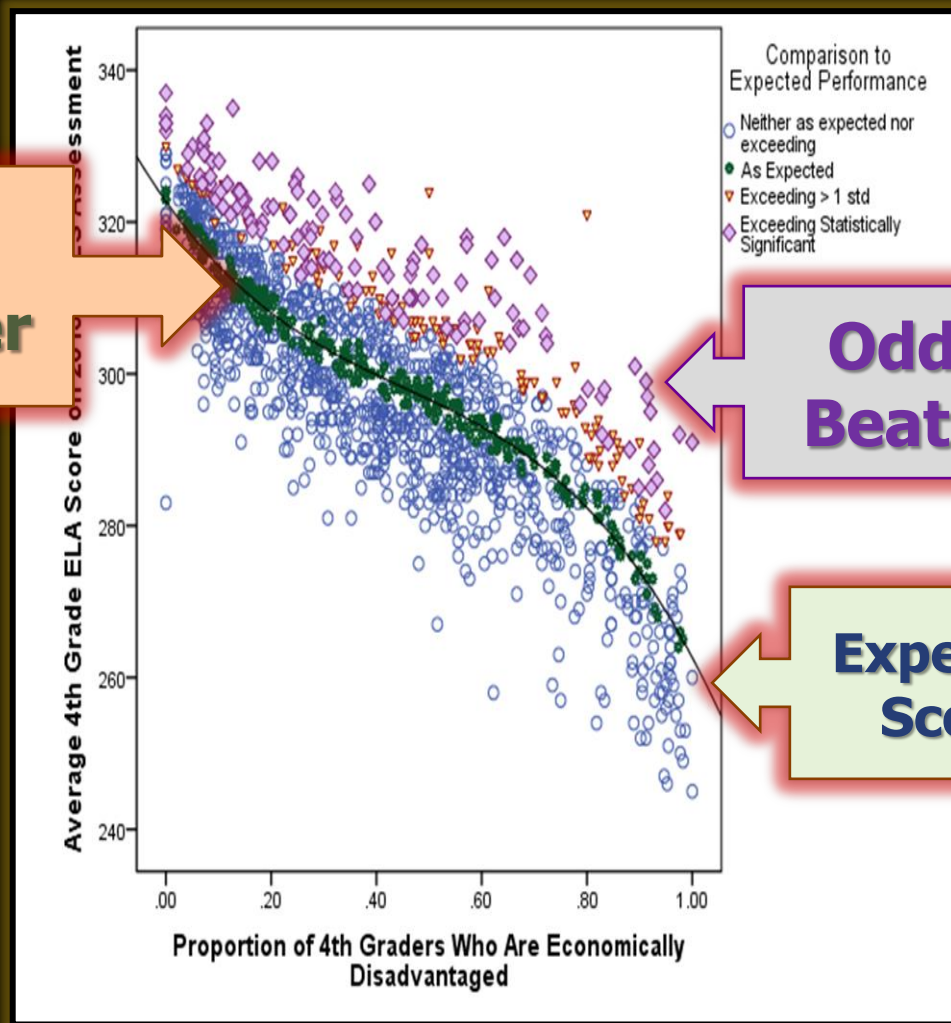
UNIVERSITY
AT ALBANY

State University of New York

THE STUDY DESIGN

- A mixed-method multiple case study of 18 elementary and middle schools
- “odds-beating” schools (n=12): those with above expected CCSS performance based upon their demographic characteristics
- “typically performing” schools (n=6): those with expected CCSS performance based upon their demographic characteristics

Typical Performer



Odds Beater

Expected Score

Odds-Beating Schools		School Pseudonym	Grade Span	% Economic Disadvantage	% White	% ELL	Average z Residual Range ¹
Rural	Elementary	Eagle Bluff ²	K-6	50	100	0	1.00-1.49
		Spring Creek	K-6	55 ³	90	0	1.50-1.99
	Middle	Ruby	6-8	50	95	0	2.00<
		Roaring Gap	6-8	40	65	0	1.50-1.99
Suburban	Elementary	Starling Springs	K-5	30	50	15	2.00<
		Yellow Valley	K-5	80	65	5	1.50-1.99
	Middle	Hutch Hill	6-8	20	90	0	<1.00
		Larabee	5-8	5	85	0	2.00<
Large Suburban/Urban	Elementary	Bay City	K-6	100	40	0	1.50-1.99
		Goliad	K-6	60	20	15	1.00-1.49
	Middle	Julesberg	6-8	35	50	5	1.00-1.50
		Sage City	6-8	60	35	15	<1.00
Typically Performing Schools							
Rural	Elementary	Wolf Creek	K-6	35	95	0	-0.20-0.00
	Middle	Tarelton	6-8	40	100	0	0.00-0.20
Suburban	Elementary	Sun Hollow	K-6	40	90	0	0.00-0.20
	Middle	Locus Glen	6-8	30	90	0	-0.20-0.00
Large Suburban/Urban	Elementary	Paige City	K-5	55	80	5	0.00-0.20
	Middle	Silver City	6-8	55	60	0	0.00-0.20
Average for New York				50	48	8	

¹ Ranges and rounding of numerical data are provided to ensure anonymity.

² All school and district names are pseudonyms

³ Schools highlighted are those with greater poverty, ethnic and/or linguistic diversity than the state average. Percentages for each subgroup are not provided as to minimize the possibility of deductive disclosure of any school or participant.

DATA SOURCES

5

District-Level Interviews

- Superintendent Interview
- Asst. Super for Curriculum & Instruction Interview
- Director of Special Education
- Community Outreach Coordinator
- Director of Assessment
- Director of Professional Development
- Director of ESL/Bilingual Ed
- Director of Student Services

School-Level Interviews and Focus Groups

- Principal Interview
- Building Leadership Team Focus Group
- **Mainstream Content Teacher Focus Group**
- Support Staff Focus Group (School Psychologist, Social Worker, Nurse)
- **ESL Teacher Interview (or Focus Group upon request)**
- **Special Education Interview (or Focus Group upon request)**
- Instructional Coach/Master Teacher Interview
- Individual Mainstream Teacher Debrief Interview

Other Data Sources

- Interpretive Memo
- Classroom observation protocol ELA Part 1
- Classroom observation protocol Math Part 1
- Classroom observation Part 2
- Documents
- Surveys:
 - (1) Of all Staff
 - (2) Of teachers of math and English Language Arts

- NYKids Home
- About Us
- Research Results
- Find Your School
- Best Practice Frameworks
- Publications and Presentations
- Common Core Research
- COMPASS Professional Development
- Special Interest Topics



Home / Common Core Research

Common Core Research

NYKids researchers teamed up with other School of Education faculty to complete research on Odds-Beating Schools and the Common Core in 2014-2015.

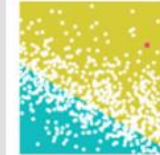
News!

New book on the Common Core Implementation Study, [click here](#).

"Odds-Beating Schools in the Common Core Era," a research report by Dr. Kristen Wilcox and the U-Albany team, cited in the New York Common Core Task Force Report, December 2015 (page23).

