Leading for Improvement in California's CORE Districts

Carnegie Summit – April 4, 2018

Session Agenda

- Who we are, what we've been doing and why, and some of what we are learning (15 minutes)
- A taste of how we are approaching the role of leadership and equity in improvement (10 minutes)
- Superintendent Panel Discussion (30 minutes)
- Reflection from Andres Alonso, Professor of Practice at Harvard's School of Education
- Q & A
- Close

Who we are, what we've been doing and why, and some of what we are learning

CORE Districts collaboration since 2010

CORE DISTRICTS

- ▶ **Fresno Unified**
- ▶ **Garden Grove**
- ▶ **Los Angeles Unified**
- ▶ **Long Beach Unified**
- ▶ **Oakland Unified**
- ▶ **Sacramento City Unified**
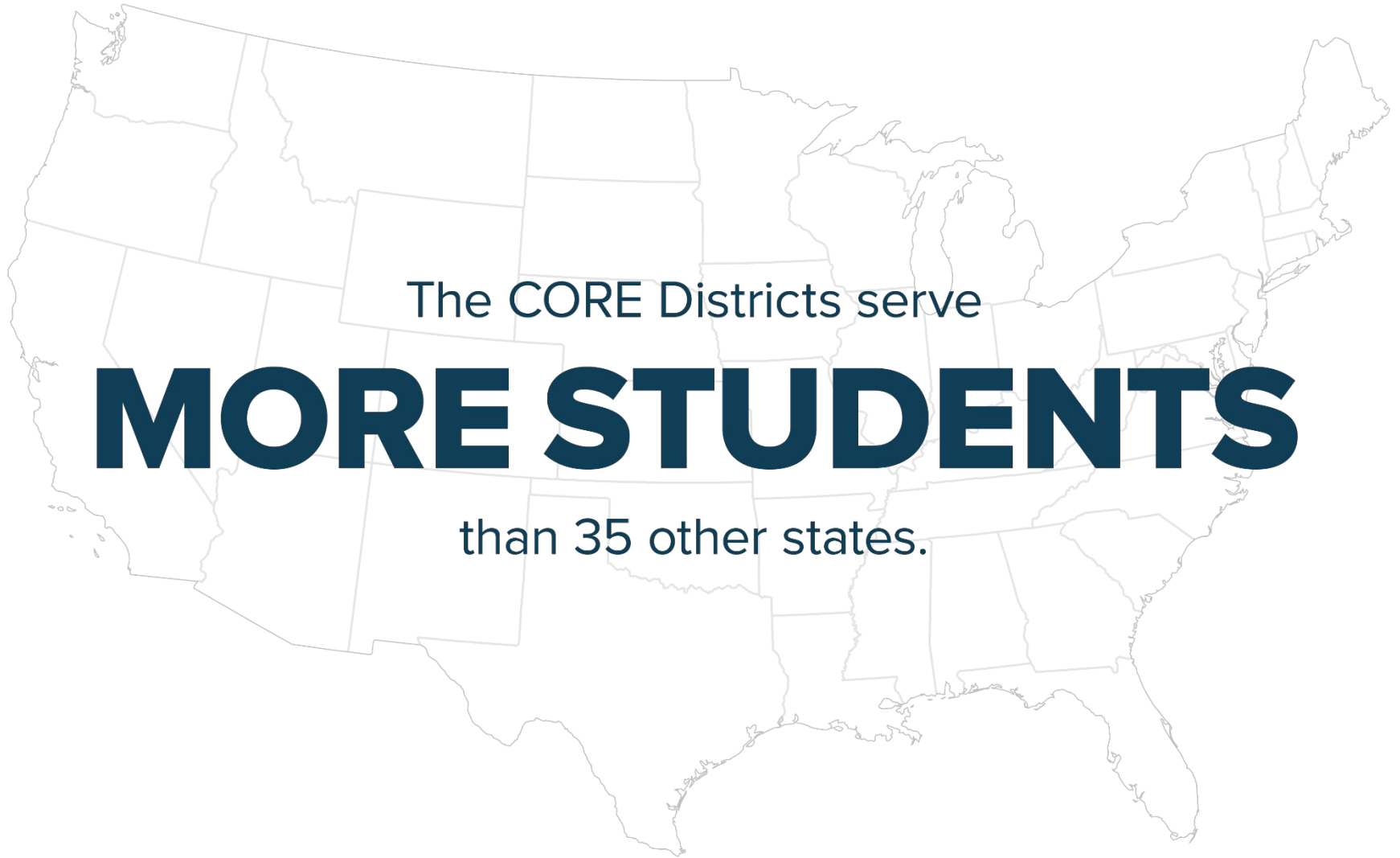- ▶ **San Francisco Unified**
- ▶ **Santa Ana Unified**

