

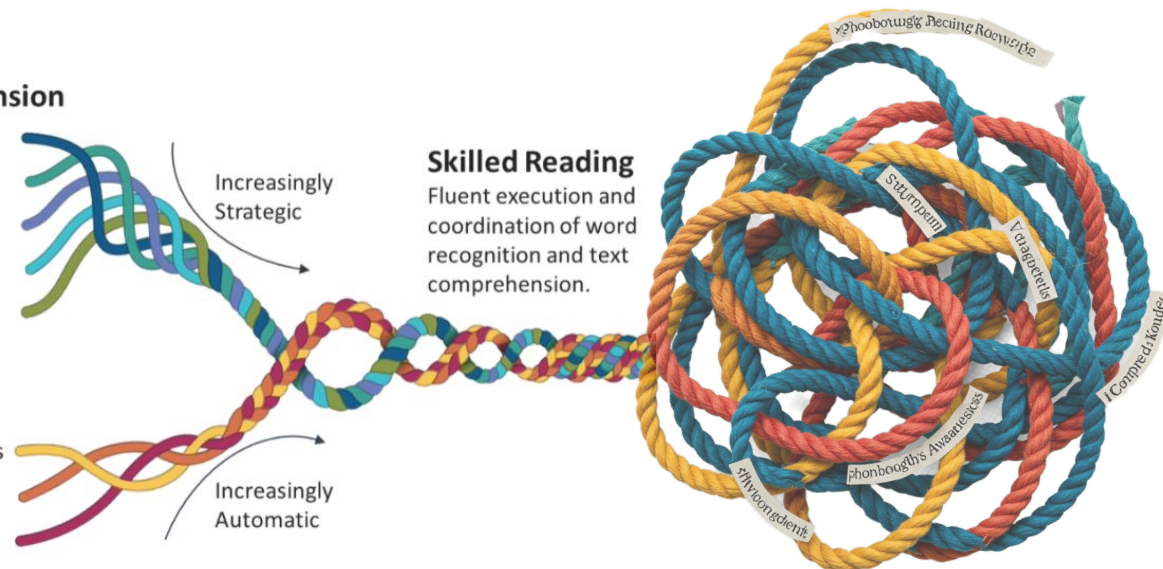
Turning Research Into Reality: Why Is It So Hard?

Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition



Nystrom Elementary School

Literacy Coach

Sacramento County Office of Education

California's Early Literacy Support Block Grant

Oakland Unified School District

District Early Literacy Lead
Site-based Literacy Coach
Interventionist
1st Grade Teacher



Margaret Goldberg

margaret@righttoreadproject.com

[@right2readproj](https://twitter.com/right2readproj)

Agenda

Hello!

What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

... Will Go Wrong

Planning for Failure

Plotting Success

Working Together

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Change Is a Long Process

Initiating Change

Agreeing that change needs to happen



Planning for Change

Developing implementation plans



Implementing Change

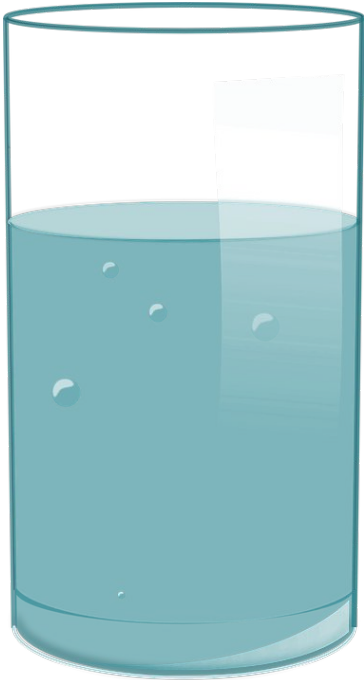
Supporting implementation



People developing an
initiative tend to be excited.

(People expected to implement often groan.)