Know Your Schools - for NY Kids
School of Education B9
University at Albany
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222
518-442-5171

facebook



Name:
Know Your Schools-
For NY Kids
Status:
Results from the
NYKids Study of

<http://www.albany.edu/nykids/>

University at Albany

Research Brief

Practices and Processes of Odds-Beating Schools: Examples from Representative Cases

Introduction

A research team at the University at Albany School of Education recently com-

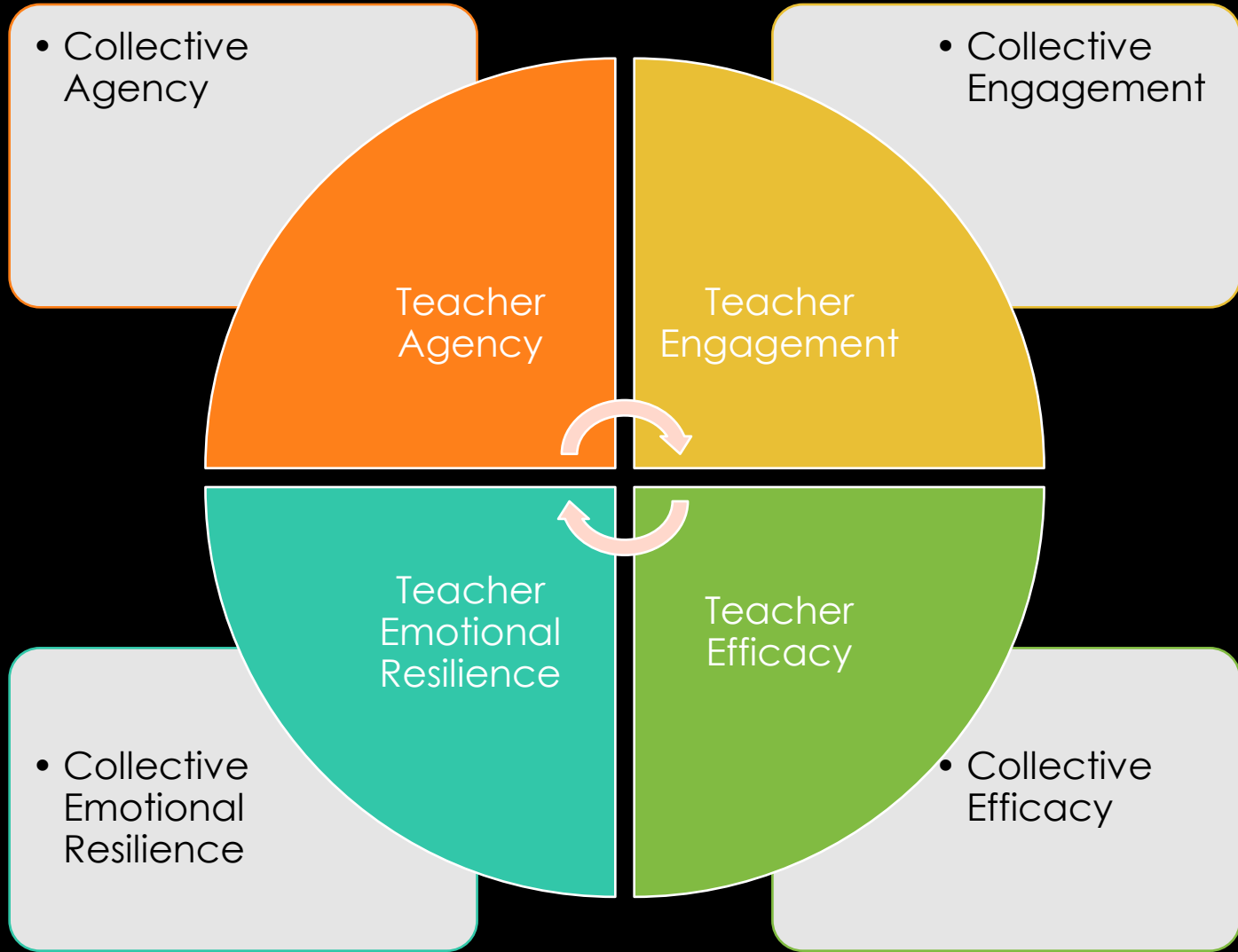
What practices and processes distinguish odds-beating elementary and middle schools from more typically performing but

THIS ANALYSIS

1. How do teachers describe their experiences implementing the Common Core State Standards?
2. How do teachers describe their experiences with the Annual Professional Performance Review system?
3. How do teachers describe supports for their adjustment to the CCSS, APPR, and DDI innovations?

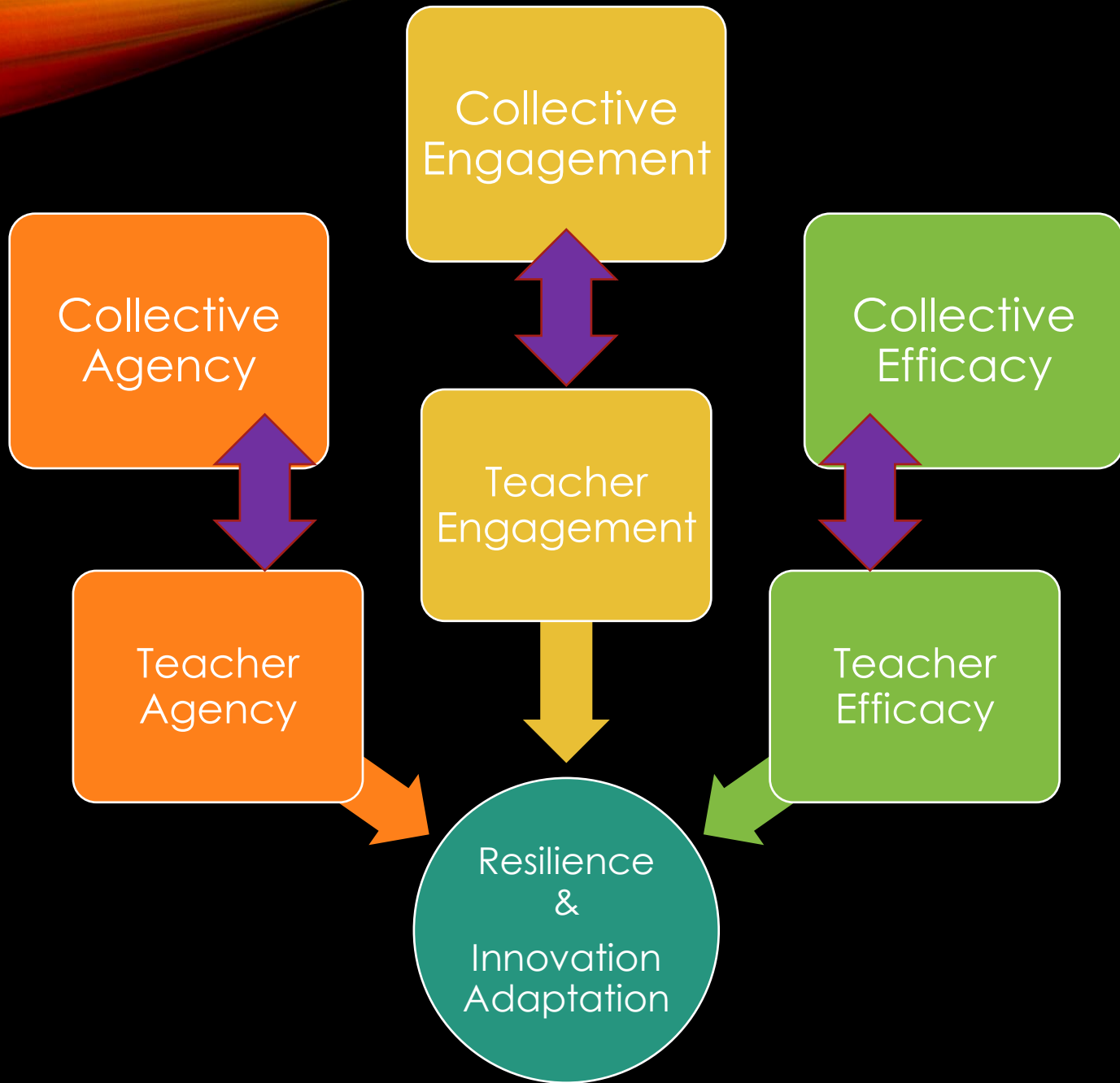
FRAMING

- The performance was shaped by the growing attention being paid to inter-school differences in teachers' orientations and actions during times of rapid, dramatic innovation implementation
- We provide a new, four-component framework: **teacher agency, efficacy, engagement and resilience**
- All four can be brought to bear on the study of individuals and also groups of teachers