8 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

>1m STUDENTS

~1,800 SCHOOLS

~56,700 EDUCATORS

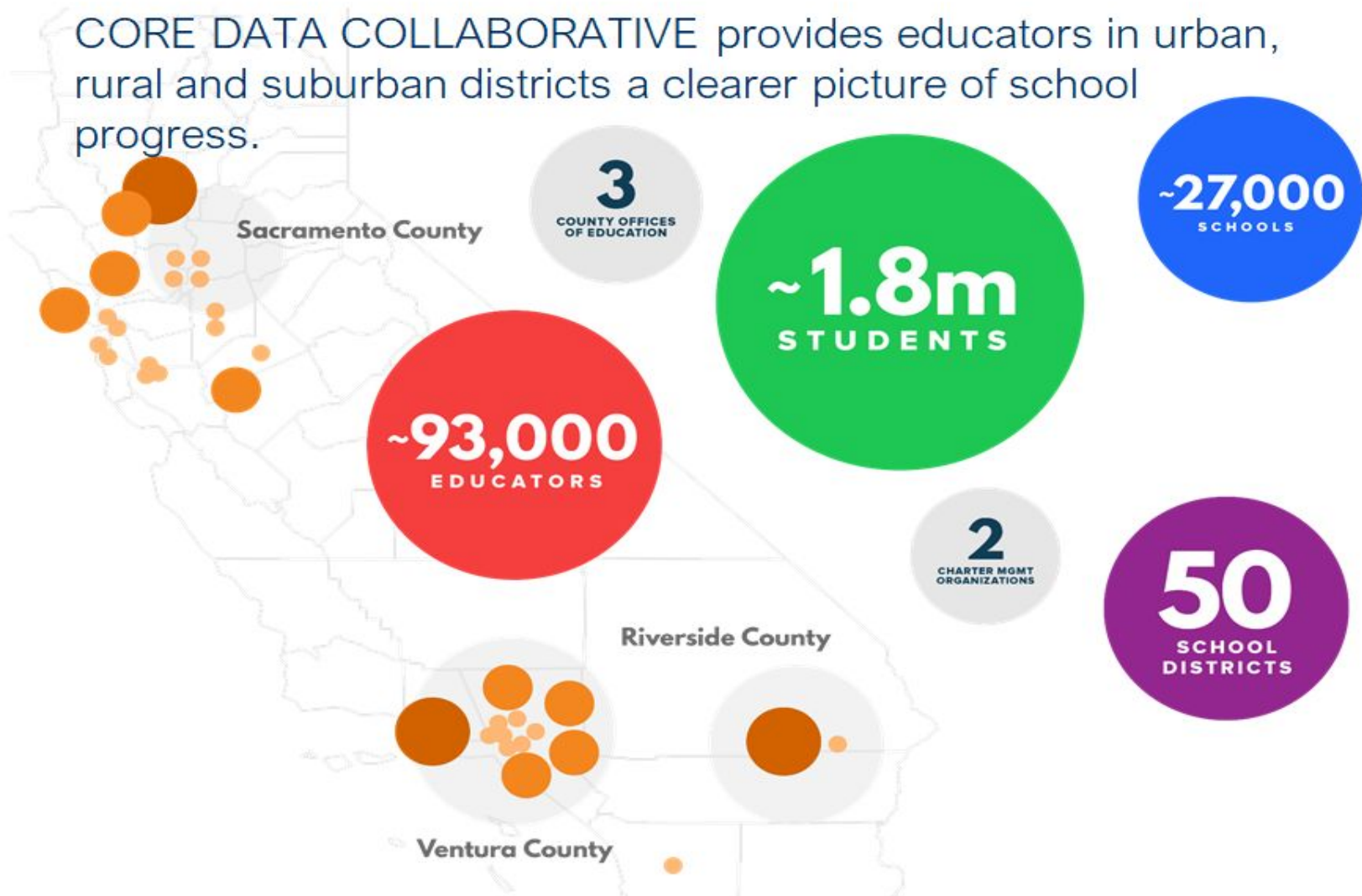The CORE Districts serve

MORE STUDENTS

than 35 other states.

Compared to ANY other state,

the CORE Districts serve a HIGHER percentage of low income students.

According to researchers, the most powerful predictor of racial gaps in academic achievement is the extent to which students attend schools surrounded by other low income students.

# CORE Data Collaborative: Who we are now

CORE DATA COLLABORATIVE provides educators in urban, rural and suburban districts a clearer picture of school progress.

Sacramento County

3 COUNTY OFFICES OF EDUCATION

~1.8m STUDENTS

~27,000 SCHOOLS

~93,000 EDUCATORS

2 CHARTER MGMT ORGANIZATIONS

50 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Riverside County

Ventura County

CORE Districts have a 360-view of students strengths and challenges through data, research, innovation and collaboration

DATA

INNOVATION

STUDENTS STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

COLLABORATION

RESEARCH

# Our Networked Improvement Community launched in Winter 2017
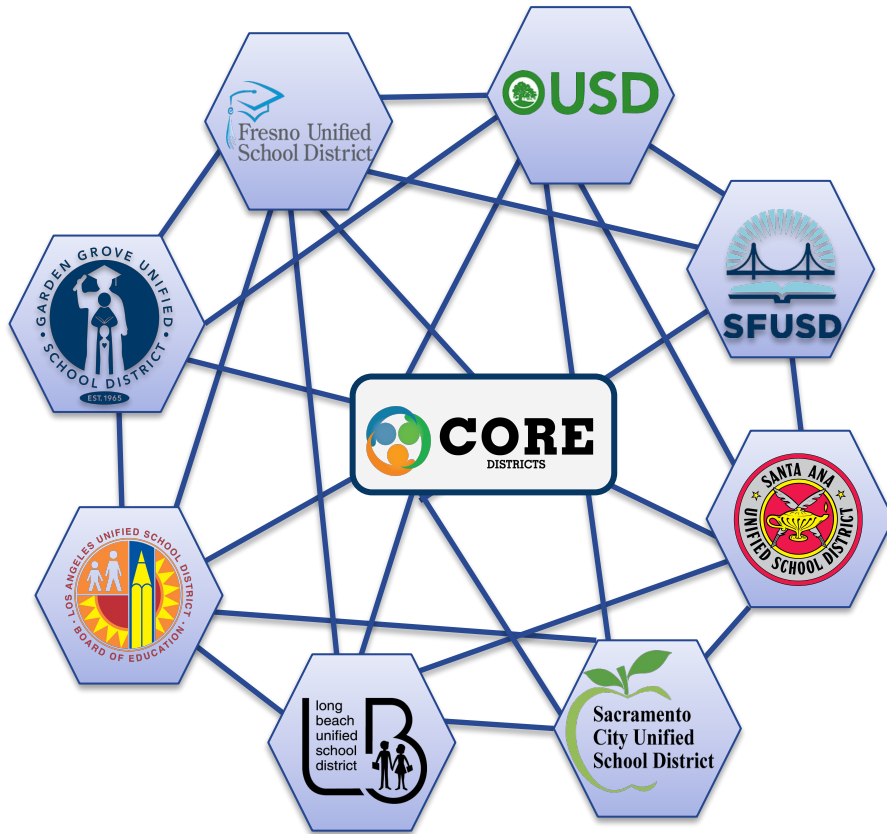
By 2020, we will see the following improvement in math achievement in grades 4 to 8:

