

Rethinking Professional Development

Culture, Continuity & Continuous Learning

Gaston School District

Emily Putney & Ashley Cantrell

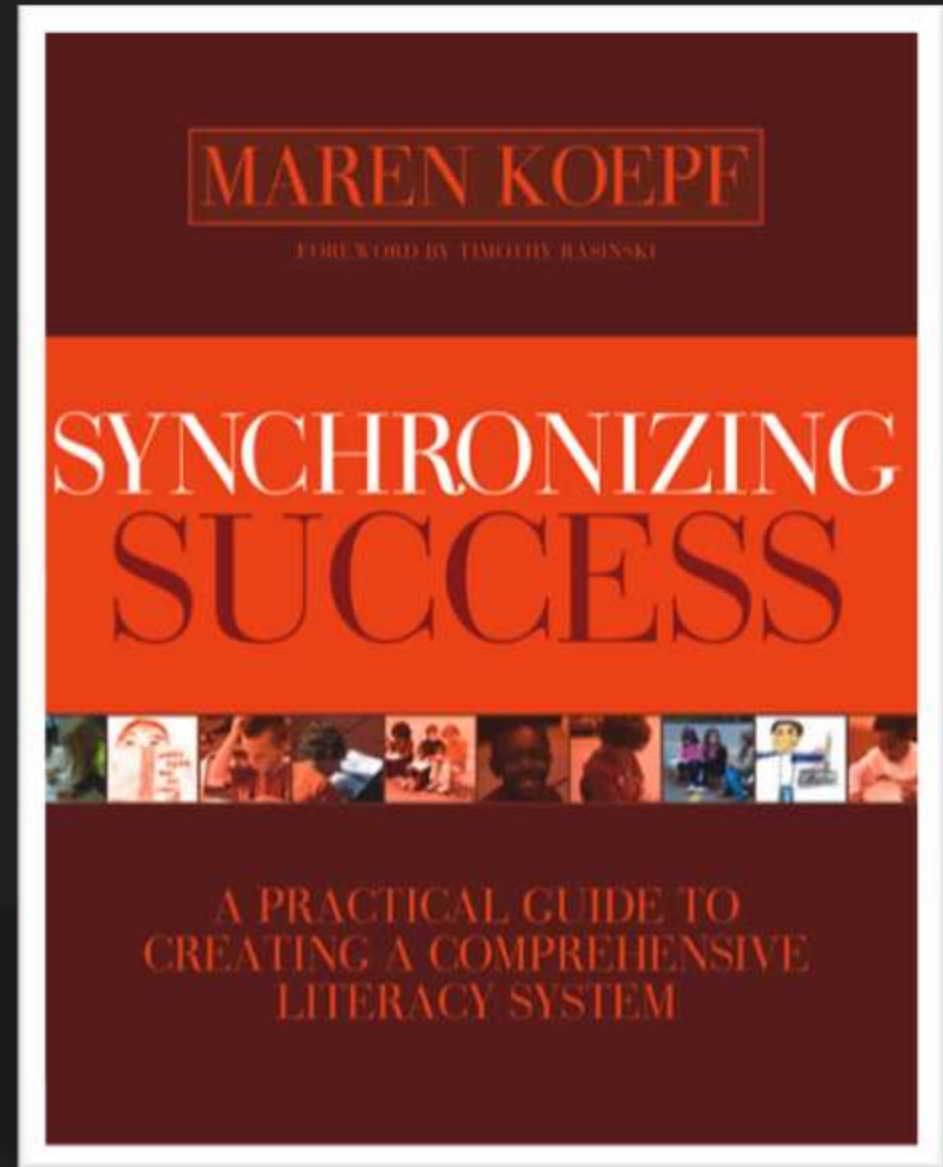
Maren Koepf

District Literacy Specialist

Moreland Hills Elementary

Creating a learning network to support students, staff and parents

Emerging from isolated classrooms & offices to generate **mutual resources, solutions and innovations**



How do schools accomplish
systematic and lasting change
in their literacy programs?

www.kahoot.it



[//play.kahoot.it/#/?quizId=02946047-bb08-4c52-9cac-e36515260609&gameMode=ghost&startTime=1491492867066](https://play.kahoot.it/#/?quizId=02946047-bb08-4c52-9cac-e36515260609&gameMode=ghost&startTime=1491492867066)

Key Factors to Sustain Change Efforts

Perkins, D. (2014) When Change Has Legs. Educational Leadership.

