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Odds-Beating Schools in the Common Core Era:

School of Education Day August 28, 2015



UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
State University of New York

Welcome !

Introductions

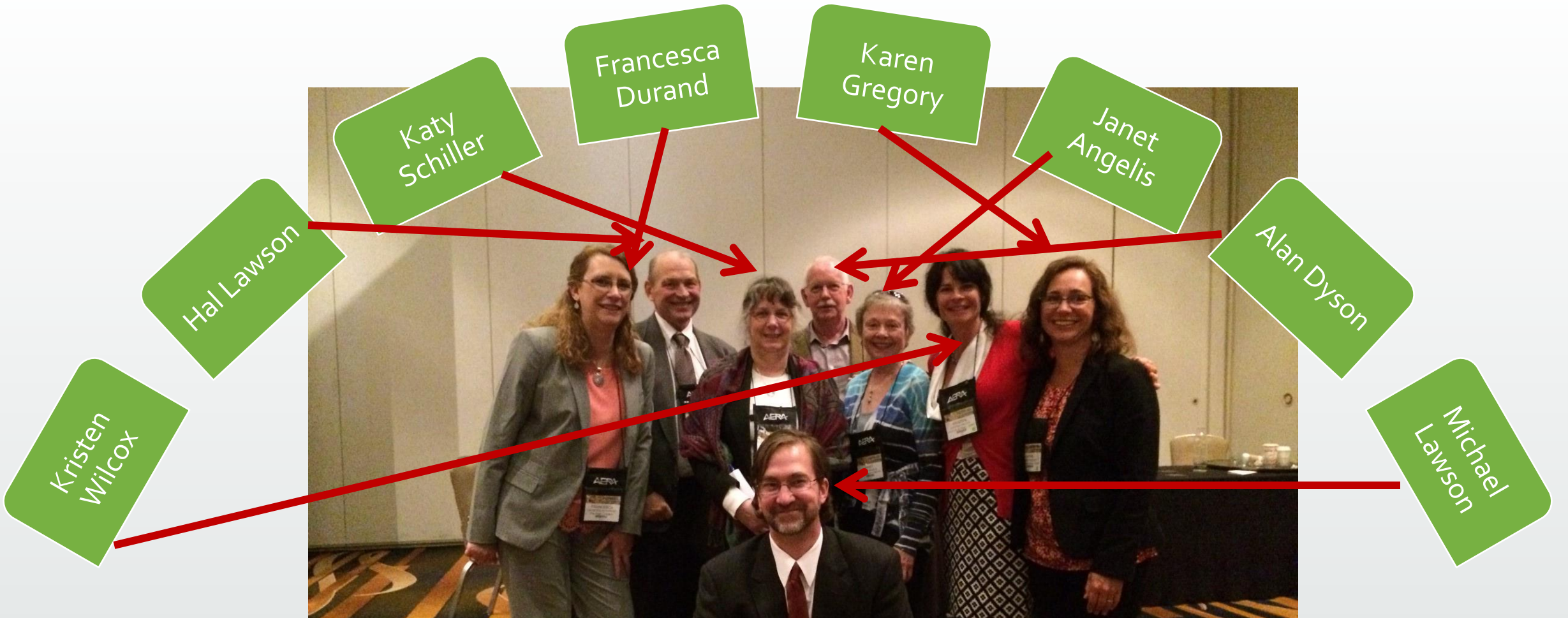
Overview /Project Purpose

Sampling and Procedures

Findings

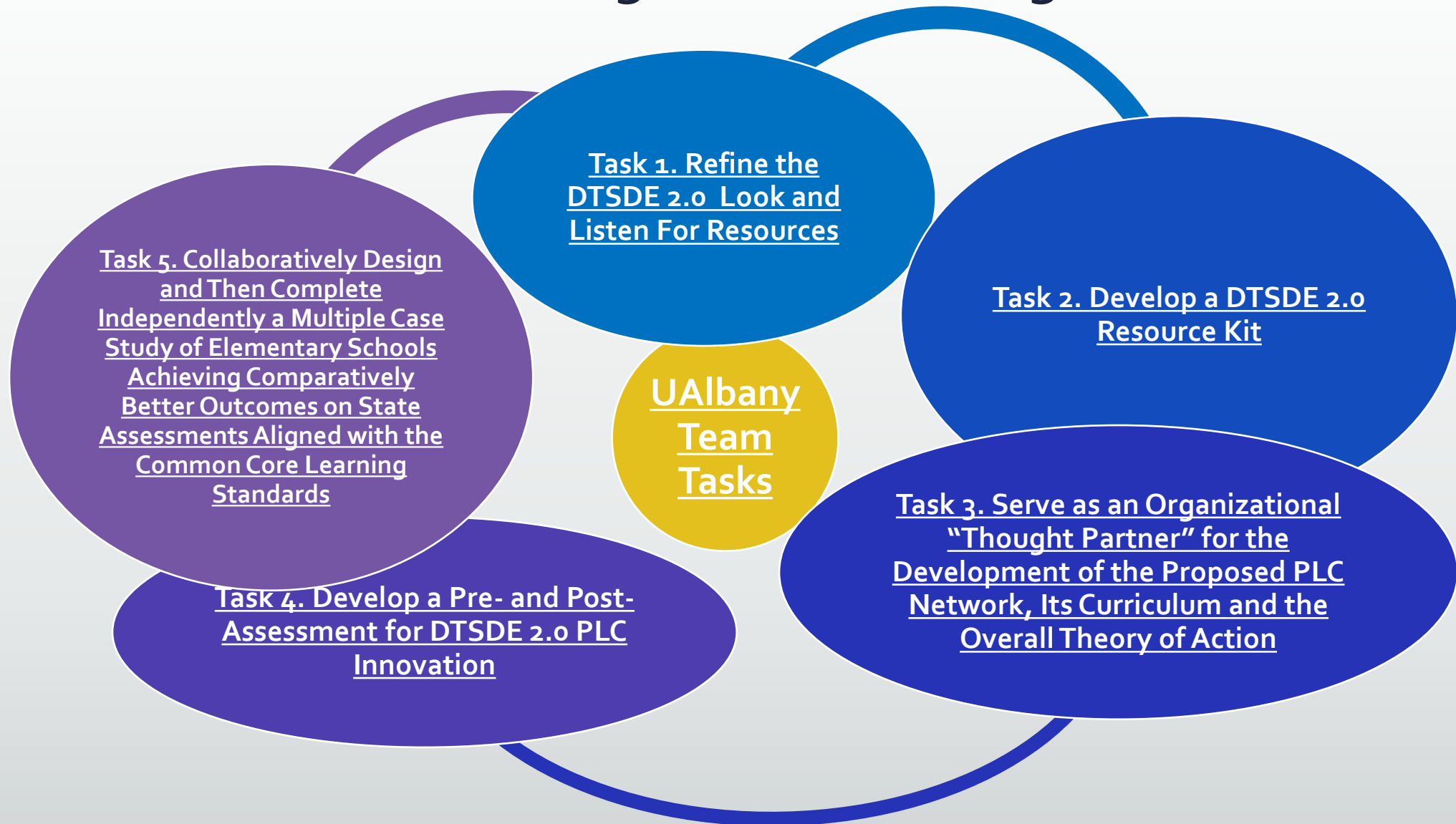
Next Steps

Q & A

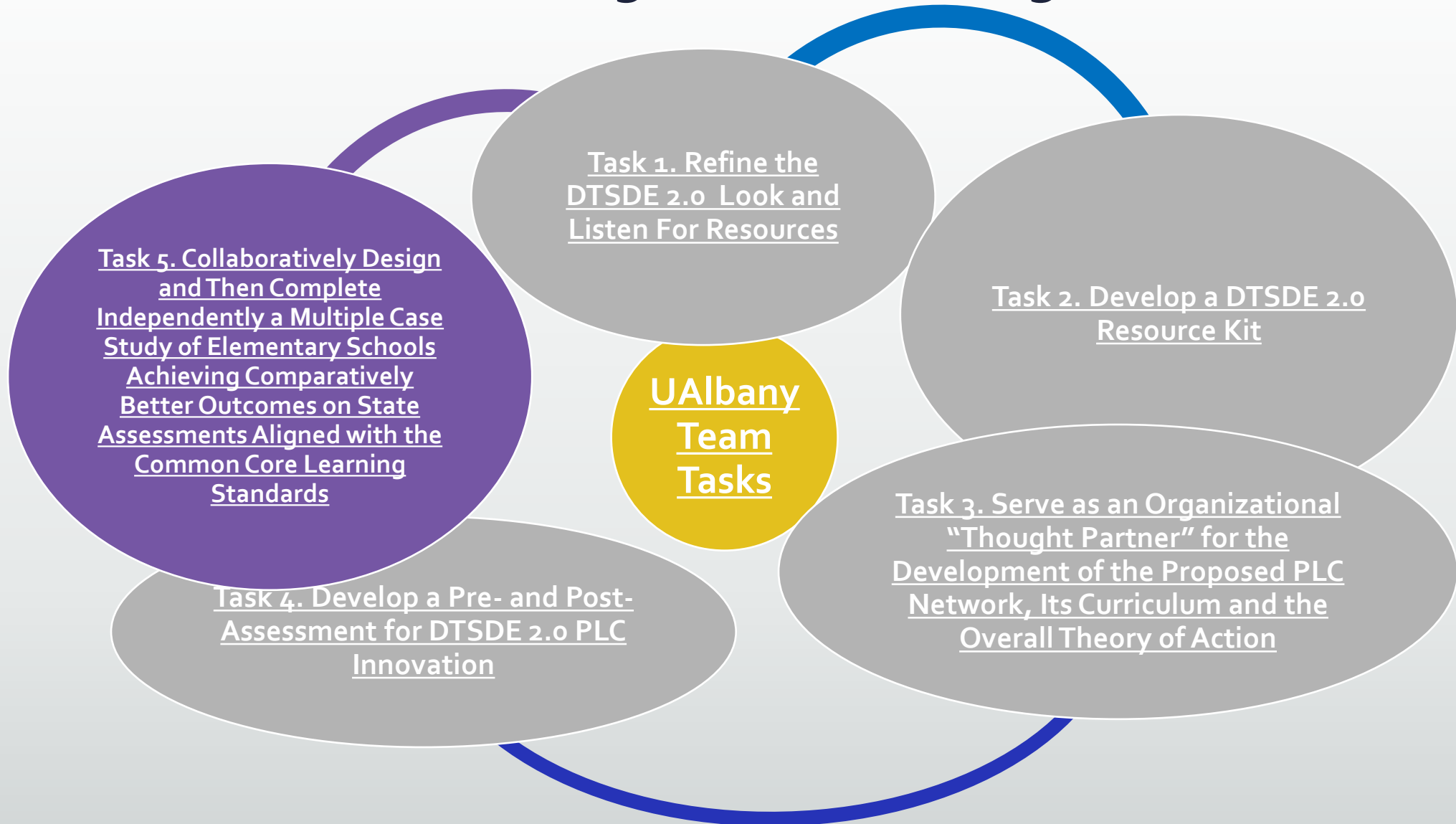


Linda Baker, Kathy Nickson, Shari Keller, Dorothy Porteus, Sarah Zuckerman, Ben Malczyk, Michelle Bianchi, Fang (Lisa) Yu, Sharon Wiles, Nisa Felicia, Juliana Svistova, Lynn Lisy-Macan, Deb Byrne, Piera Camposeo, John Costello, Heather Kurto, Aaron Leo, Christl Mueller, Gretchen Oliver, Kemm Wilson

The BIG Picture: Regents Reform Agenda and Us



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Project Purpose

- The primary purpose for the proposed research is to **identify the school practices and policies found in elementary and middle schools whose students exceeded performance expectations on the 2012-2013 New York State assessments**, which were the first aligned with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).

Research Questions

- The main question underlying this study is: What accounts for these schools' comparatively better performance? This question structures five important sub-questions.
 - (1) To what extent are the schools' curricula and instructional practices aligned with the CCLS?
 - (2) To what extent and how do the schools utilize their educator evaluation system processes (observation, feedback, measures of student learning) to improve instruction?
 - (3) What school and district capacities support implementation of the new curriculum and teacher evaluation system?
 - (4) What are the workforce configurations, organizational designs, and improvement models in place in the schools and districts?
 - (5) To what extent and how do the schools' theories of action align to the DTSDE?