- African American and Hispanic/Latino students will improve by 44 points
- The gaps between these students and white students will decrease by 20 points

CORE-Wide

CORE Districts Math Trend in 4th Grade to 8th Grade for
African-American and Hispanic Latino Youth in Distances to Meeting
Grade Level Standards

Measure Names
- Student Group in Question
- Students NOT in the Group in Question
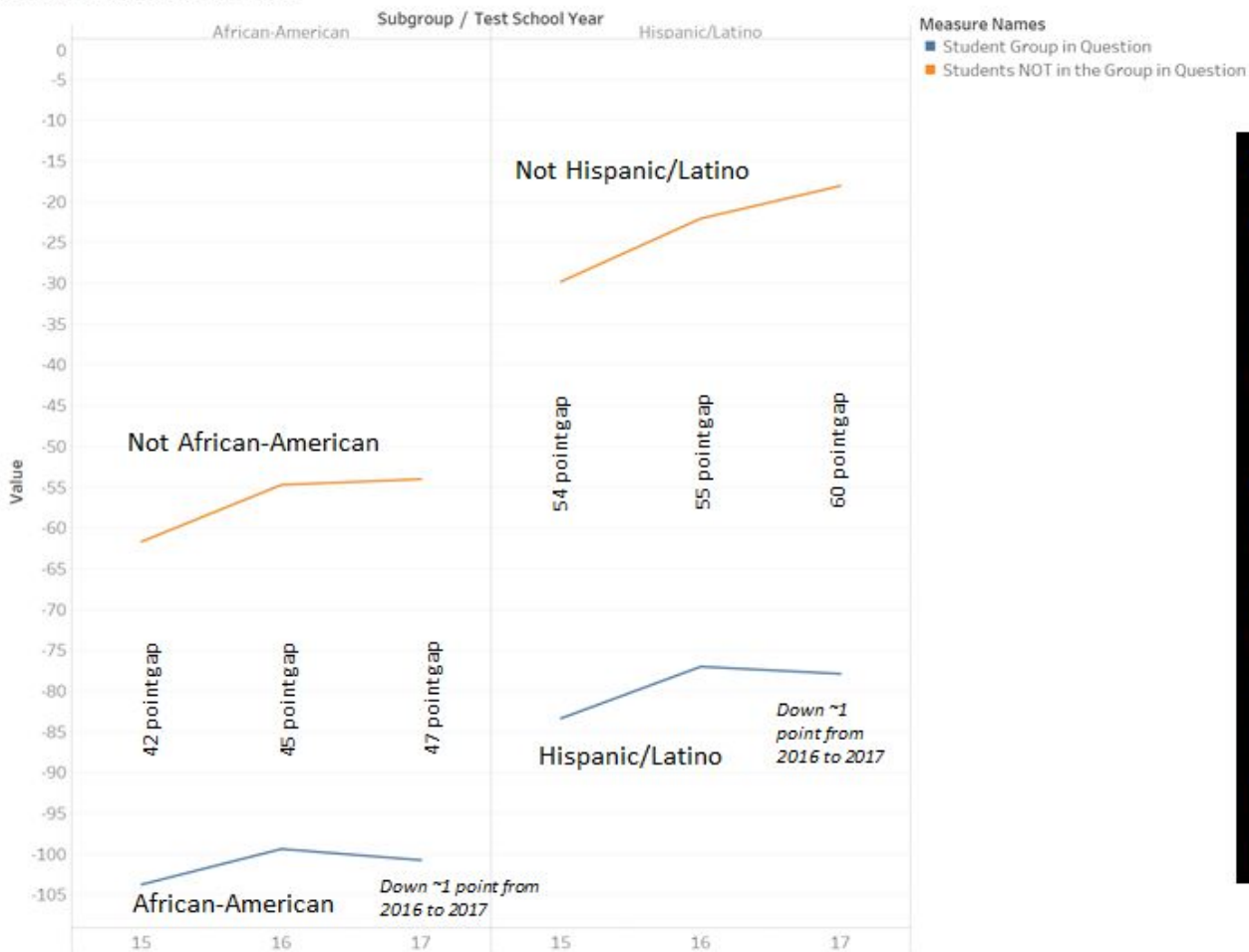
Gaps for African-American and Hispanic/Latino students continue to widen.