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Those implementing the initiative know:

- All the things that can go wrong
- How hard the work will be

Those planning the initiative know:

- Reasons why the plan is needed
- How great the results can be

Go Fever

Focused on a mission

Excited by the work

Feeling the importance of the job

Urgency to get it done

Working as part of a group and feeling courageous

What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

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Implementation Example

We need to change how reading is taught

A new curriculum will be better

“We’ll just do it. We’re trying to do the right things and for the right reasons. Everyone will see that and they’ll be on board.”

Der Mensch Tracht, Un Gott Lacht.

We make plans and God laughs.

What Can Go Wrong...
Will Go Wrong

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*“Hindsight is a wonderful
thing but foresight is
better.”*

It's Hard to Think About Resistance

Sometimes we fear we'll lose something if we talk about what might go wrong, such as...

Momentum
or
Time

Credibility

Control

Buy-in

It's Worth Talking About

Why might teachers object to a new reading program?

What might they need in order to improve instruction?

What will be similar or different in classrooms?

Common Leadership

Overly Optimistic:

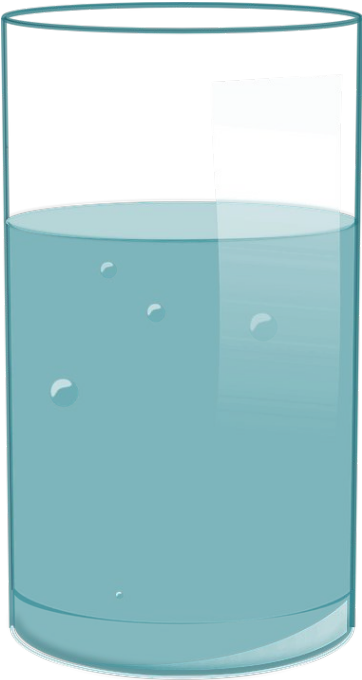
“I know we need to focus on reading. We’ll adopt a new program that’s popular elsewhere and our own teachers will discover great things about it.”

Unhelpfully Apologetic:

“The teachers are going to be upset. I’ll tell them that I trust them and I think they should teach the way they think is best.

That way they’ll blame district leadership for the new program and not me.”

Aim for Realism



Half Empty:

- There will be resistance
- Change is hard

Half Full:

- We need to do better
- We can do better

If We Talk Through Potential Resistance

We may actually gain...

Momentum
or
Time

Credibility

Control

Buy-in

Planning for Failure

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What goes wrong with
curriculum implementation
plans?

Simple Leadership

**A single, comprehensive
core curriculum**



Imagines Simple Implementation

Week Of _____

Subject	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

ELA Program Name

AT-A-GLANCE®

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Simple Leadership

A single, comprehensive
core curriculum



Hard Implementation

- ❑ Replicates instruction teachers already have (and like?)
- ❑ Not all components of the program are equally well-designed
- ❑ Takes a lot of planning time to learn how to teach it well
- ❑ Focuses on curriculum vs. best-practices

“The biggest problem in education is not curricula, methodology, standardized tests, or teacher education.

The biggest challenge is to make the practice of teaching visible, sharable and analyzable.”

Simple Leadership

A professional development series delivered by the curriculum's publisher



Thoughtful Leadership

- ❑ We need common language and frameworks to discuss teaching moves and strategies
- ❑ Teachers need opportunities to observe each other's practice
- ❑ We need systems to collect evidence about what works and refine practice

“The 'shiny new program syndrome' in education leadership reflects our cultural bias toward innovation over implementation, despite evidence that persistence is what transforms schools.”