Research Design: Multiple Case Study

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

Timeline for Project

Analysis of 2012-2013 data to identify schools exceeding expectations conducted, instruments completed, and IRB approved (late in the fall of 2013).

School recruitment and site visit arrangements made (spring– fall 2014)

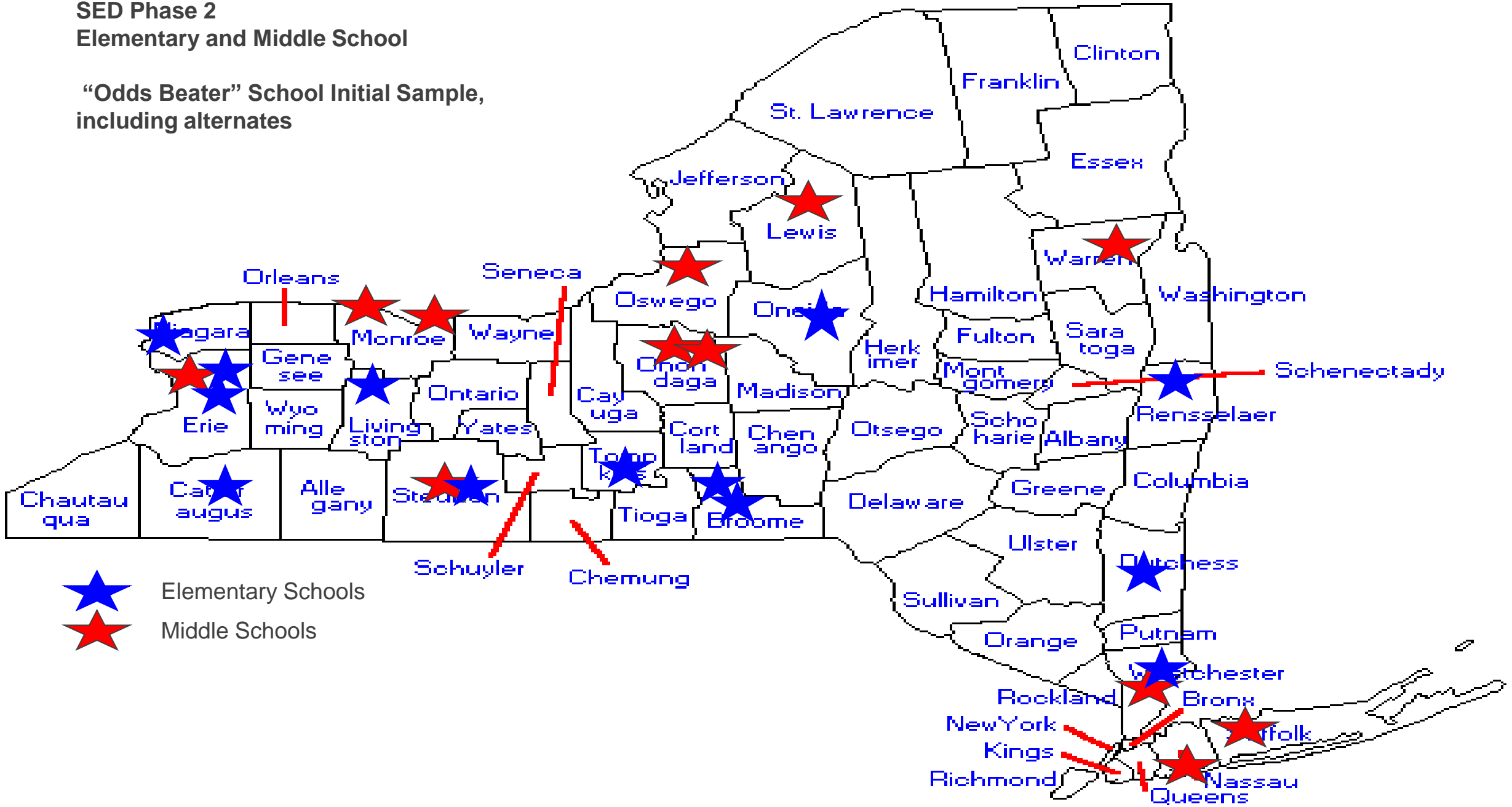
Site visits conducted (February – December 2014)

Coding of case study data and writing of individual school case studies (June 2014– March 2015)

Cross-case and student performance analyses for final reports (January – June 2015)

SED Phase 2
Elementary and Middle School

“Odds Beater” School Initial Sample,
including alternates



What is “Odds Beating”?