Across the eight CORE Districts, the African-American gap has widened by two scale score points and the Hispanic/Latino gap has widened by two points.

Trajectory of the CORE Improvement Community

Ready...
Fire…
Aim...

Refine, build and test change packages and measurement system for impact

Achieve impact in targeted participating schools

Infrastructure for Local and District Improvement

SY 2019-20

- Implement shared theory of improvement, measurement system and change packages with targeted LITs
- Goals: Make demonstrable impact on closing math gaps with targeted LITs; *yield a sharable and scalable theory of improvement, change package and measurement system*

SY 2018-19

- Test a shared theory of improvement along with a shared measurement structure and promising change ideas
- Goals: Develop a strong theory of improvement with change packages and measurement systems likely to yield substantive impact on closing gaps

SY 2017-18

- Launch Local Improvement Teams (LITs)
- Launch Capability Building Programs in Improvement
- Goals: Develop and refine infrastructure for improvement including LIT and DIT routines and tools; learn our way into *promising change ideas*

Launch at District Level

SY 2016-17

- Launch CIC
- Engage District Improvement Teams (DIT) in learning improvement and understanding the problem
- Build our CORE hub's capacity to support improvement work

Our Network Structure

Local Improvement Team Project Storyboard Contents

Project Background

Team Membership
Who's on our team?

Project Rationale
Why is this work important?

Meeting Log
Key team meetings & outcomes

Our Understanding of the Problem

Description of Current Performance
Our understanding of our current level of performance

Description of Desired Performance
Our vision of exemplary performance, if this problem were solved

GAP

Problem Investigation Summary
- *What are the causes of the gap between our current and desired performance?*
- *What is the user's perspective on the problem?*
- *What are our current work practices?*

Content Knowledge:
What content knowledge, resources, and experts will we draw on to support our understanding of the problem and our theory of improvement?

Our Theory of Improvement

What are we trying to accomplish?
Project Aim Statement

How will we know if our changes are an improvement?
Measures

What changes might we introduce and why?
Change Ideas

Our PDSA Cycles

ACT
•Next steps: Adapt, adopt, abandon

PLAN
•What's your change?
•What's your prediction?
•Plan to conduct test

STUDY
• Compare results to prediction
• What did you learn?

DO
• Execute test
• Collect data, document observations
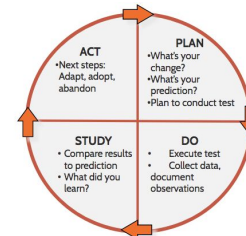
Appendices

SUMMER → FALL → WINTER → SPRING →

NETWORK:

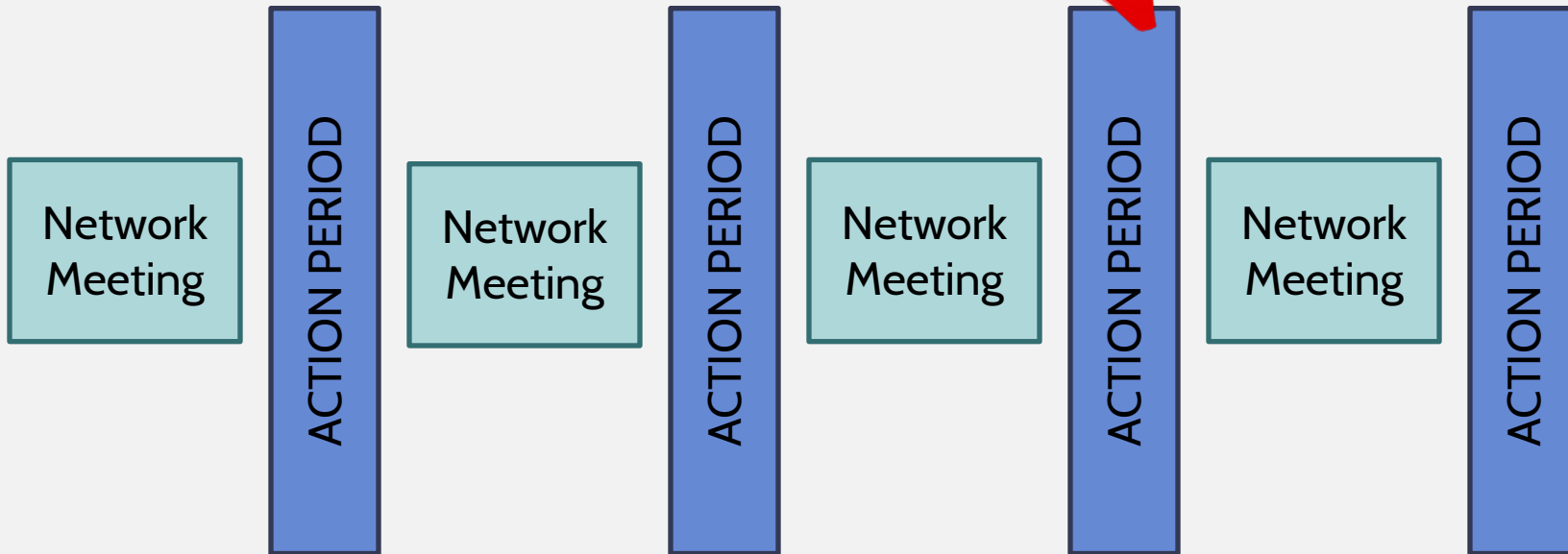Network Meeting | ACTION PERIOD | Network Meeting | ACTION PERIOD | Network Meeting | ACTION PERIOD | Network Meeting | ACTION PERIOD