1. **Framework**: a philosophy that offers a vision for more effective teaching and learning; provides common language and perspective
2. **Leaders**: political visionary & practical visionary
 - *POLITICAL*: Commitment to innovation, advocating for it and making it a priority (principal)
 - *PRACTICAL*: Manages the program on the ground, organizing faculty groups, conducting training and coaching (teacher)
3. **Community**: collegial culture, teachers meeting regularly in small groups to discuss experiences as they try out the target framework
4. **Institutionalization-** framework is written into the DNA of the school
 - Mission Statement
 - Family Communications
 - Formal Documents
 - Hiring Practices for New Staff



“Change is hard. Change is anxiety-provoking and necessarily slow. My own experience suggests that when we try to change everything at once, little that matters actually changes. But someone has to initiate and support the needed change. If not you, who will? If not today, when?”

-Richard Allington “What Really Matters for Struggling Readers”

Random Acts of Good Intention

Slow Meaningful Change



Unified Vision

- The problem is if our teaching is to be an art, we need **an organizing vision that rings all of these separate components into something graceful & vital and significant**. It's not the number of good ideas that turns our work into art, but the selection, balance, coherence and design of those ideas.
-Lucy Calkins "The Art of Teaching"



Gaston Elementary

260 Students
12 Teachers
Kindergarten – 6th Grade

Journeys: Reading Core
Title I
RTI Year 3



RTIi: A Change in Culture

Susy McKenzie, Superintendent

Culture Shift



Building a School Wide System of Reading Instruction

Training

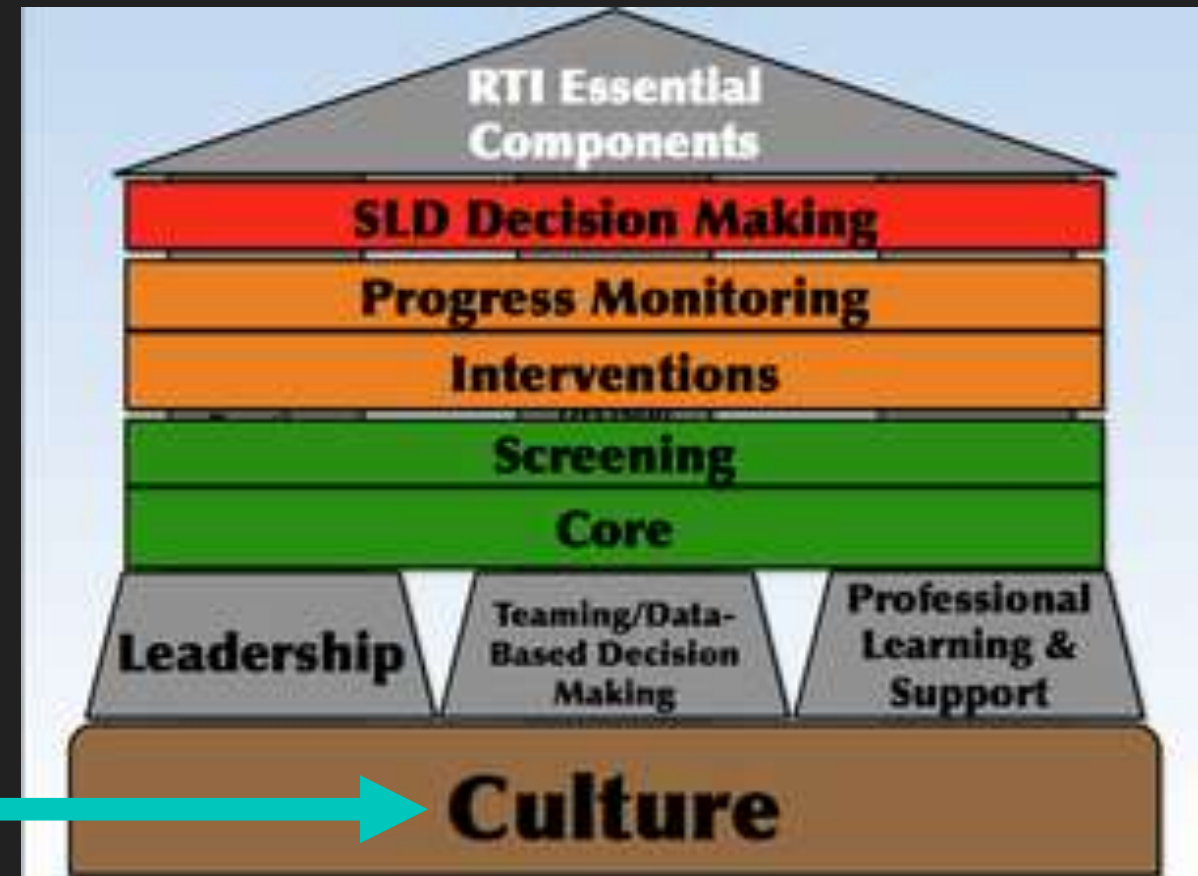
- Adopting Core Curriculum
- Anita Archer Engagement Strategies