ROLES

- Researcher: Female. White. Age 40 to 49 years. Graduate degree
- Narrator: No distinguishing characteristics
- Odds-beating School Teachers (Their voices in italics)
 - Nancy teaches in a low poverty and low diversity school
 - John teaches in a low poverty and low diversity school
 - *Angelica teaches in a high poverty school*
 - *Kishmar teaches in a high poverty and high diversity school*
- Typically performing School Teachers (Their voices in regular font)
 - Sarah teaches in a low poverty and low diversity school
 - Chen teaches in a low poverty and low diversity school
 - *Kathleen teaches in a high poverty school*



District Office & School Leaders' Implementation Strategy

Make It Happen:

Top-down compliance directives with scripted protocols, strict implementation timetable and fidelity standards, tight monitoring,
And narrow training

Help It Happen:

Implementation entails mutual adaptation, and it is facilitated by responsive technical assistance, social supports, and needed resources, together with organizational learning mechanisms

Let It Happen:

Loosely-configured implementation plan with variable guidance and monitoring, technical assistance, social supports, and resources

Teachers' and Other Front-line Professionals' Motivations for Implementation and Performance Adaptation

Have-to Motives:

Front-line professionals feel like Implementation puppets, not expert professionals with discretion

Want-to Motives:

Front-line professionals value the innovation and are committed to adapt, learn, and improve as they implement it

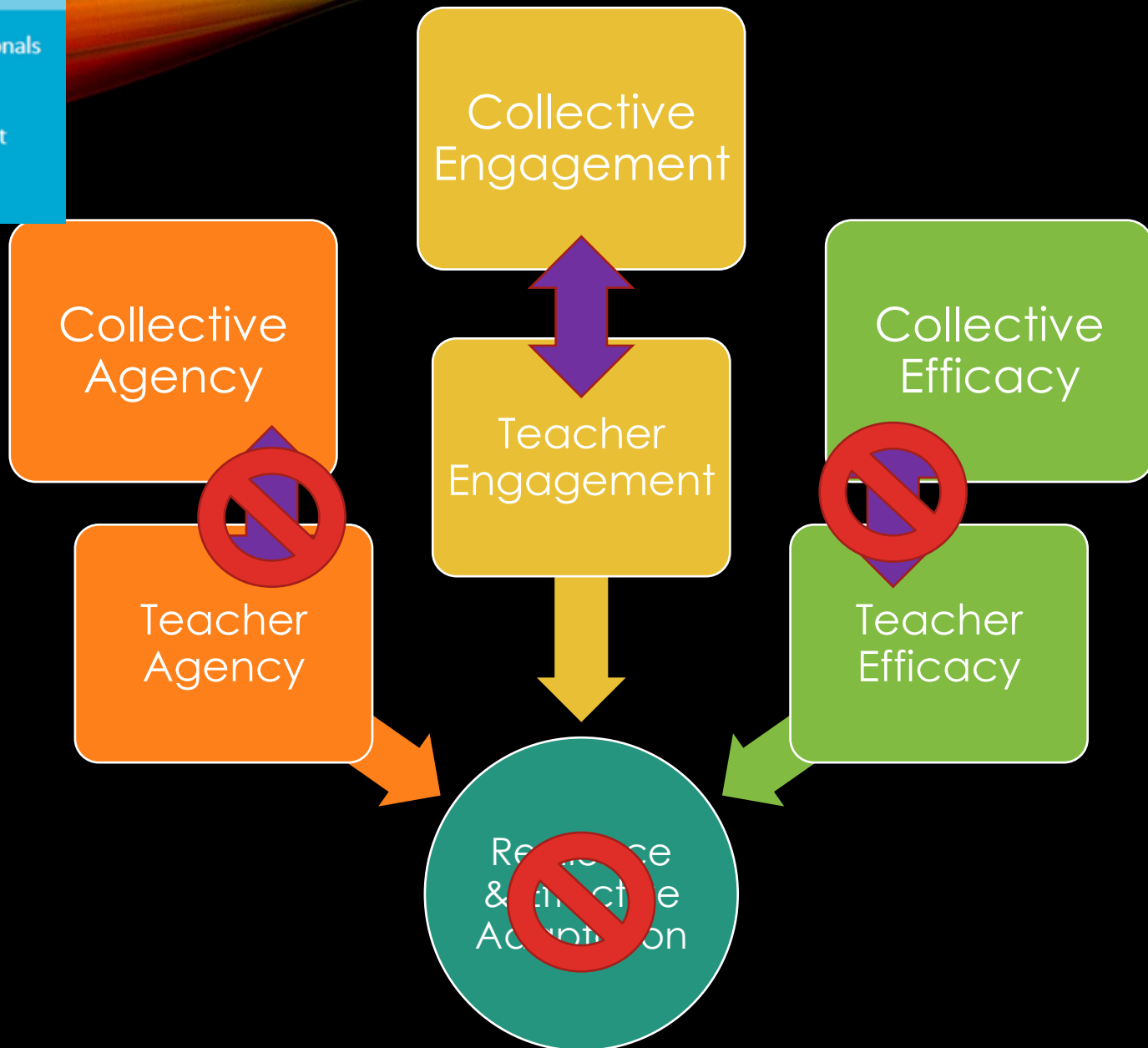
Ought-to Motives:

Front-line professionals feel a sense of obligation, but "their hearts aren't in it," resulting in variable implementation

Have-to Motives:

Front-line professionals
feel like
Implementation
puppets, not expert
professionals with
discretion

14



Have-to Motives:

Front-line professionals
feel like
Implementation
puppets, not expert
professionals with
discretion