HUB: Regular internal meetings, coaching calls/site visits with district & local teams

DISTRICT: Regular team meetings, coaching calls & visits with schools

SCHOOL: (Ideally) Weekly testing and improvement team meetings with support
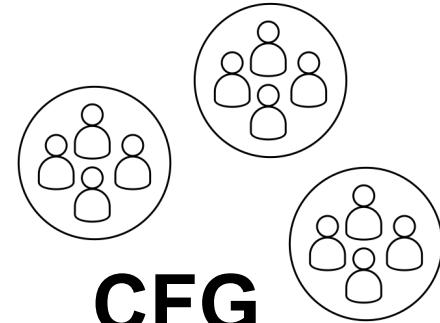
Capacity & Capability-Building Efforts

- **CORE Improvement Community: CIC**

- **Professional Learning Programs:**
  - Local Improvement Facilitators' Training (LIFT)
  - Executive Leadership for Improvement & Equity

- **District-specific offerings**
  - Principal professional learning series
  - Introduction to improvement science
  - Other district staff learning

ELIE

CFG
Critical Friends Groups

15 Participants
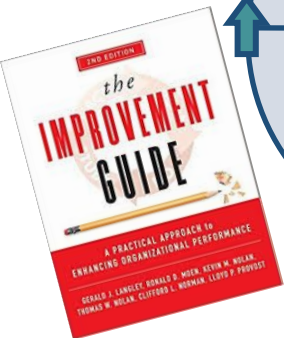
Local Improvement Facilitators' Training

What specifically are we trying to accomplish?
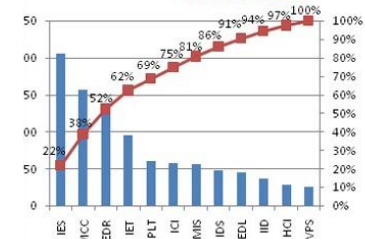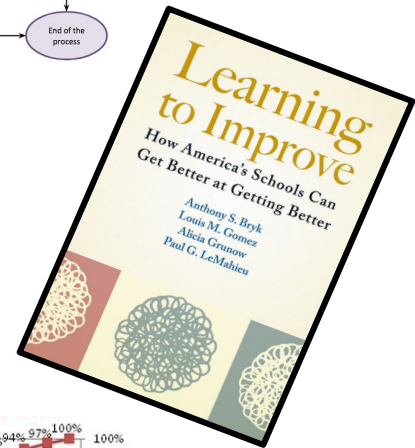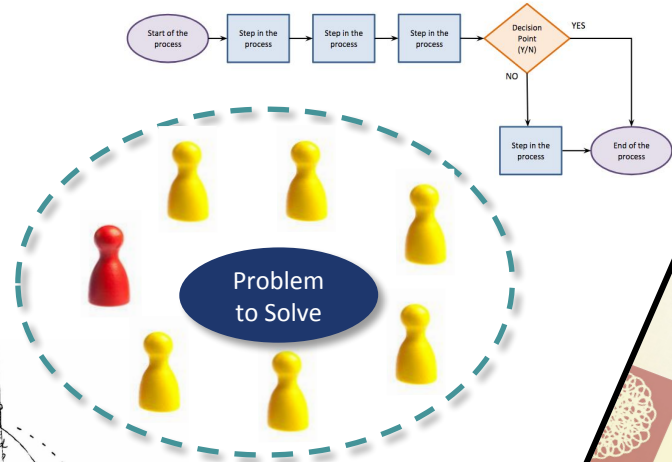
What changes might we introduce and why?

How will we know that a change is actually an improvement?

ACT · PLAN · STUDY · DO

Model for Improvement @2009 API

PHASE 2: DIAGNOSE
Investigate the problem & its causes

PHASE THREE: CHARTER
Focus collective efforts around shared aim, measures, and theory

PHASE 5: SPREAD
Consolidate what works to make permanent in your practice & to share with others

PHASE 1: LAUNCH
Identify the problem area & launch the team

PHASE FOUR: TEST
Test change ideas and build evidence around how & where they work