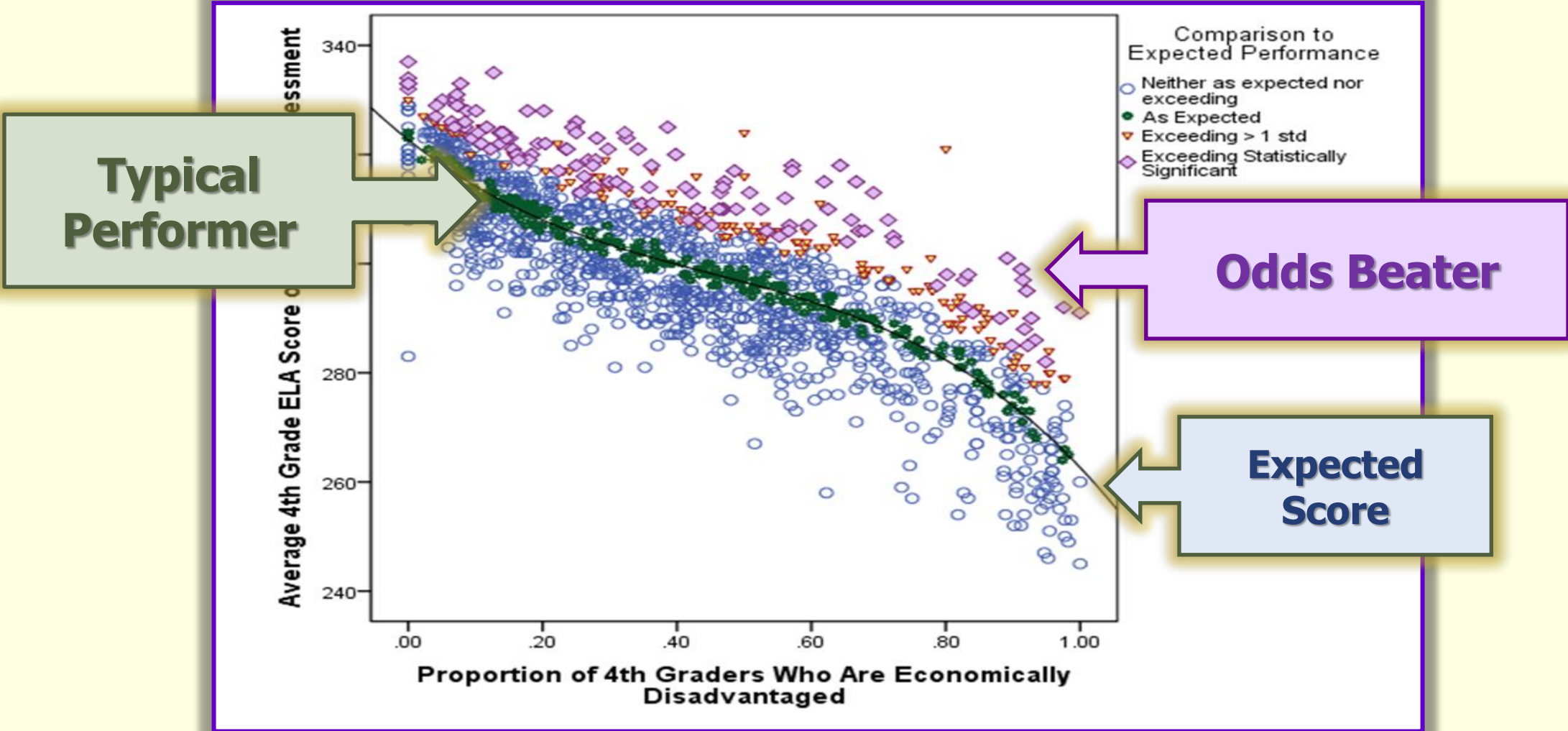
▣ Odds Beating

- Schools whose students performed significantly better on 2013 state Common Core-aligned assessments in multiple subjects and grade levels than other schools serving populations with similar rates of poverty and English Language Learners.

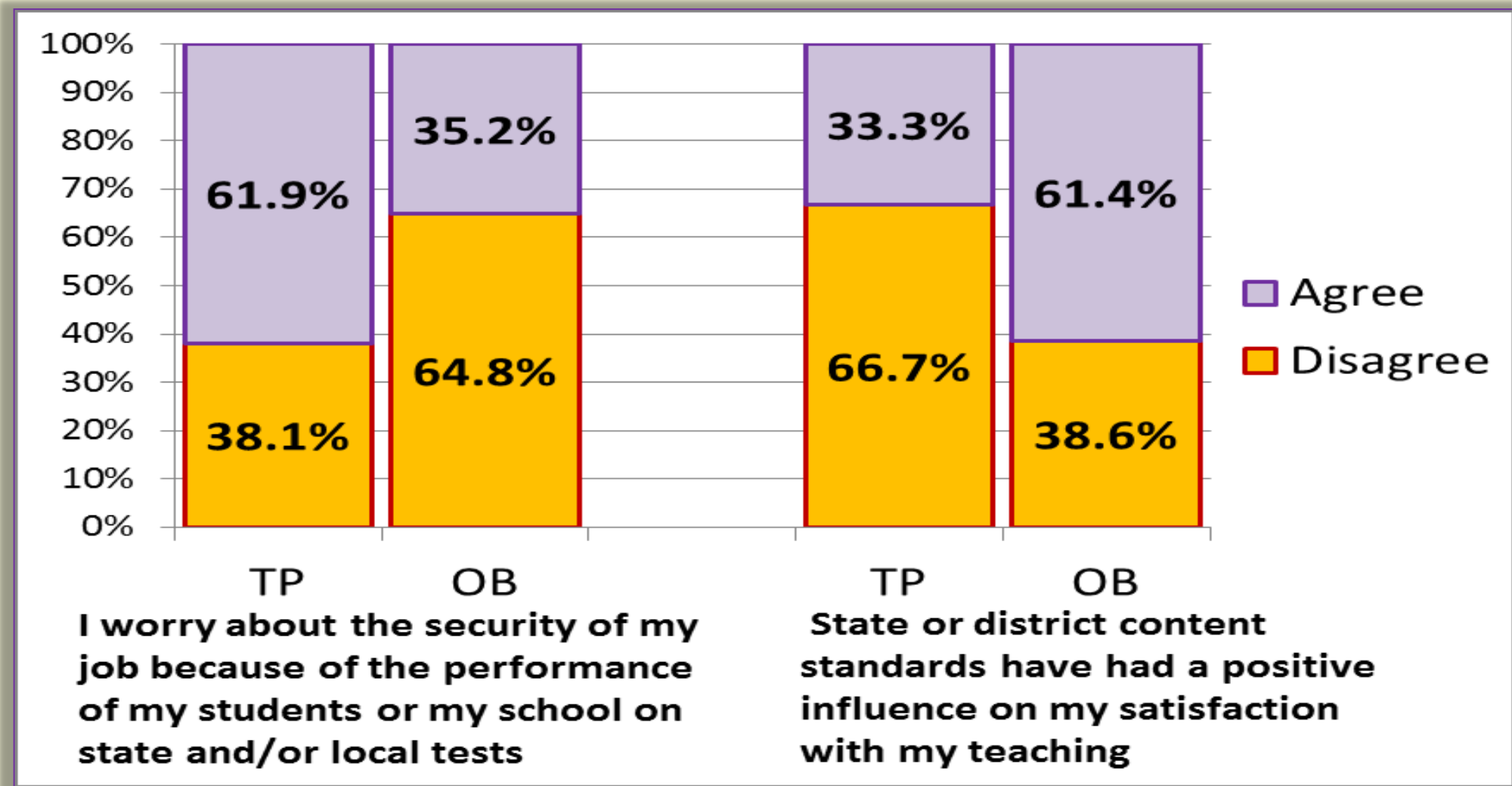
▣ Typically performing schools

- Schools whose students performed as expected on state assessments for the population served.