CULTURE

- Professional Learning Communities
- Peer Observations
- Critical Conversations
- Trust
- Risk

Culture Shift

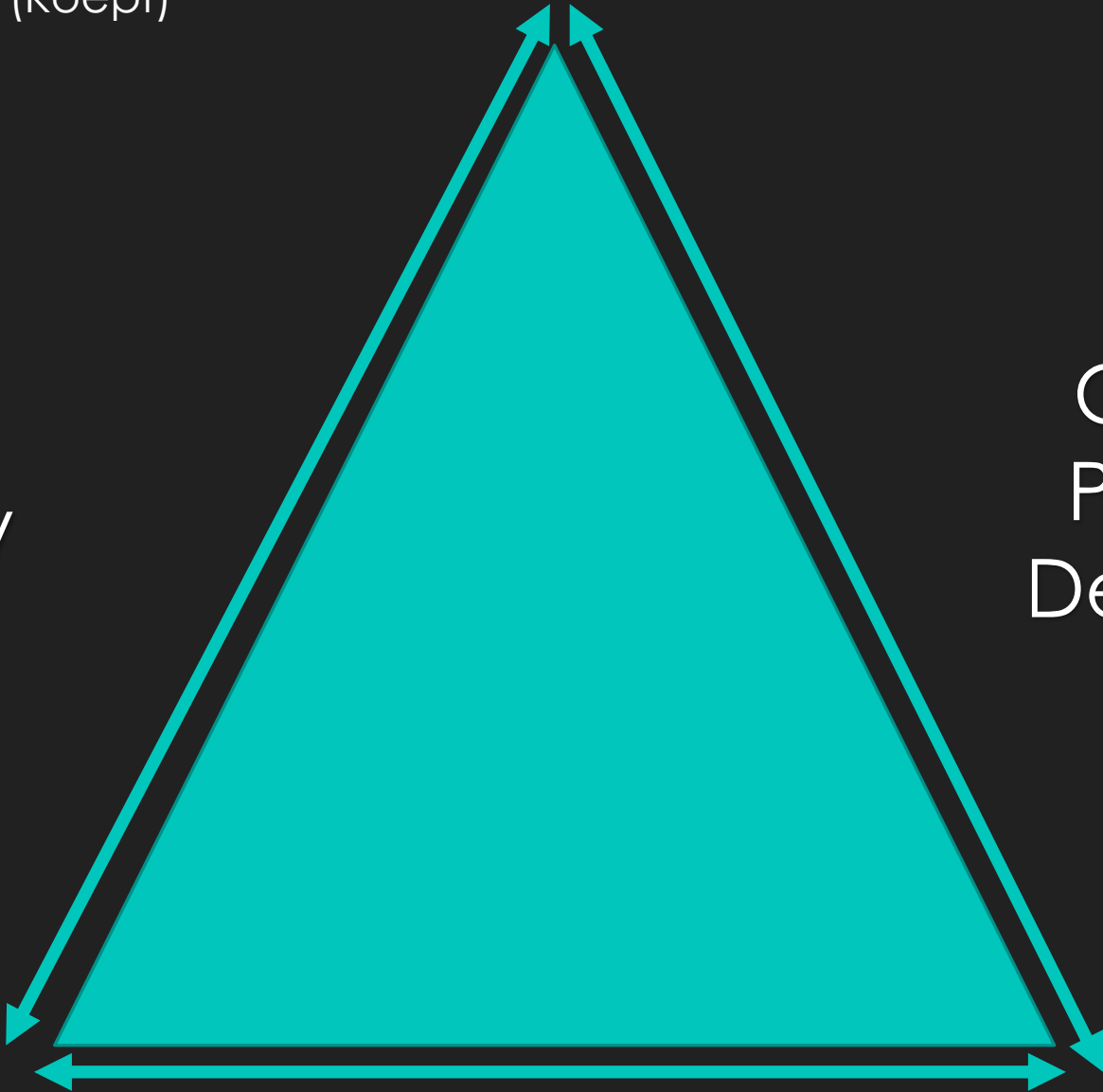
- Professional Learning: a school culture of **continuous learning for all**