Problem to Solve

42 Participants

The CORE-PACE Research Partnership

Continuous improvement

Smarter policy & practice
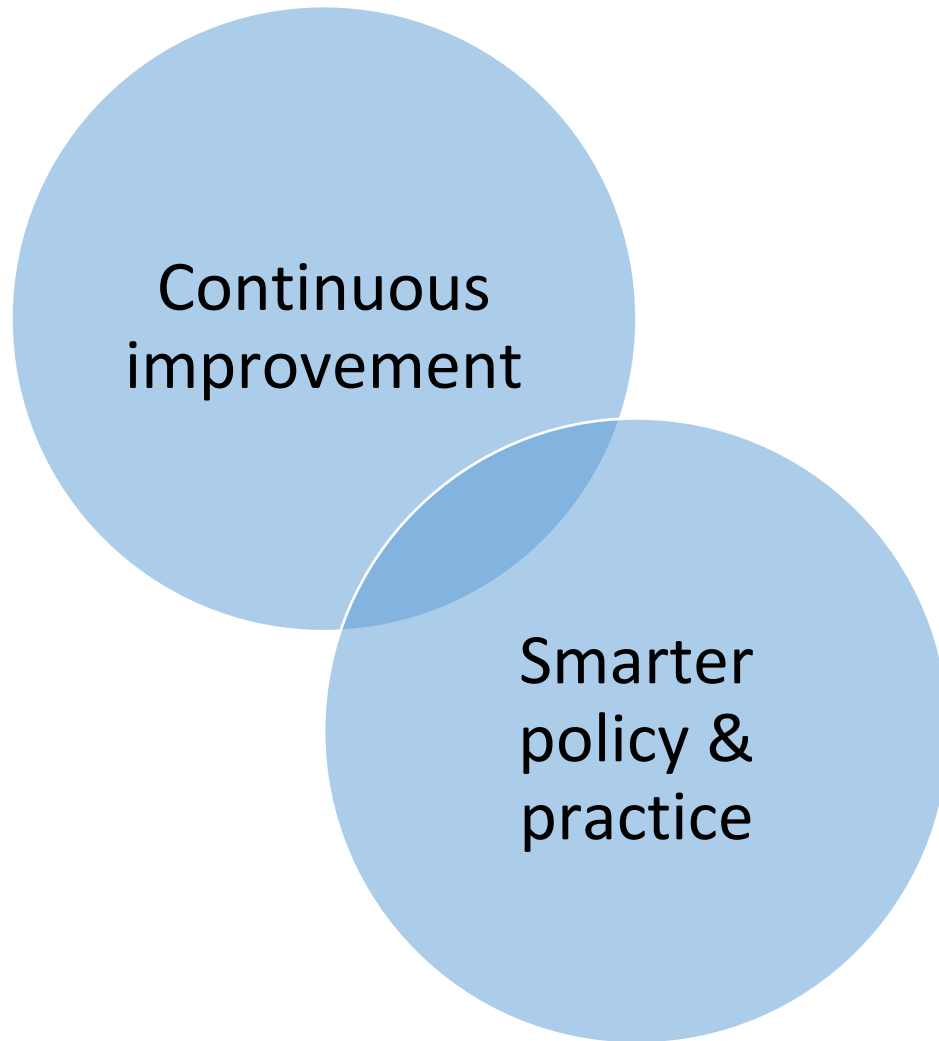
By sharing:
- Lessons learned
- Tools and resources
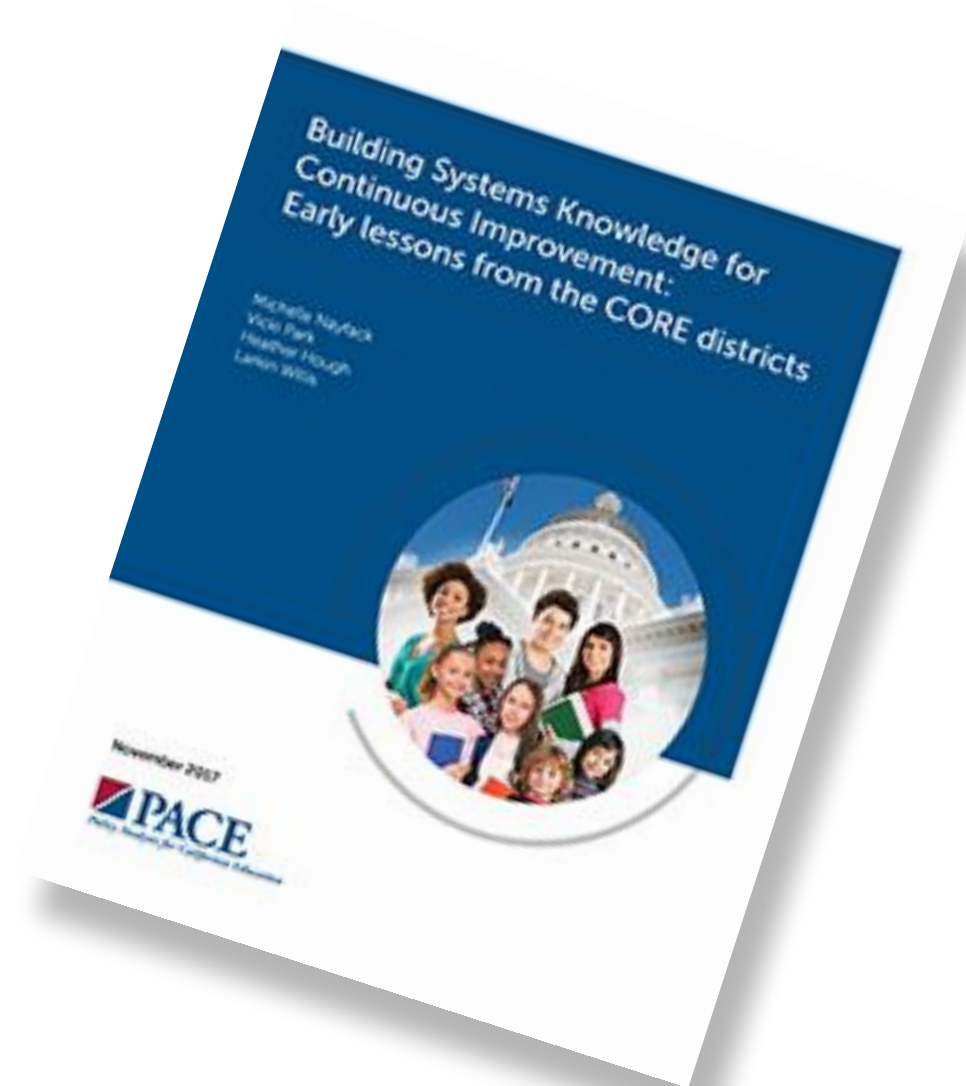- Best practices
- Original research with data unique to CORE

What we've learned

Building Systems Knowledge for Continuous Improvement:
Early lessons from the CORE districts

Success Starts with Strong Teams

Effective systems analysis starts with creating an improvement team that is set up for success.