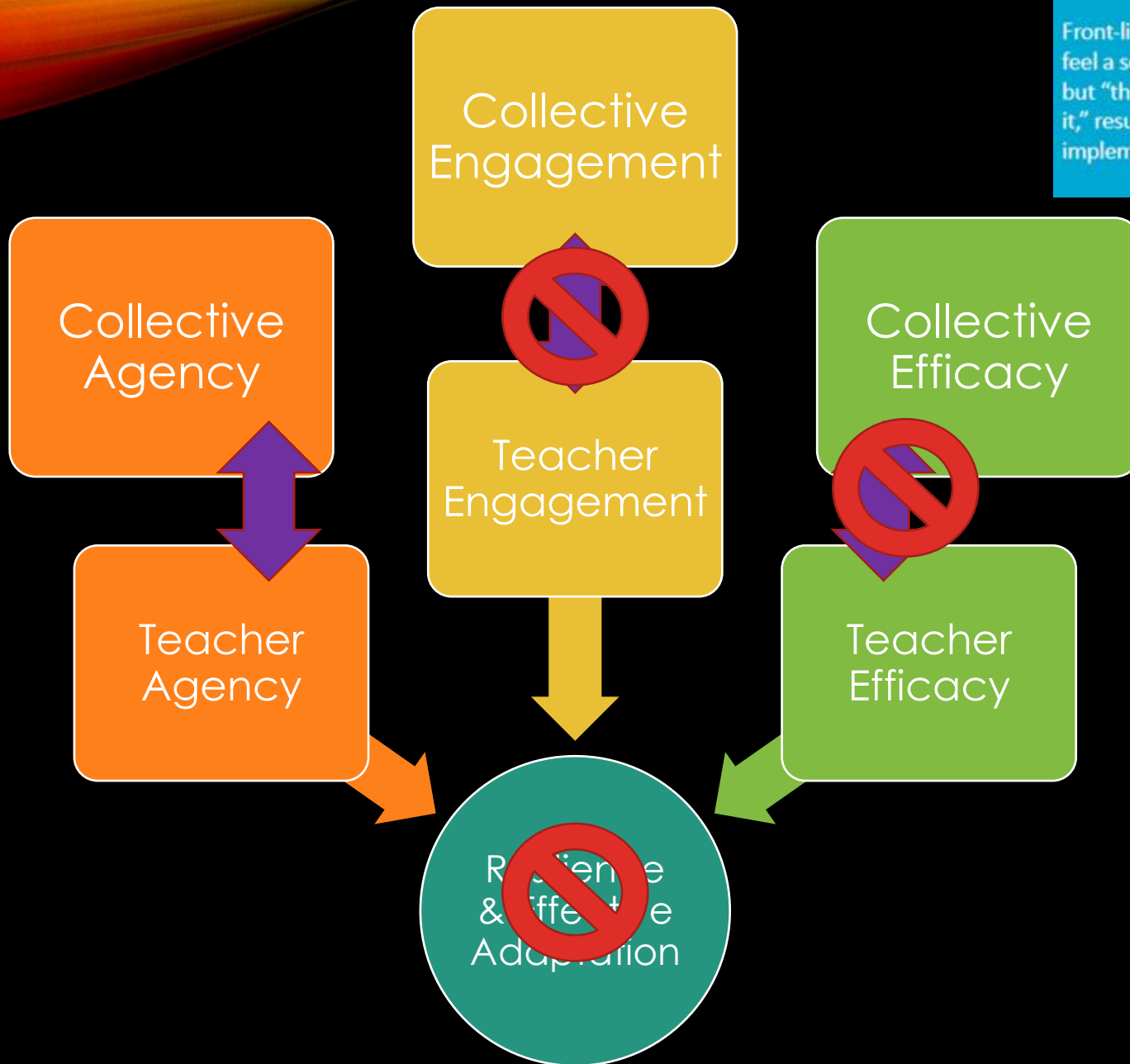
15

Collective
Agency

Teacher
Agency

. There doesn't seem to be a lot of "hey I know you're a good teacher and I am going to let you do what you do best, because we hired you and we believe in you." And incrementally control was taken away from us. First it had to be you're teaching the same thing at the same time. Now we have to teach the modules. And now our grade books have to look identical. It's just one more thing in a litany of ways to take control away from us. I think it makes us feel devalued. - Chen

Front-line professionals feel a sense of obligation, but "their hearts aren't in it," resulting in variable implementation



Ought-to Motives:

17

Front-line professionals feel a sense of obligation, but "their hearts aren't in it," resulting in variable implementation