Continuity

Continuous
Professional
Development

Collaborative Leadership



Foundation of Trust & Communication

○ Tim Larkin, Principal



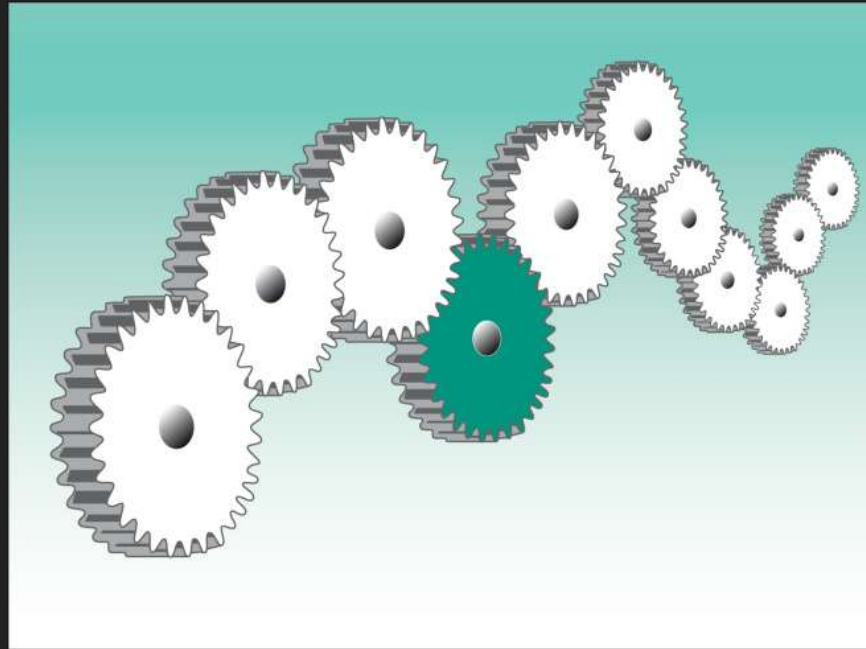
Together, we can do hard things.

The difference between what we are doing and what we are capable of doing would solve most of the world's problems.

-Mahandas Gandhi



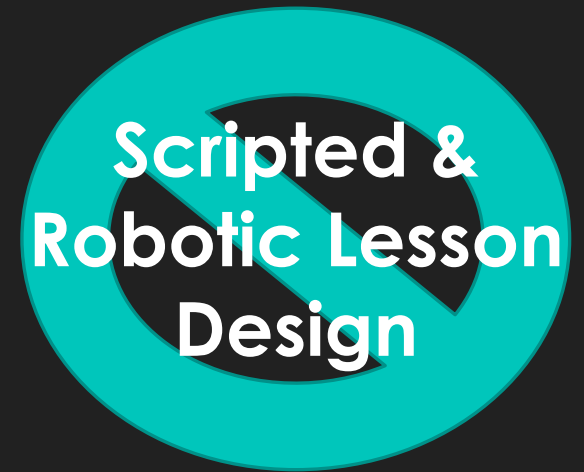
Continuity



Systems of Support

Quality Instruction

- Teacher Expertise
- Professional Judgement
- Teaming
- Streamlining Learning Continuum



Continuity of:
Practice
Policies
Resources

-----from classroom to classroom & grade to grade-----

Working Smarter

- Combining our efforts to maximize our effect on student learning



Learning Going Viral

○ Brian DeWolf

- 5th Grade Teacher
- PBIS Leader
- SIT Team Leader



Continuity

What resources & practices can be made more consistent to advance the goals of our literacy system?