" I feel like there's more potential for us to be able to solve a problem, identify redundancies, and be more efficient. I feel like it gives us better leverage. We're not working on six different things. We're actually working on one thing together…I think it builds confidence in us, organizationally."

"When we can work well together and utilize each other's strengths and make those weaknesses disappear because of the meshing of the teams and the expertise, it becomes a really powerful thing."
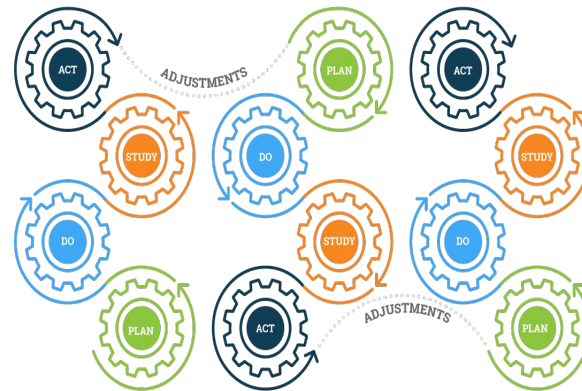
Data Builds Understanding

Accessing and interpreting different types of data is critical to building a complete understanding of a problem of practice.

System Analysis is Empowering

Systems analysis enables educators to revise, refine and expand their initial hypotheses about the reasons behind their problem of practice.

Expert Facilitation is Beneficial

Teams that are getting started in continuous improvement benefit from expert facilitation and learn-by-doing activities.

A taste of how we are approaching the role of leadership and equity in improvement

Organizational Understanding

Seeing the System

How are we as systems leaders attending to the Technical & the Relational Aspects of the Work
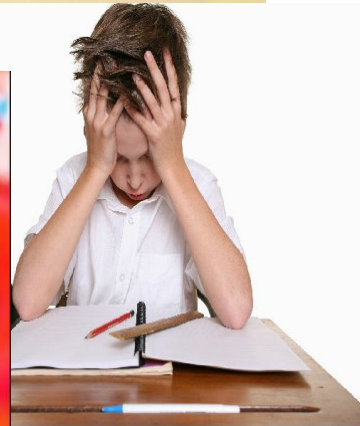
Working Towards Equity Means...

Removing the predictability of success and failure that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor

Working Towards Equity Means...

Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive school environments for all

Working Towards Equity Means...

Discovering & cultivating the unique gifts, talents & interests that every human possesses.

Hallucination...