Well, I think innovation went out when the modules came in. - Sarah

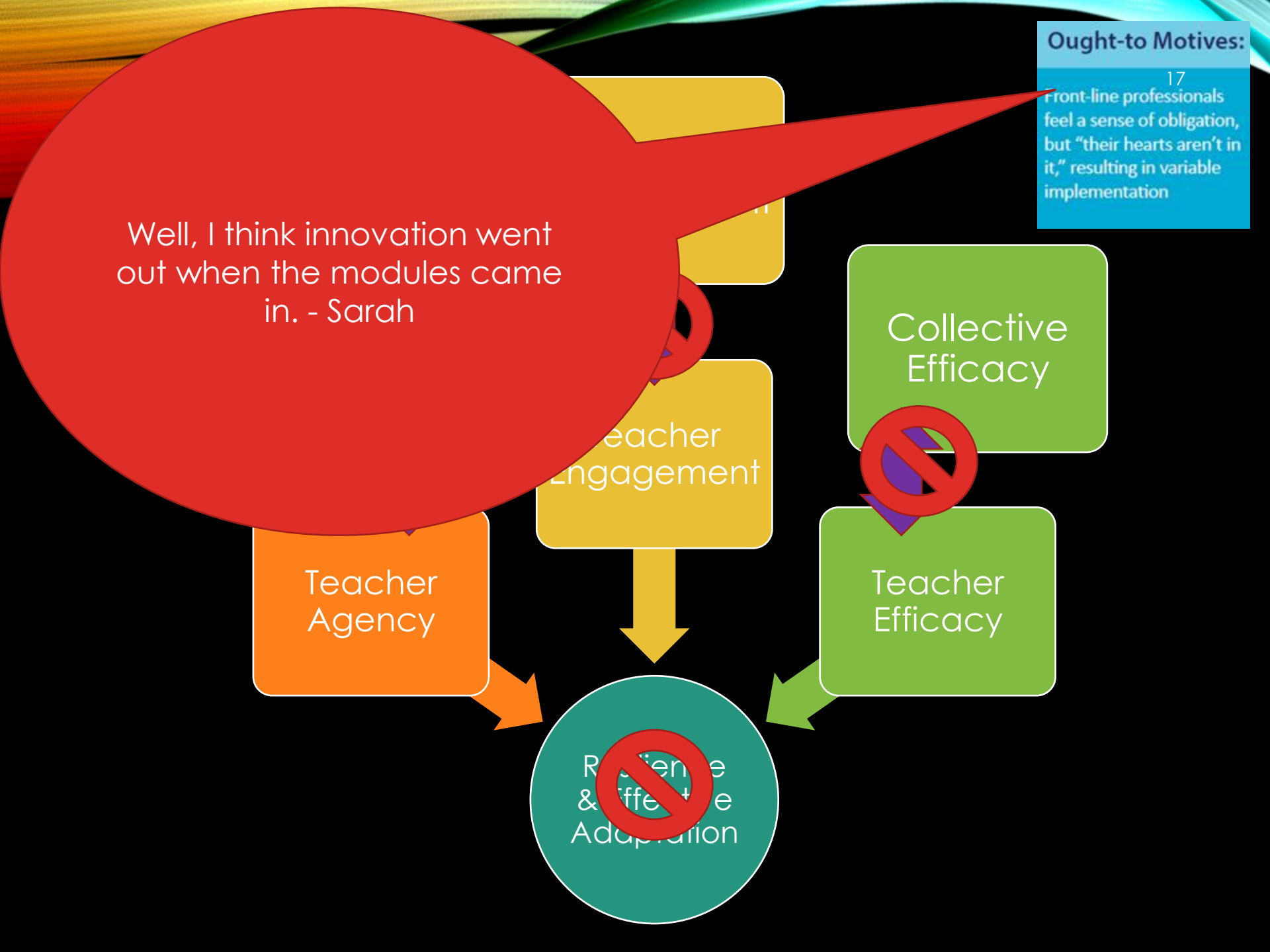
Teacher Agency

Teacher Engagement

Collective Efficacy

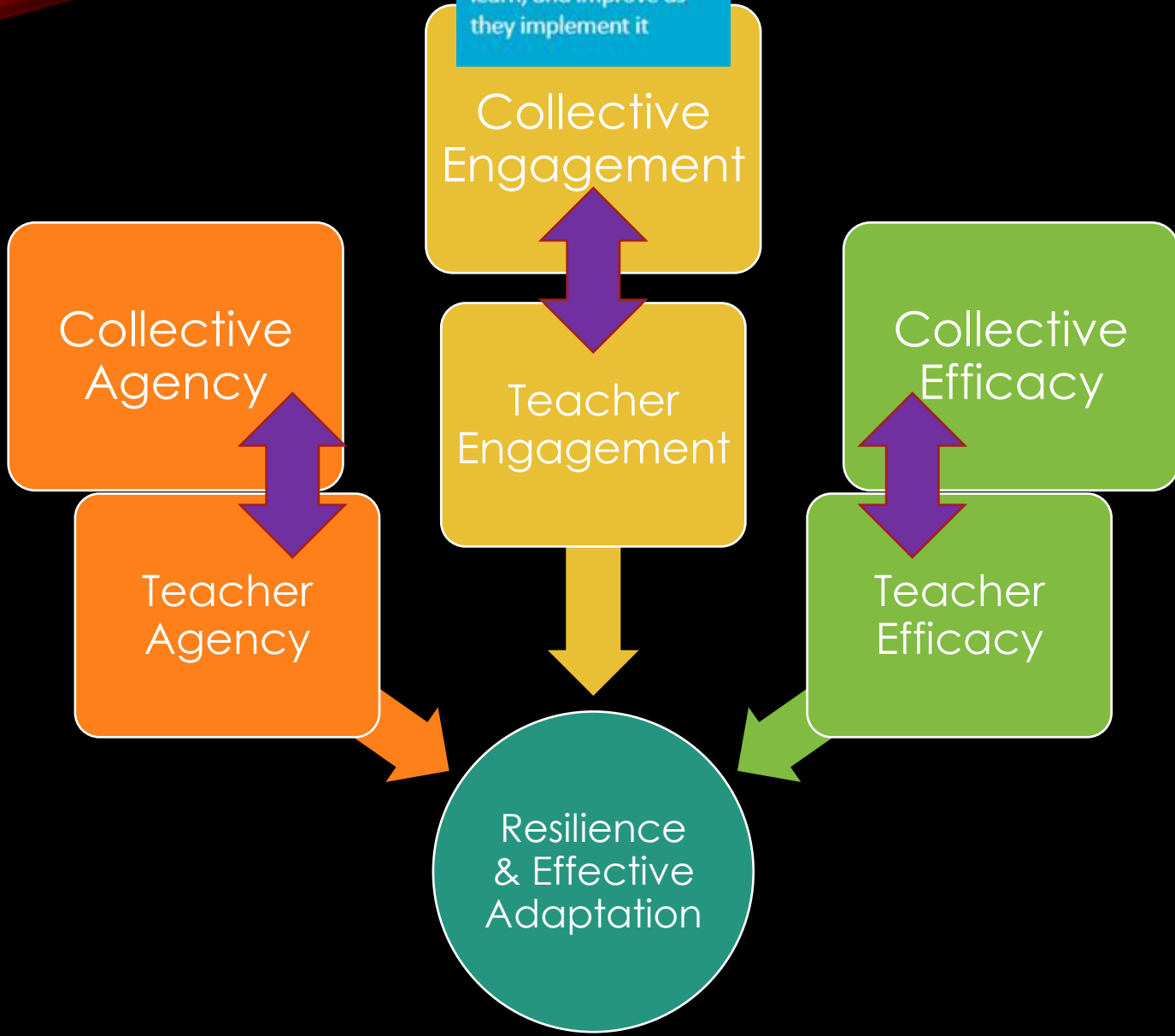
Teacher Efficacy

Resilience & Effective Adaptation



Want-to Motives:

Front-line professionals value the innovation and are committed to adapt, learn, and improve as they implement it



Want-to Motives:

Front-line professionals value the innovation and are committed to adapt, learn, and improve as they implement it

Collective Engagement



Teacher Engagement

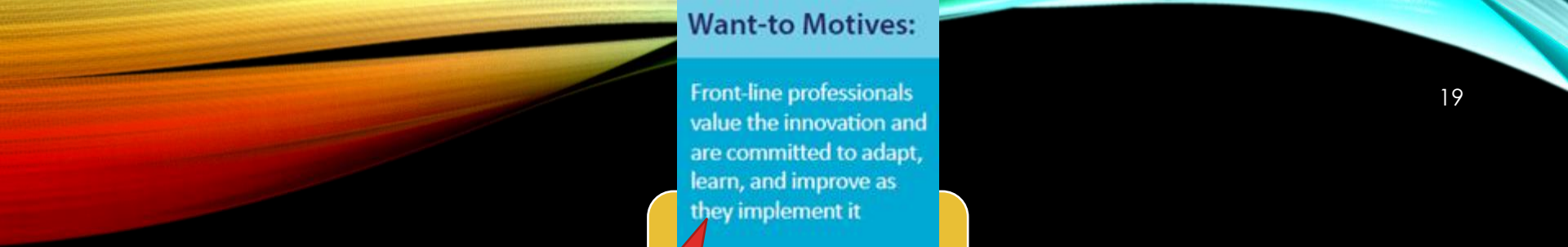
Collective Efficacy



Teacher Efficacy

Resilience & Effective Adaptation

A number is not going to affect me because we get a score for the whole school. And anyway, I know I'm a good teacher. I know that everyone around this table meets their kids' needs and is dedicated. - Kishmar



TURN AND TALK

Small Group:

- What resonates with you about this performance?
- What kinds of challenges do you face in your own setting with regard to teacher agency, efficacy, engagement, and resilience?
- How have you surmounted those challenges?

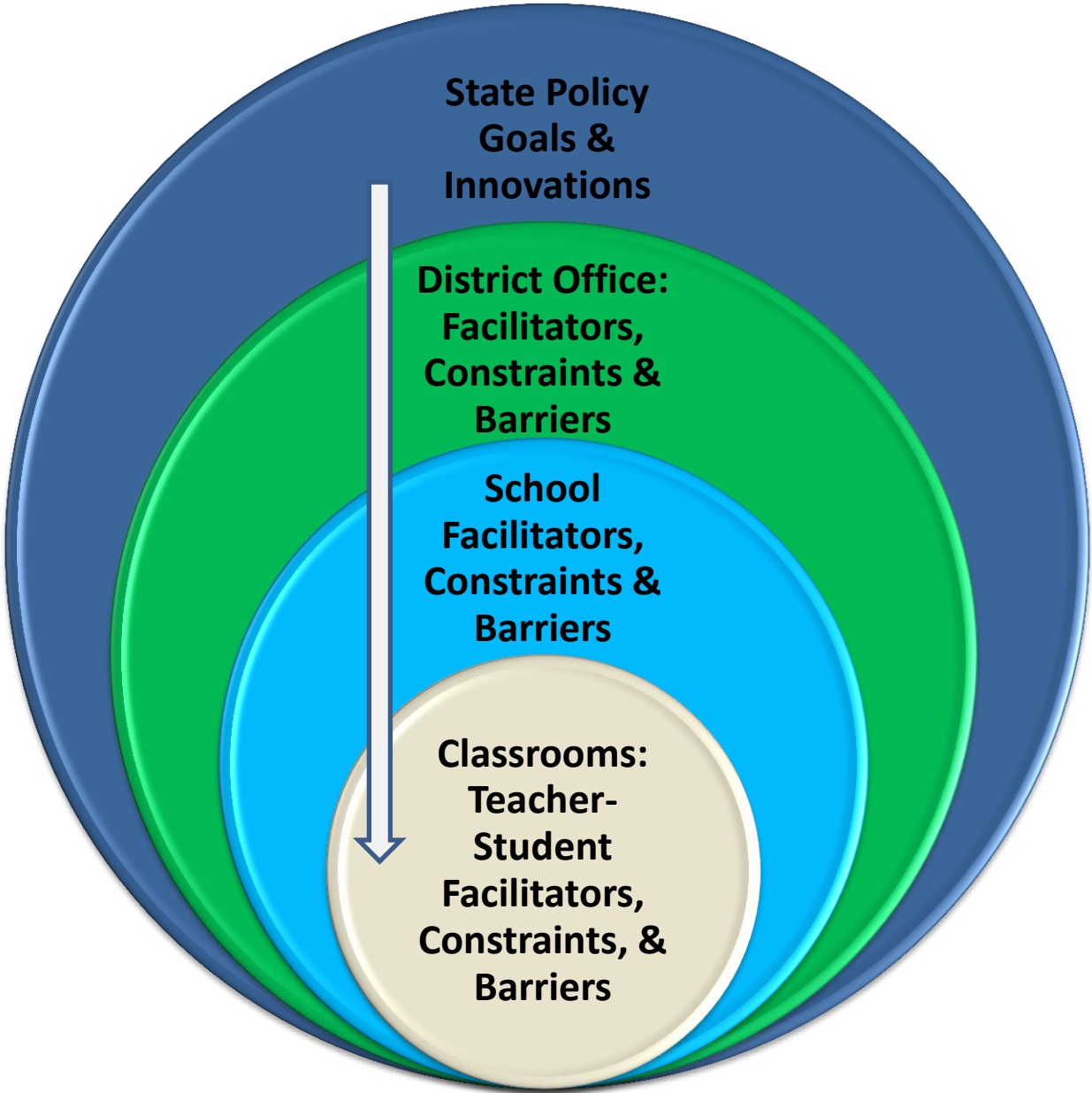
Whole group: Key take-aways

From School Reform to Innovative Designs

- What forces, factors, and actors explain “innovation-ready and –able district offices and schools?”
- Dual focus: **Workforce competencies** and **organizational capacities** (“absorptive capacity”)
- The shift from management (“administrator”) to leadership (“leaders”)
- With Ronald Heifetz, **adaptive leadership also is an organizational function**: “Distributed Leadership”
- The innovation implementation strategy, especially leadership, determines what gets implemented, for how long, and with side-effects & indicators of future needs