- 2 Minute Quick Write
- Small Group Share

Continuous Learning for All



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Personal & Organizational Responsibility

Professional development should be a personal professional responsibility as well as an organizational responsibility. In other words, **each teacher has a professional responsibility to become more expert with each year of teaching.** Each district has an organizational responsibility to support the professional development of each member of the faculty.

-Richard Allington, "What Really Matters for Struggling Readers"



Embedded Professional Development

- **Intentional** Discussion, Study, Communication & Sharing
- Opportunities for **Practice**
- **Feedback** and **Support**

1. Range from simple to structured options
2. Both horizontal and vertical conversation
3. Collaboration between role groups



Peer Observations

- **Teachers observing and learning from one another**

- **Culture**

- Willingness to Risk
 - Trust
 - Building a culture of reflective practice

- **Building Continuity of Instruction**

- Disseminate best practice
 - Immediate take-away
 - Feedback



- RTI Fidelity Check vs. Peer Observation
- Reflection Conversations

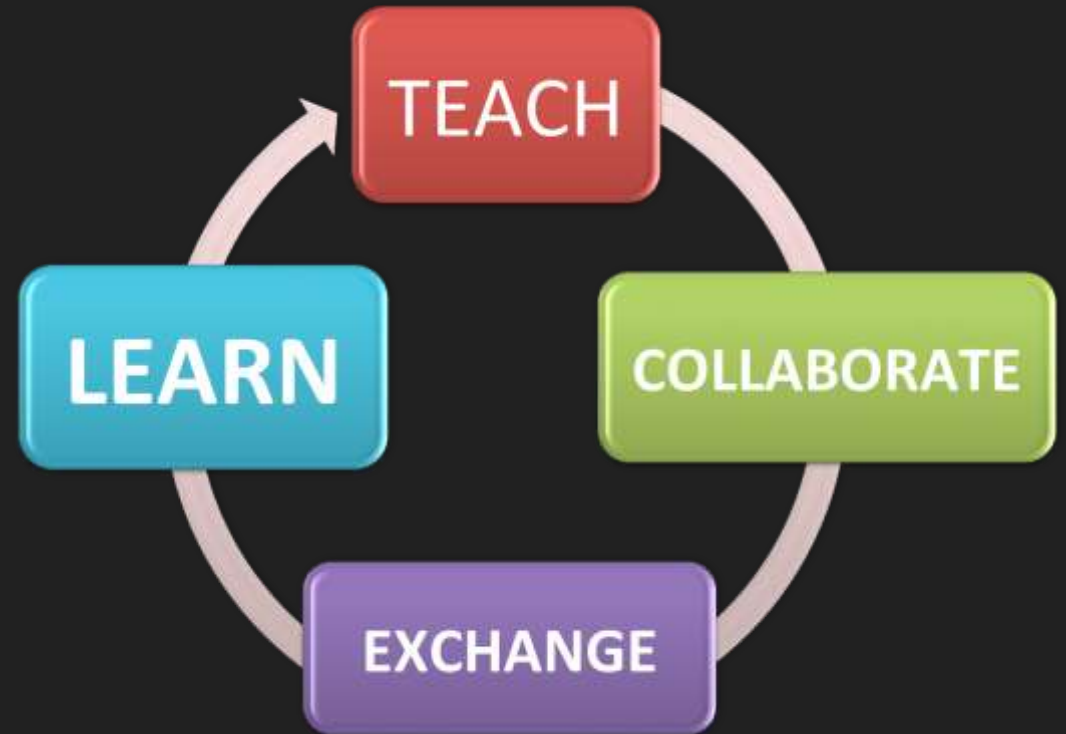
Reflecting on Peer Learning

- Thea Hiersche, 6th Grade
- Brian DeWolf, 5th Grade
- Laura Christensen, 4th Grade



Professional Learning Communities

- Wednesday Early Release
 - Primary Team
 - Intermediate Team
- Loose & Tight Structure
- Shared Leadership