*The "**hallucination**" was that if you changed the structure of the organization – assigned people to have the primary responsibility for a key initiative – the organization would then respond to the change.*
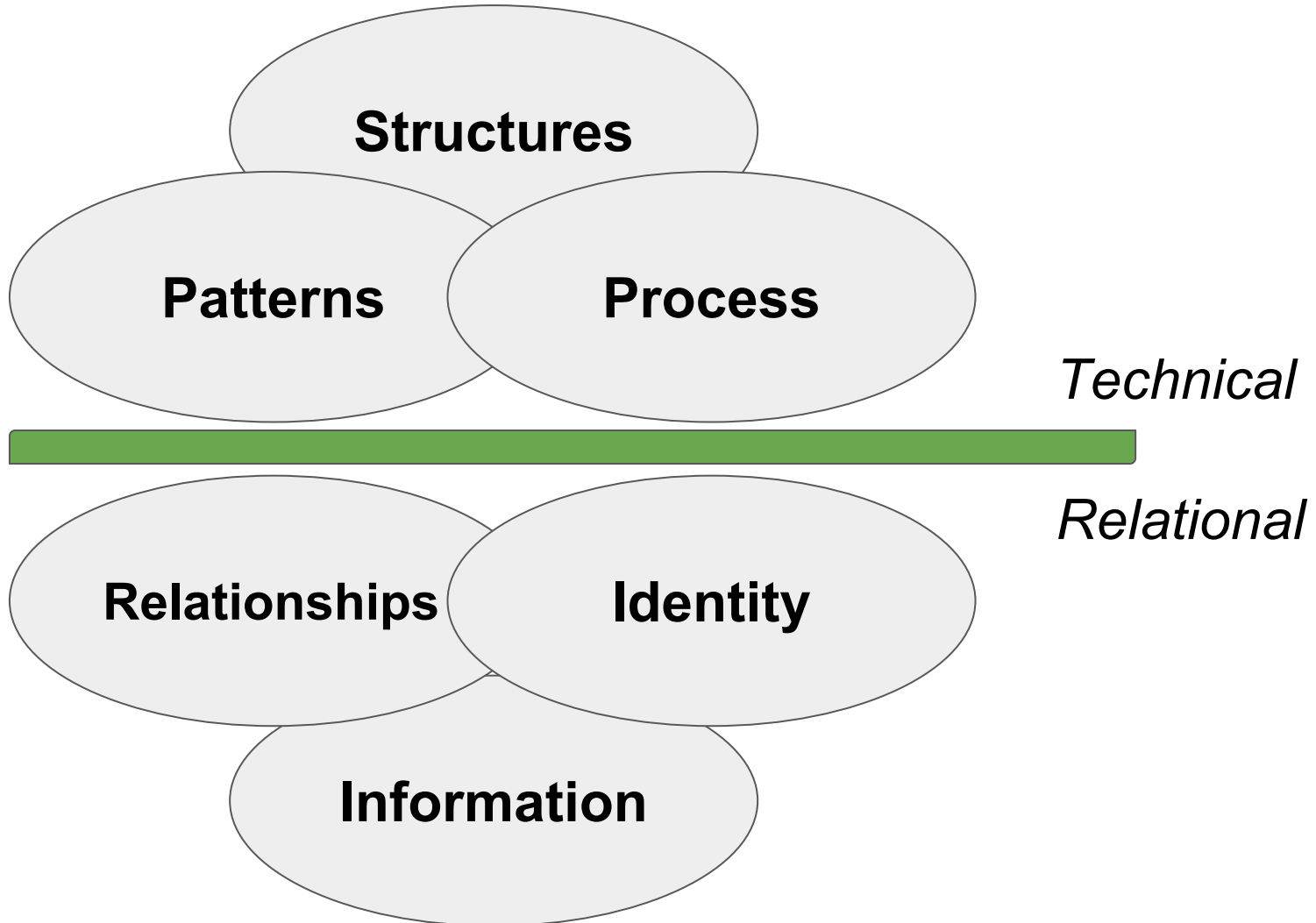
Additionally, the thinking was that if you designed explicit processes that detailed out every step of a change process, people would willingly respond and create the desired change."
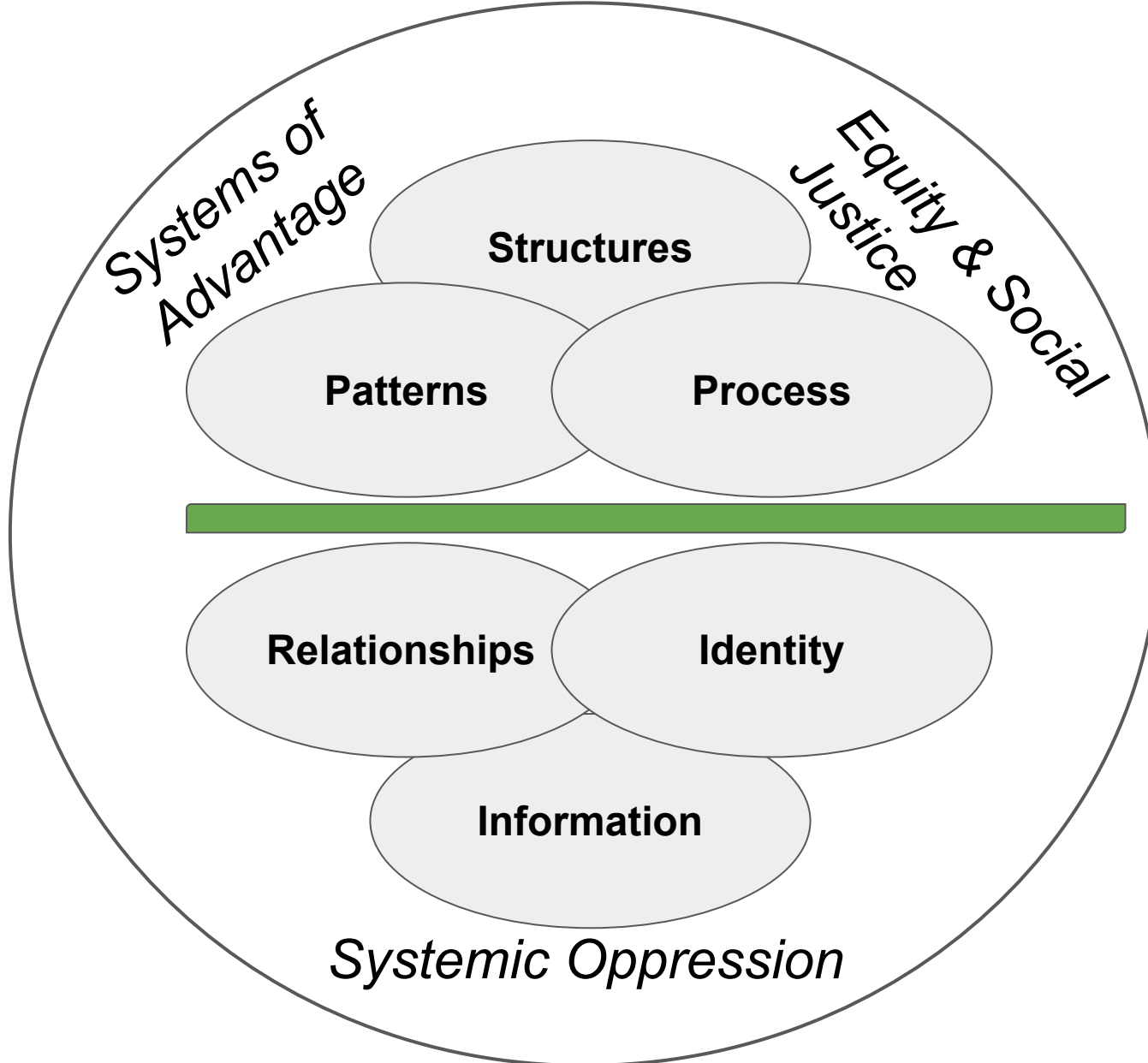
-Steve Zuieback and Tim Dalmau

Six Circle Model

Organizations / Systems

Six Circle Model

Leading for Equity

Systems of Advantage

Equity & Social Justice

Structures

Patterns

Process

Relationships

Identity

Information

Circle of Human Experience

Systemic Oppression

Superintendent Panel Discussion

Reflection from Andres Alonso, Professor of Practice at Harvard's School of Education

Q & A

Close