Rates of Economic Disadvantage & Average 4th Grade ELA Score



Elementary Teachers' Reform Initiatives Concerns



**District Leaders
are Proactive
and Adaptive**

Build Capacity

Develop Competency

Responsive to Needs

Bridging Strategies



Buffering Strategies



Brokering Strategies

**IMPLEMENTATION
OF CHANGE**

*Teacher
Practices and
Support Features
for Effective
Instruction in
Odds-Beating
Schools*

an evidence-guided system



a well-established, understood, and enacted differentiated instructional approach



an established organizational routine to support teacher collaboration



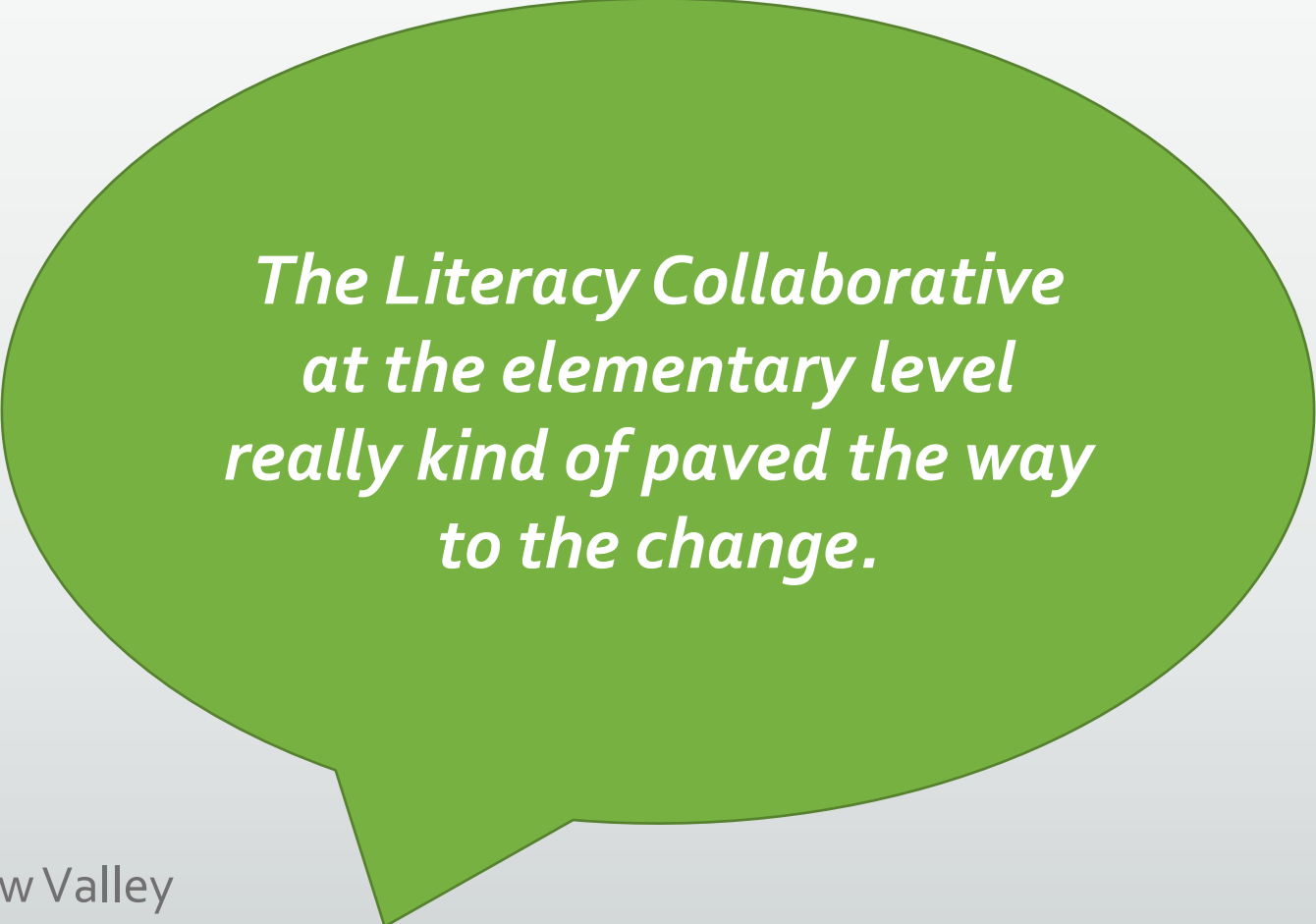
a set of expectations and supports that shape teachers' understandings of their responsibilities and expected behaviors

Shared Teacher Literacy Instruction Practices in Odds-beating Schools

1. Used integrative approaches to literacy instruction— combining the old with the new.
2. Took a “student-centered” approach to CCSS implementation, making decisions based on the local context and the needs of their particular students.
3. Sustained, embedded, and focused PD structured around developing instructional skills and knowledge related to CCSS.

1. Integrated Approaches to Literacy Instruction

- Odds beaters combined the old with the new
 - Integrated CCSS shifts into their balanced literacy programs already in place