Plotting for Success

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Typical Implementation

Dream Up a Plan

Realize Resources Are Limited

Scale Way Back

Roll Out a Plan No One Loves

Gardening Analogy

Dream Up a Plan

Realize Resources Are Limited

Spread Things Out Thin

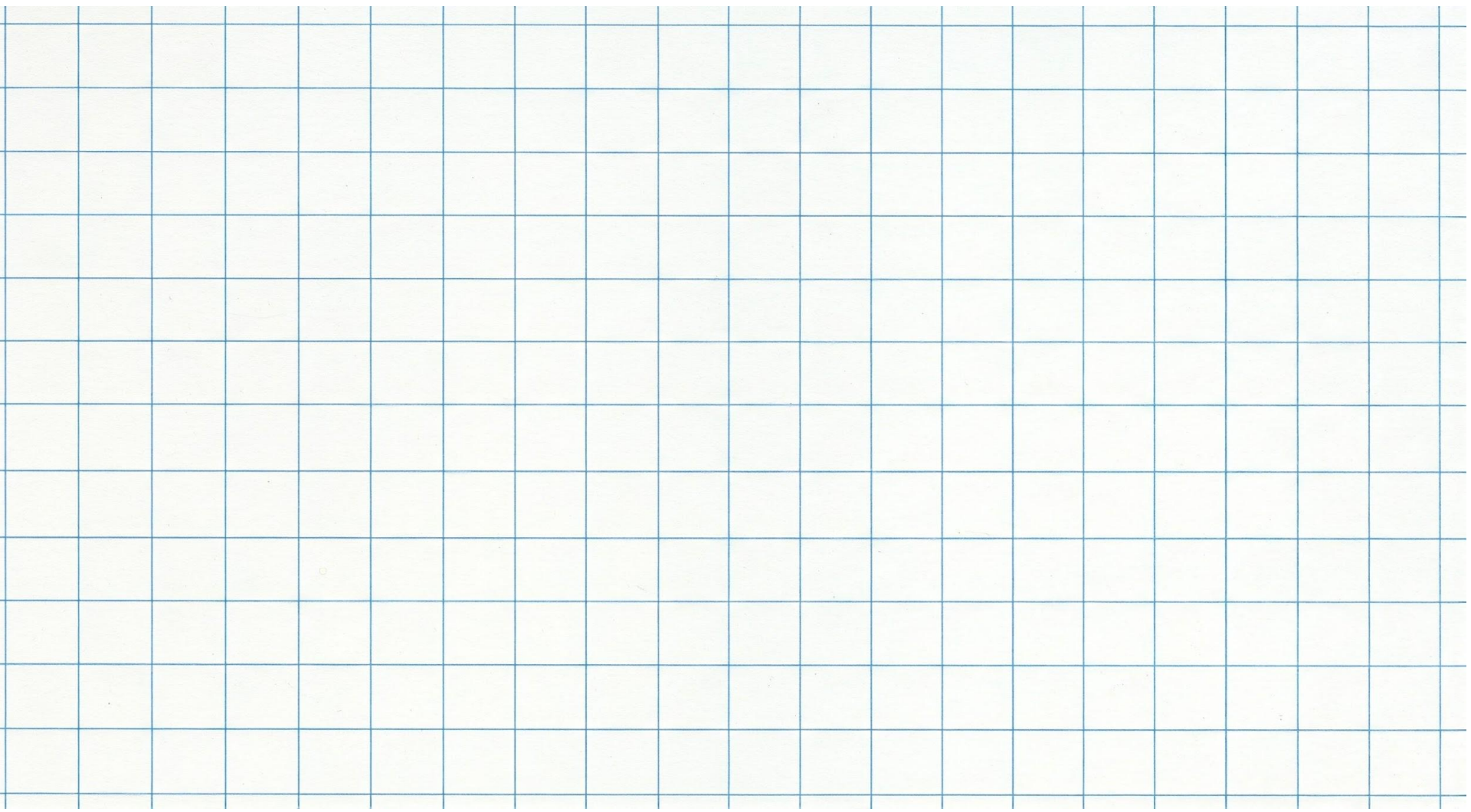
Realize Maintenance Is a Pain

Before...

...and After



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What's Already There?

How much light is there?

How much do teachers already know?

What do we know about the soil?

How much PD and collaboration is possible?

What hardscaping already exists?

What's nonnegotiable?

What's been planted before?

What's already been tried?

“Continuous improvement requires building upon foundations rather than repeatedly breaking ground.”