<p>District Office & School Leaders' Implementation Strategy</p>	<p>Make It Happen:</p>	<p>Help It Happen:</p>	<p>Let It Happen:</p>
	<p>Top-down compliance directives with scripted protocols, strict implementation timetable and fidelity standards, tight monitoring, And narrow training</p>	<p>Implementation entails mutual adaptation, and it is facilitated by responsive technical assistance, social supports, and needed resources, together with organizational learning mechanisms</p>	<p>Loosely-configured implementation plan with variable guidance and monitoring, technical assistance, social supports, and resources</p>
<p>Teachers' and Other Front-line Professionals' Motivations for Implementation and Performance Adaptation</p>	<p>Have-to Motives:</p>	<p>Want-to Motives:</p>	<p>Ought-to Motives:</p>
	<p>Front-line professionals feel like Implementation puppets, not expert professionals with discretion</p>	<p>Front-line professionals value the innovation and are committed to adapt, learn, and improve as they implement it</p>	<p>Front-line professionals feel a sense of obligation, but "their hearts aren't in it," resulting in variable implementation</p>

The Innovation Implementation Journey



What Happens at the Boundaries as Innovations Travel?

- **Buffering Mechanisms:** e.g., slow it down; reduce demands; “let people off the hook” for the time being; develop conflict prevention & resolution strategies
- **Brokering Mechanisms:** e.g., “Cutting deals” with principals, teachers, district central office leaders, unions
- **Bridging Mechanisms:** e.g., Connecting CCSS to DDI & also to other innovations; communications with parents
- **Filtering Mechanisms:** e.g., adjusting the innovation(s) to fit rural schools & communities; adaptations to fit local features such as education workforce competency
- **Learning/Continuous Improvement Mechanisms:** e.g., Craft coherence with bottom-up & top-down strategies; develop & adjust professional development resources
- **Innovation Incubation Mechanisms:** e.g., CCSS, APPR, DDI stimulate and serve as catalysts for companion innovations

Blending Improvement Science with Systems Thinking

- From systems thinking:
 - Every innovation depends on a system for adult learning
 - Adult learning (and professional development) should be grounded in people's "mental models" for their roles, relationships, responsibilities, & desirable student outcomes
 - Comparative advantage: "What's new, different and better with the CCSS, DDI, & APPR; and what does it all mean for me & my colleagues?"
- From improvement science:
 - See the system that produces the current outcomes
 - Anchor practice improvement in disciplined inquiry
 - Variation in performance is the core problem to address
 - The context matters.