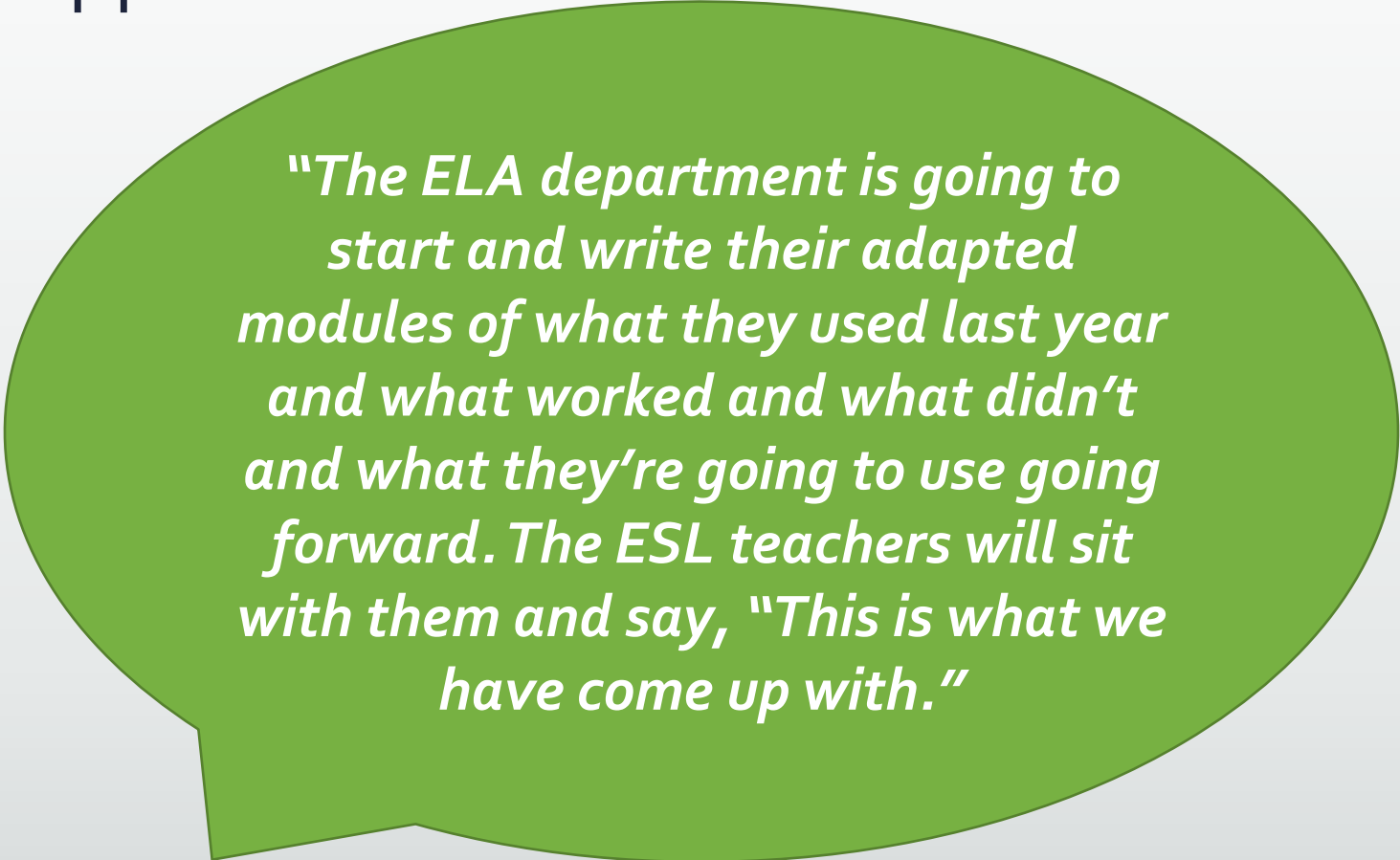


*The Literacy Collaborative
at the elementary level
really kind of paved the way
to the change.*

Superintendent, Yellow Valley

2. Student-centered Approach

- Teams in odds beaters collaborated to modify instruction to serve diverse learners
 - Mainstream-special education; mainstream-ESL
 - Differentiation the focus




"The ELA department is going to start and write their adapted modules of what they used last year and what worked and what didn't and what they're going to use going forward. The ESL teachers will sit with them and say, "This is what we have come up with."

District Supervisor of ESL, Goliad

3. Targeted, sustained, embedded PD

- PD in odds beaters focused on deep understanding of the CCSS.
 - Coordinated, focused
 - Sustained and embedded, e.g. through coaching



“Our success comes from a lot of hard work, dedication, [and] professional development.”

Yellow Valley teacher

Implications

- (1) district and school investment in modeling and coaching teachers in how to provide balanced and innovative literacy instructional supports in their CCSS-aligned instruction;**
- (2) placing focused attention on differentiation and student-centered instructional strategies in evaluations of teachers' instruction; and**
- (3) targeting professional development (preferably embedded modeling) toward developing specific CCSS-related skills and content knowledge**