K-2 PLC

- Collaborate

- Exchange

- Learn

- RISK

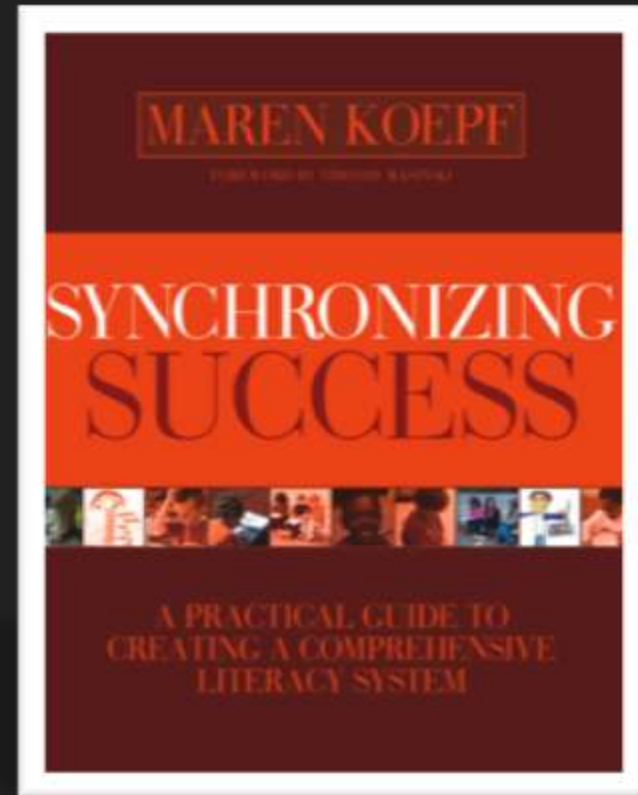
- TRUST

- Group Dynamics

- Successes

9 Modes of Embedded PD

1. Design Academy
2. Book or Article Study
3. Shared Inquiry
4. Common Resources
5. Classroom Coaching
6. Training Sessions
7. Professional Release Day
8. Site Visit
9. Expert Forum



Continuous Professional Development

How can support my school's literacy goals through on-going professional development?

- Quick Write
- Small Group Share

Shared Leadership



Collective Commitment



Involving teachers, administrators, students, parents and community members in skillful ways promotes collective commitment to learning for all students. **Launching such a shared vision** and visionary journey into school improvement unites us as travelers on the journey toward school improvement that is **challenging and deeply satisfying, and which leads to remarkable results for all learners.**

-Linda Lambert

“Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement”

Ownership & Participation

- Major decisions become initiatives shared by many

- Local Experts

- PBIS- Behavior
- SIT- Individual Student Problem Solving
- RTI- Reading Systems
- Early Childhood- PreK and Beyond
- Math- New Curriculum Adoption
- Science & Social Studies
- Engagement
- Data Management



Teachers as Leaders

○Thea Hiersche

- 6th Grade Teacher
- TAG Coordinator
- Strategic Intervention Team Leader



Relationships Matter

Trust & Honest Conversations

“Relationships matter. They made a difference in how we treat one another, and they satisfy the hunger for belonging and being heard. **Bonds of trust and honest conversations present critical contributions for shaping and sustaining meaningful reform.** Collaborative leadership shapes a school’s culture into an intrinsically gratifying workplace of care, connection, and productivity.”

-Marn Koepf “Synchronizing Success” page 53

Culture of Support

- Care
 - Connection
 - Productivity
-
- **Laura Christensen**
 - 4th Grade Teacher
 - First Year at Gaston



Collaborative Leadership

What opportunities for collaborative leadership will expand participation and advance the goals of our literacy system?

- 2 Minute Quick Write
- Small Group Share

Backwards Design

Without a **clear vision pointing to the intended goal** on that distant horizon, you might find yourself heading in circles and visiting the same obstacles again and again.

-Maren Koep "Synchronizing Success" p 11

Creating a learning network to support students, staff and parents

Emerging from isolated classrooms & offices to generate **mutual resources, solutions and innovations**



Slow Meaningful Change



Culture Shift

- Trust
- Risk

Continuity

- Practice
- Policies
- Resources

Continuous Learning for All

- Embedded PD
- Peer Observations
- PLC Structure

Shared Leadership

- Collective Commitment
- Ownership & Participation
- Gratifying Work Place

Making it Your Own

○ Reflection Sheet

○ Synchronizing Success, page 73

1. What **supports** do you and your colleagues need in order to practice professional reflection and study?
2. What assets and **resources** are available to coordinate the supports necessary?
 1. Space for PD
 2. Time
 3. Expertise
 4. Models to Observe
 5. Professional Resources
 6. Core Interest Group
 7. Other:_____