Figure 1. Antecedents & Co-Requisites

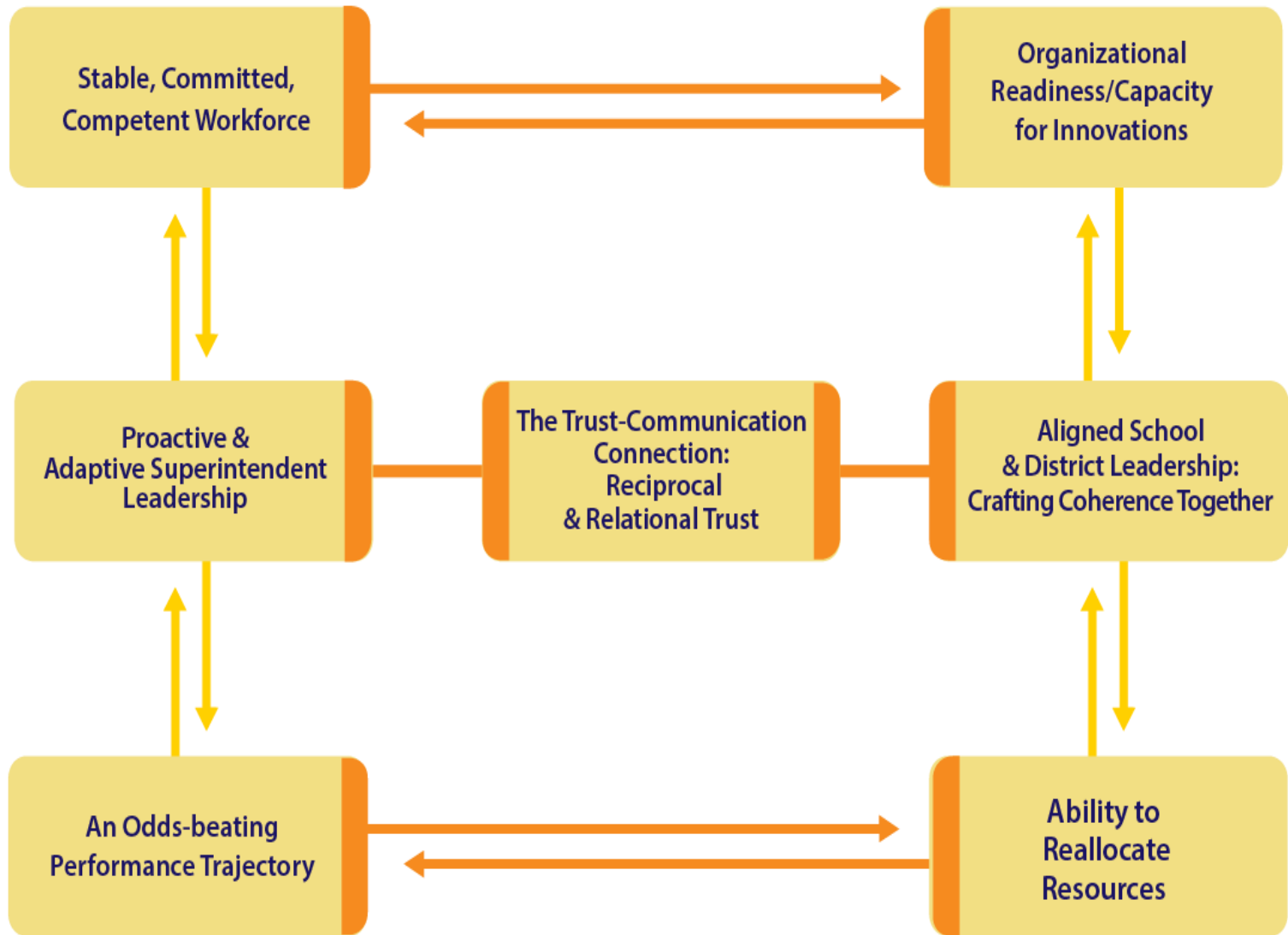


Figure 2. Learning-Focused Implementation Leadership



Figure 3. Drilling Deeper in Odds-Beating Schools

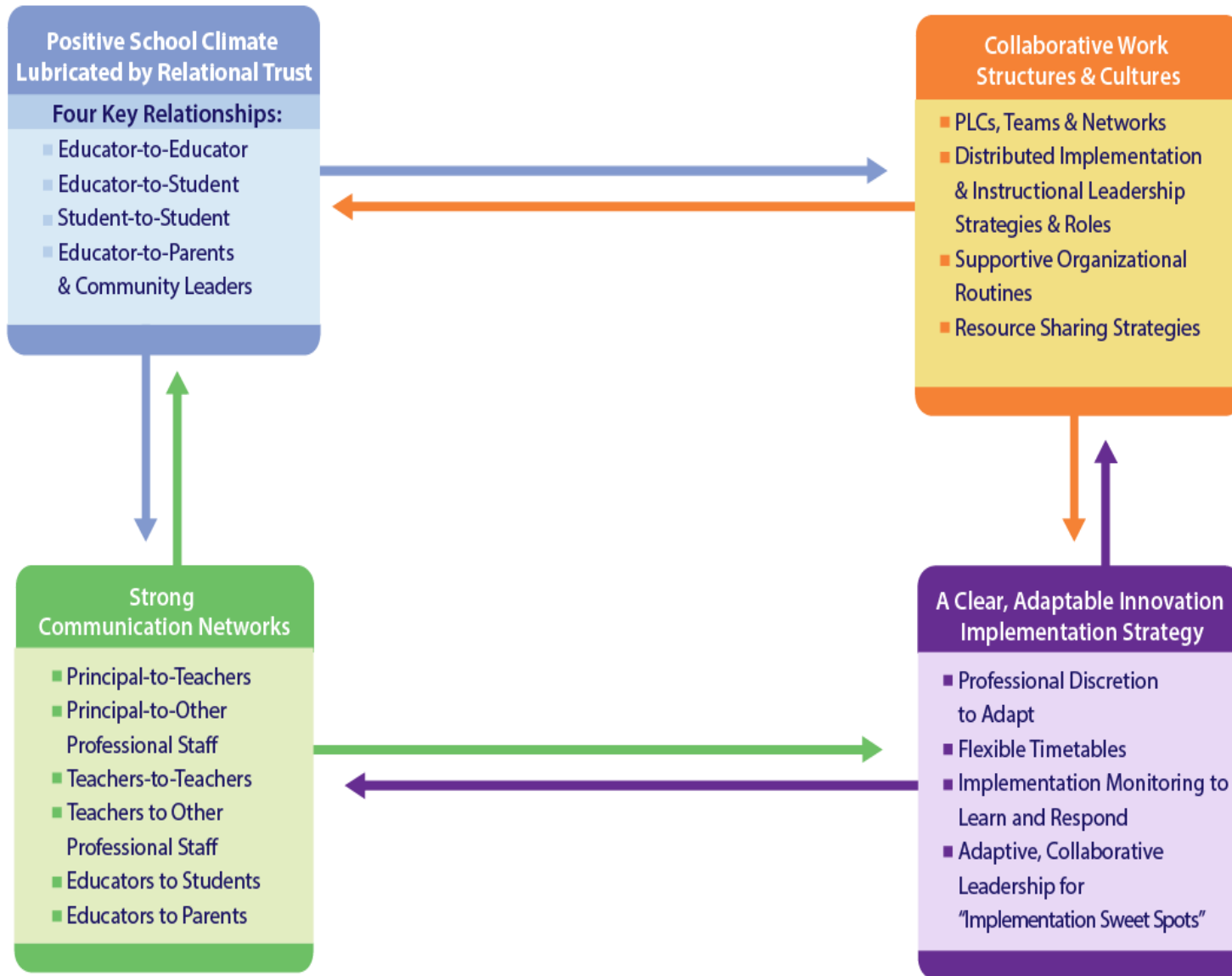
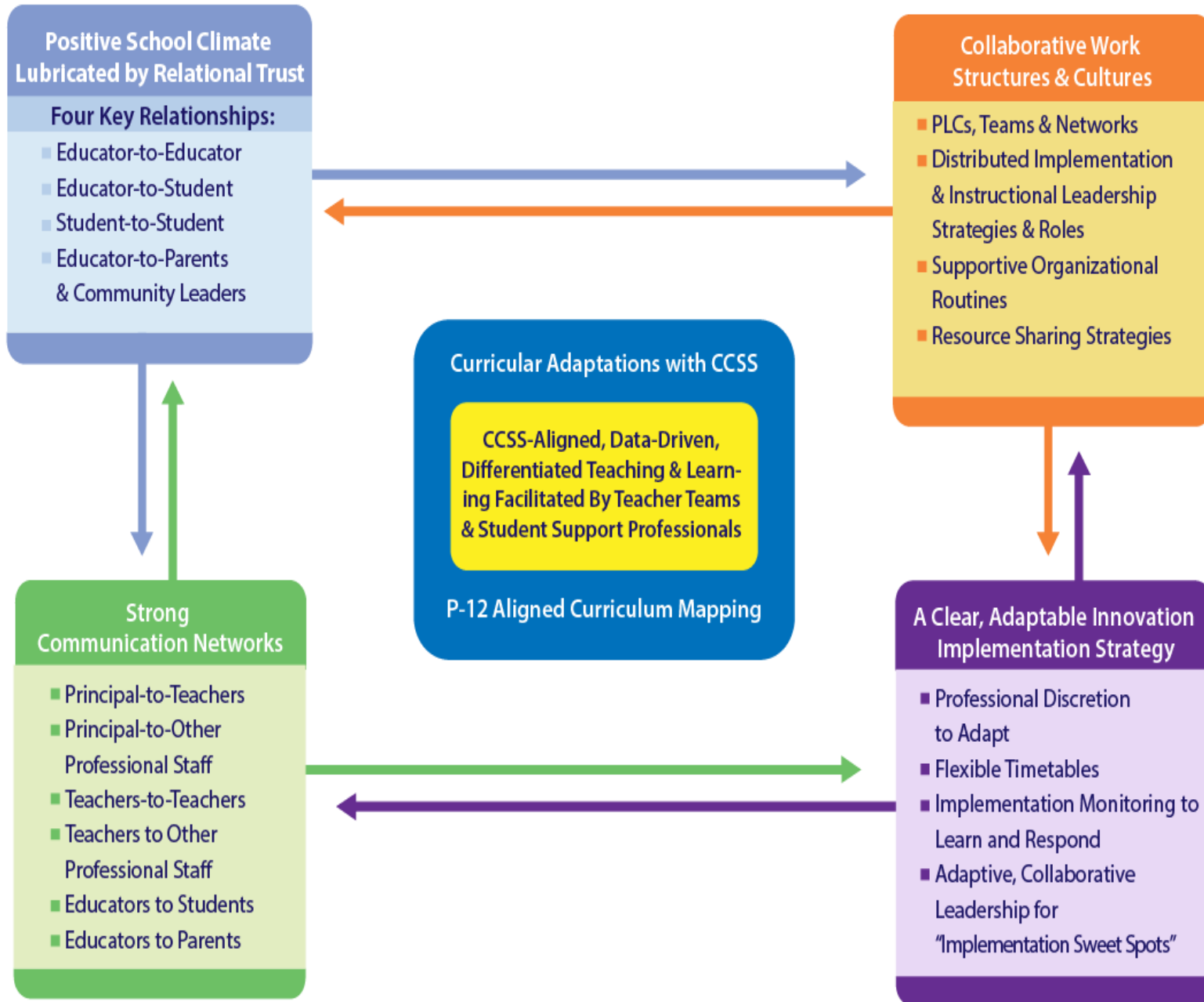
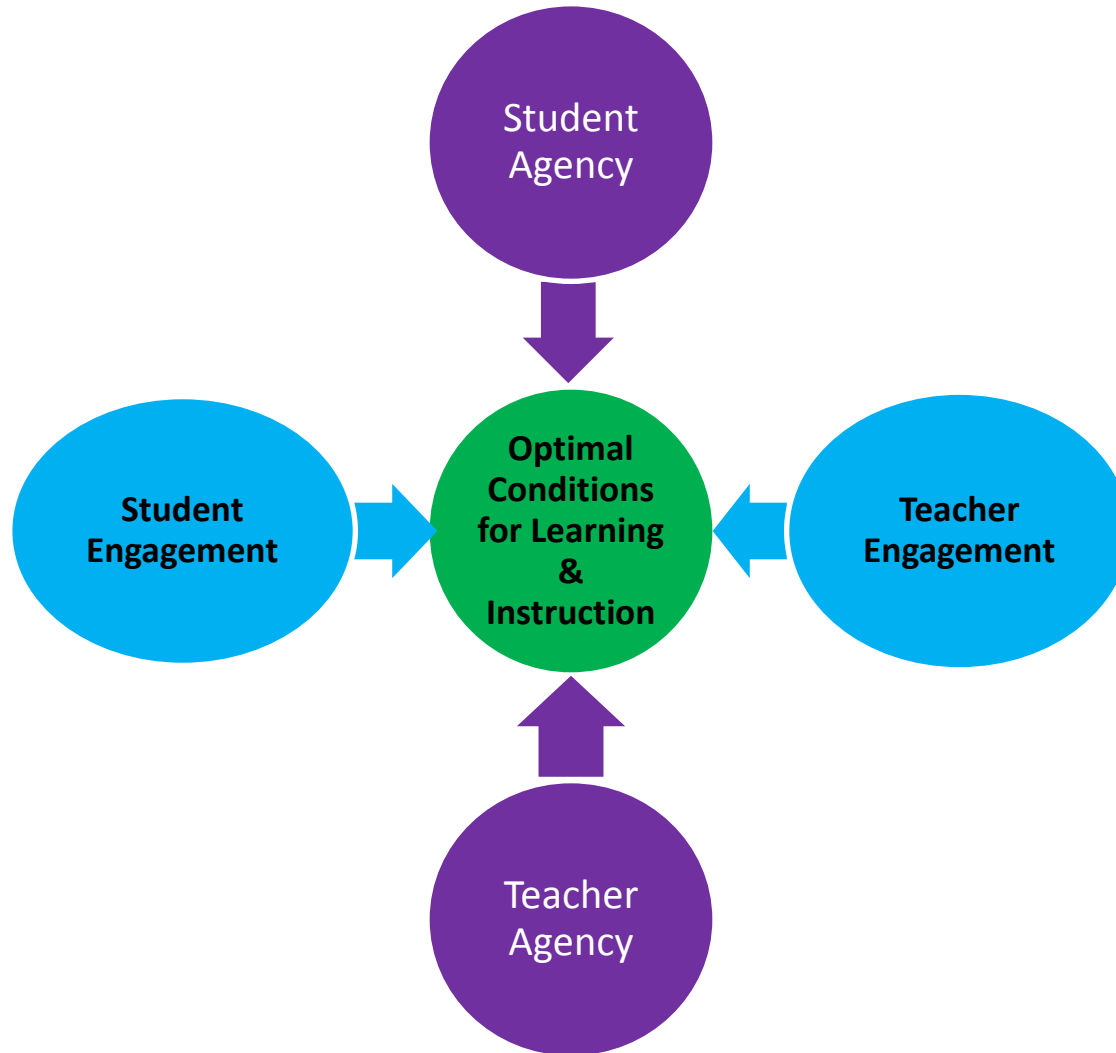