Figure 1. Antecedents & Co-Requisites

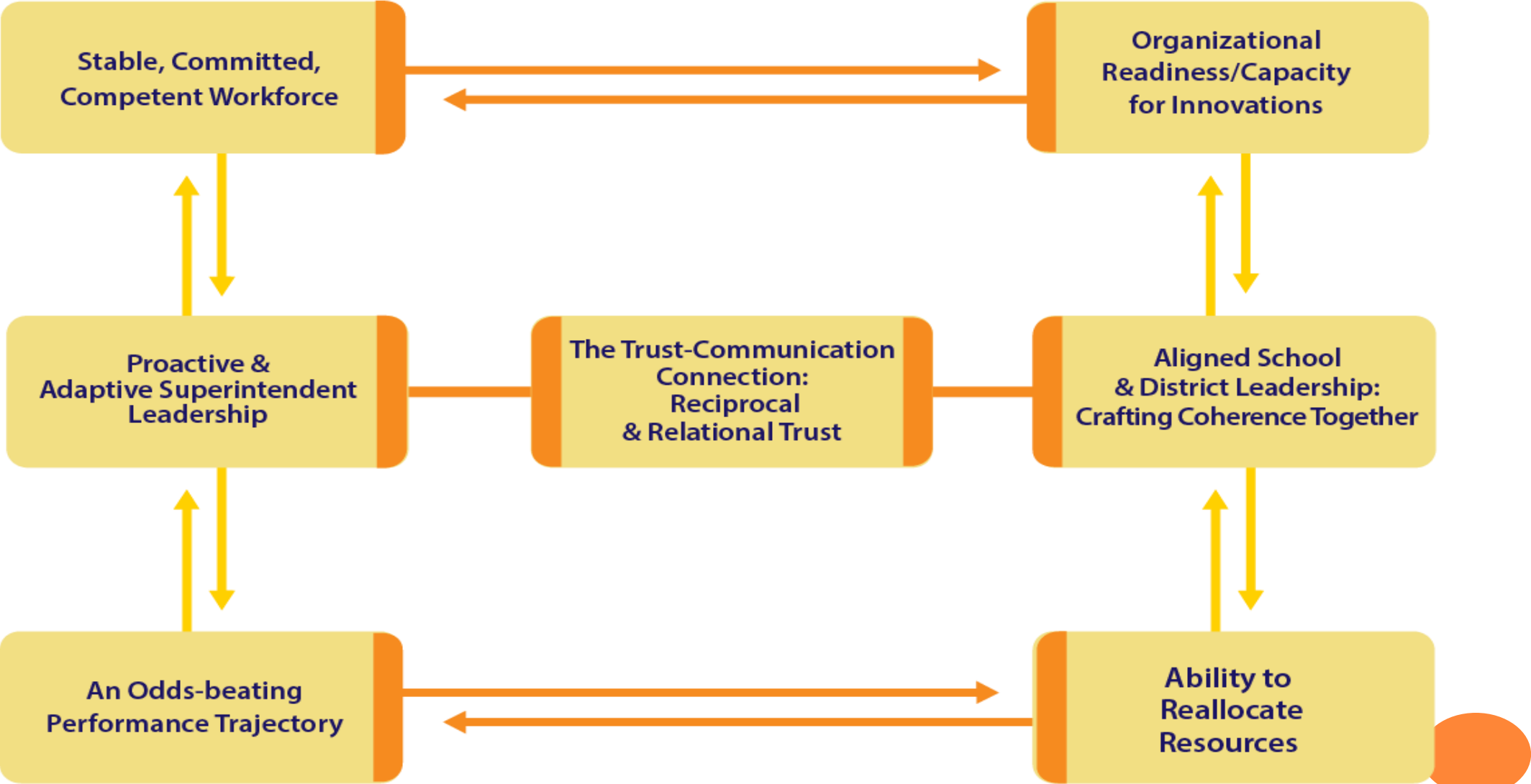


Figure 2. Learning-Focused Implementation Leadership

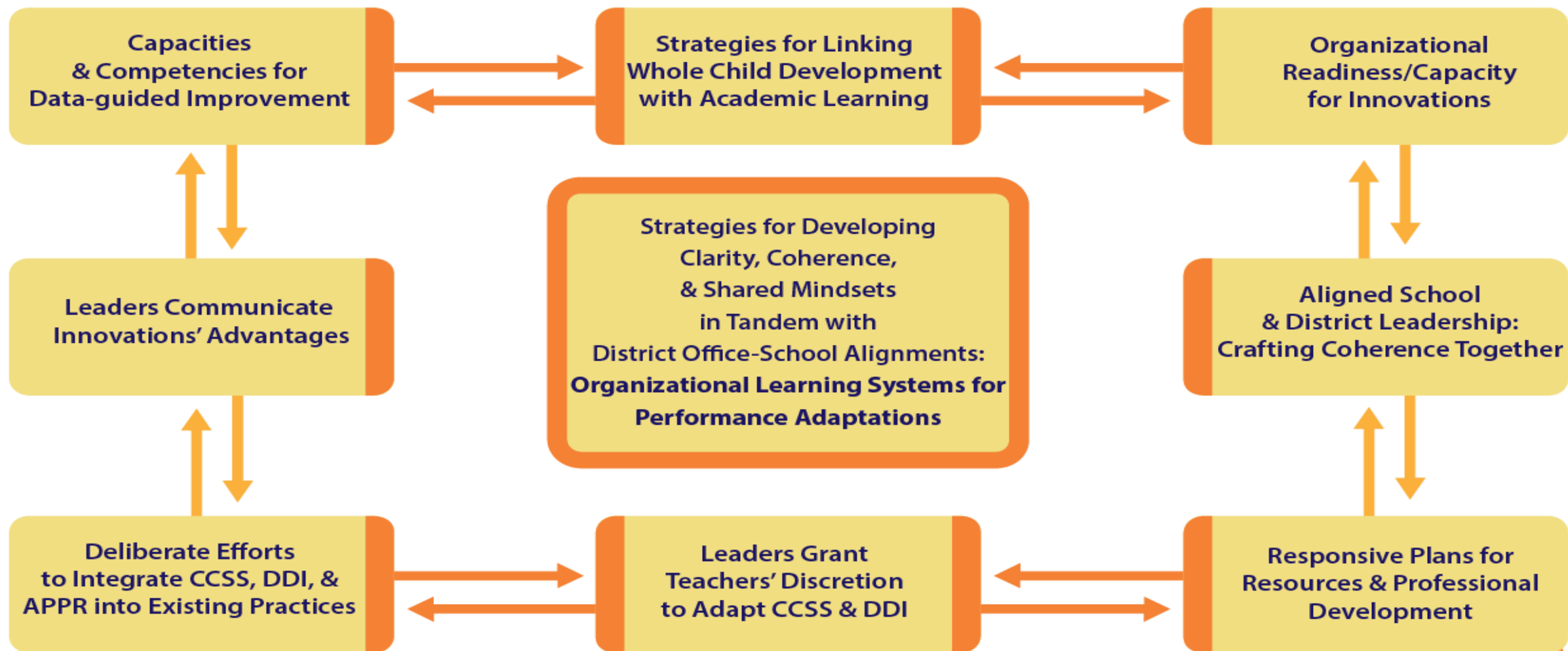


Figure 3. Drilling Deeper in Odds-Beating Schools

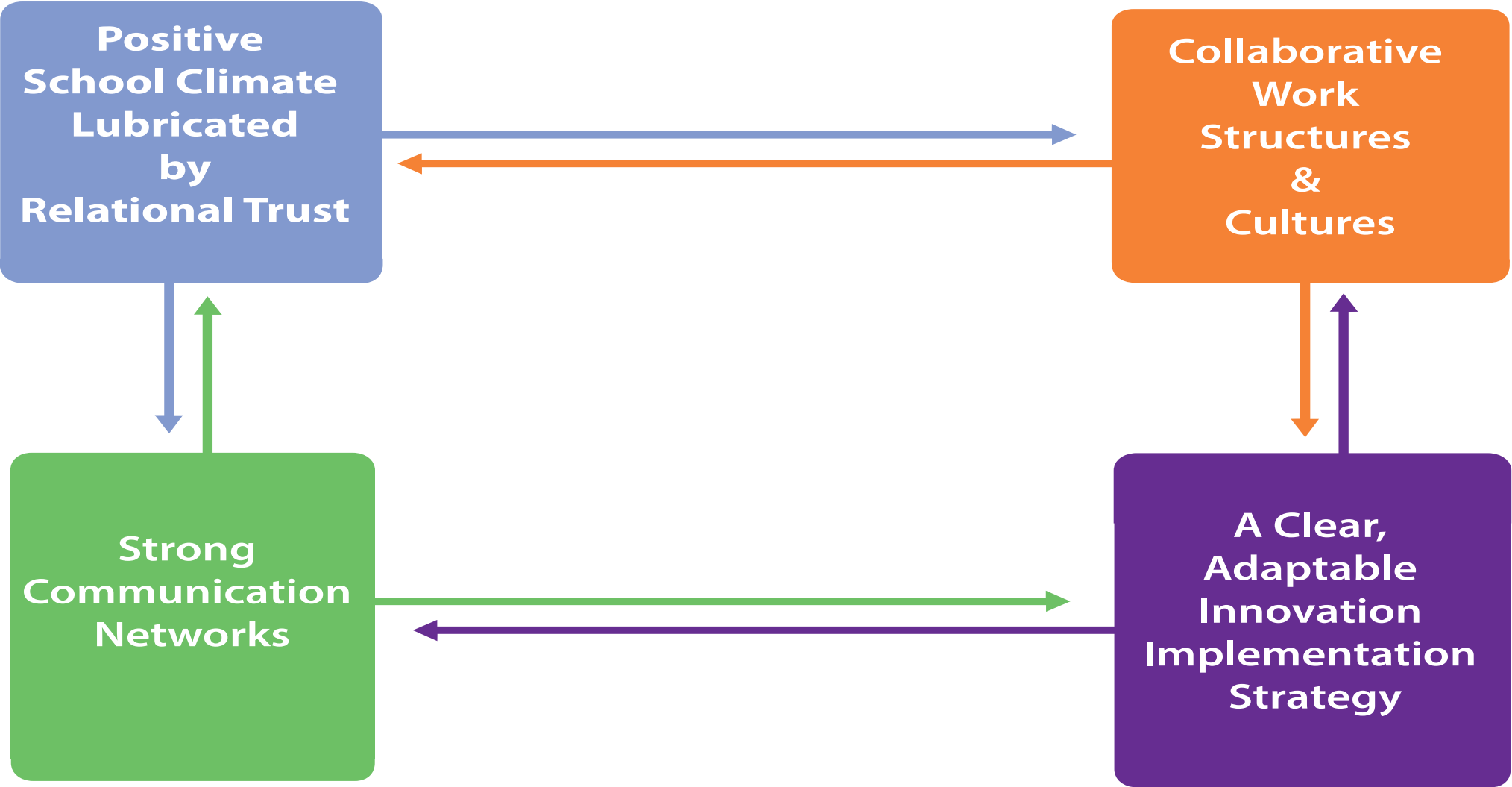
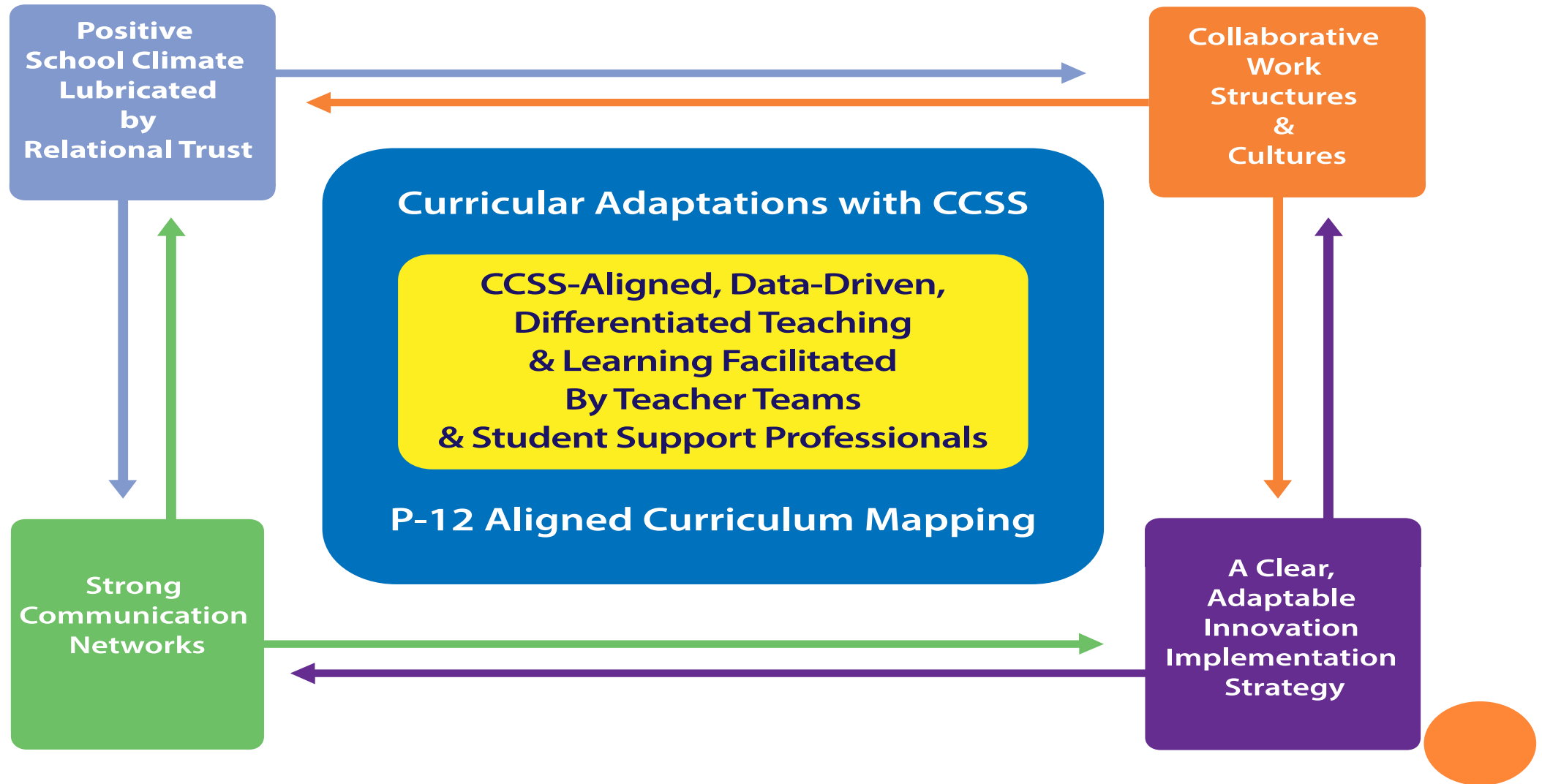


Figure 4. Improving the Core Technology



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Other reports available at:

http://www.albany.edu/nykids/publications_and_presentations.php

Publications:

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11145-015-9588-6>



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