Figure 4. Improving the Core Technology





An Example: The Agency-Engagement Relationship



Ferguson et al 7 C's for Student Agency

Exhibit 5

Implications for Teaching Across the 7Cs to Develop Agency

1. CARE

Be attentive and sensitive, but don't coddle.

2. CONFER

Encourage and respect students' perspectives, but don't waste class time with idle chatter.

3. CAPTIVATE

Make lessons stimulating and relevant while knowing that some students may hide their interest.

4. CLARIFY:

- Clear up Confusion
- Lucid Explanations
- Instructive Feedback

Take regular steps to detect and respond to confusion, but don't just tell students the answers.

Ferguson 7 C's, con't.

5. CONSOLIDATE

Regularly summarize lessons to help consolidate learning.

6. CHALLENGE:

- Require Rigor
- Require Persistence

Anticipate some resistance but persist.

7. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Achieve respectful, orderly, and on task student behavior by using clarity, captivation, and challenge instead of coercion.

Ferguson et al Con't.

Exhibit 4

Emotions, Motivations, and Mindsets Associated with Agency

Happiness

Anger

Mastery Orientation

Sense of Efficacy

Satisfaction

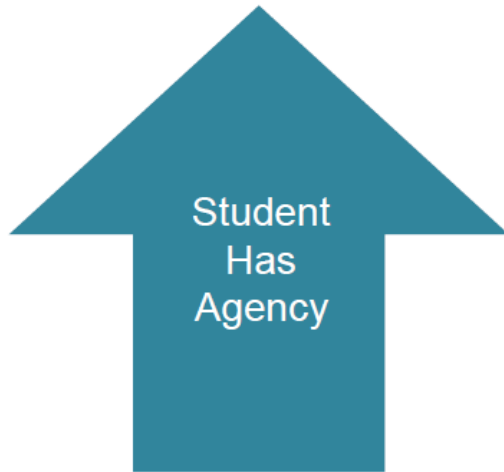
Growth Mindset

Future Orientation

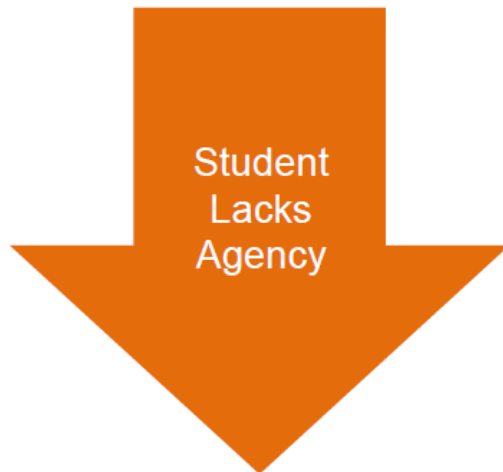
Ferguson et al Framework

Exhibit 3

Student Expressions of Agency



- ✓ Punctuality
- ✓ Good Conduct
- ✓ Effort
- ✓ Help Seeking
- ✓ Conscientiousness



- ✓ Faking Effort
 - ✓ Generally Not Trying
 - ✓ Giving Up if Work is Hard
 - ✓ Help Avoidance
-

THE SCHOOLS

Angelica's School

As an **urban ES school** that was not well reputed even ten years ago, Yellow Valley has overcome challenges to become an odds-beating school. Four salient characteristics related to this success:

- ✓ A collaborative and dedicated faculty
- ✓ Constant and systematic data-informed intervention
- ✓ Accessible and needs-based professional development
- ✓ Caring and self-regulated moral education

Kishmar's School

A composite of two municipalities with similar histories and demographics, the area that comprises the Sage City school district is considered **"rural fringe"**. This MS is characterized by:

- ✓ A welcoming culture that embraces diversity
- ✓ Team-based professional collaboration
- ✓ Student-centered and personalized learning, with an emphasis on college and career readiness, and using data to guide instruction and goal setting

TURN AND TALK

Small Group:

- Which OB school strategies resonate with you and which do not?
- What challenges have you encountered in using these strategies?
- How have you surmounted those challenges?

Whole group: Key take-aways, needs, next steps

THE BOTTOM LINE: SUPPORTING TEACHERS SO THEY SUPPORT & ENGAGE CHILDREN

- ✓ Teachers interact, plan, and learn together and support each other in teams and professional learning communities
- ✓ District office and school missions, goals, and leadership priorities emphasize high standards and equity of opportunity for learning for all students
- ✓ New teachers are prepared for challenges of diverse student populations and experienced teachers have received effective professional development that is responsive to their needs and concerns in service of their sustained agency, efficacy, engagement, and resilience

THE BOTTOM LINE: SUPPORTING TEACHERS SO THEY SUPPORT & ENGAGE CHILDREN

- ✓ Innovation adoption and implementation proceed with teachers-as-partners and co-designers, including guidelines and mechanisms for top-down and bottom-up learning and improvement
- ✓ A district office-school “911 system” for teachers, enabling rapid responses to their needs for coaching, mentoring, peer supports, and responsive professional development resources to bolster engagement and emotional resilience in the face of challenges.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- Christensen, C. M., Horn, M.B., & Johnson, C.W. (2011). *Disrupting class: How disruptive innovation will change the way the world learns*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Durand, F.T., Lawson, H.A., & Wilcox, K.C. (2016). The role of proactive and adaptive district leadership in the adoption and implementation of the common core state standards in elementary schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 52, 45-74.
- Eppley, K. (2015). Seven traps of the Common Core State Standards. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59(2), 207-216.
- Supovitz, J. A., & Spillane, J. (2015). *Challenging standards: Navigating conflict and building capacity in the era of the Common Core*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Wilcox, K.C., Lawson, H.A, & Angelis, J.I. with Durand, F., Schiller, K, Gregory, K., & Zuckerman, S (2017). *Innovation in odds-beating schools: Exemplars of getting better at getting better*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

For other related reports see “common core study” at <http://www.albany.edu/nykids/>