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Typical Method

Dream Up a Plan

Realize Resources Are Limited

Spread Things Out Thin

Realize Maintenance Is a Pain
Hope for a New Initiative

Bradley Method

Survey the Available Resources

Pick a Small Plot

Tend to the Plot

Continue to Tend
Monitor Maintenance Needed

As New Resources Become Available

What's needed to maintain existing plot(s)?

What resources are left over for expansion?

Expand as resources allow.

Scaling too often means:

Do more with less

Done?

Materials

Initial Training

Coaching to Fidelity

~~Moving on?~~

**Everything
Needs Tending**

Consumables

New Teachers

Ongoing Monitoring

**Collecting Data to Determine
Capacity**

Plot By Plot

Week Of _____					
Subject	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
NEXT	Foundational Skills Instruction				
	Fluency Practice				
	<i>Then</i> Language Comprehension				
	Writing				

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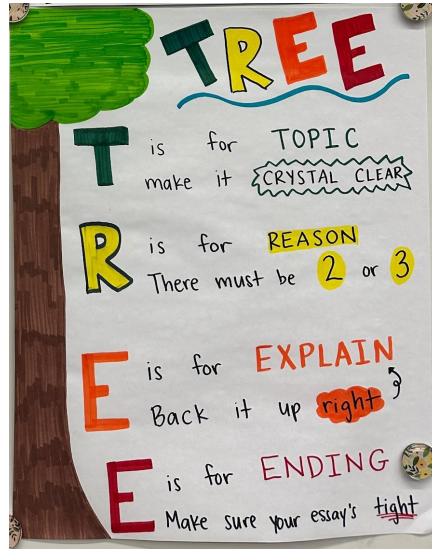
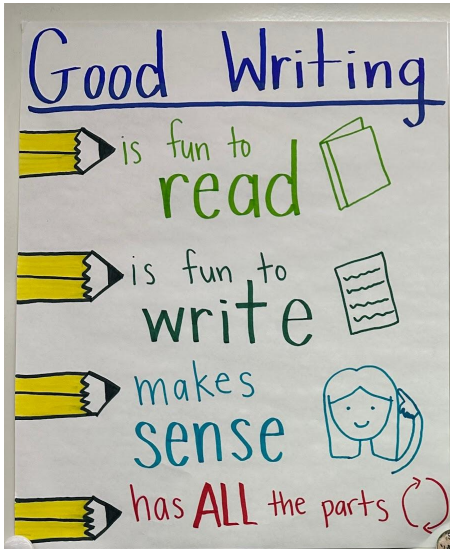
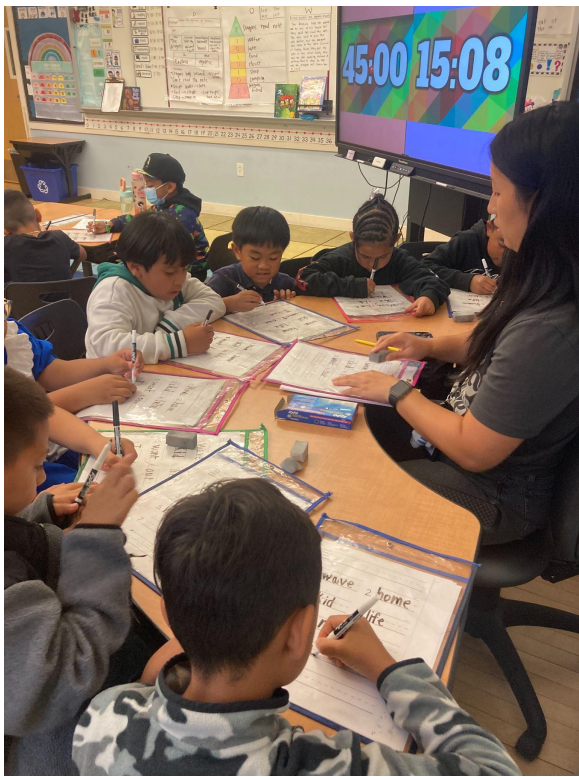
**Bit by Bit,
Done Carefully**



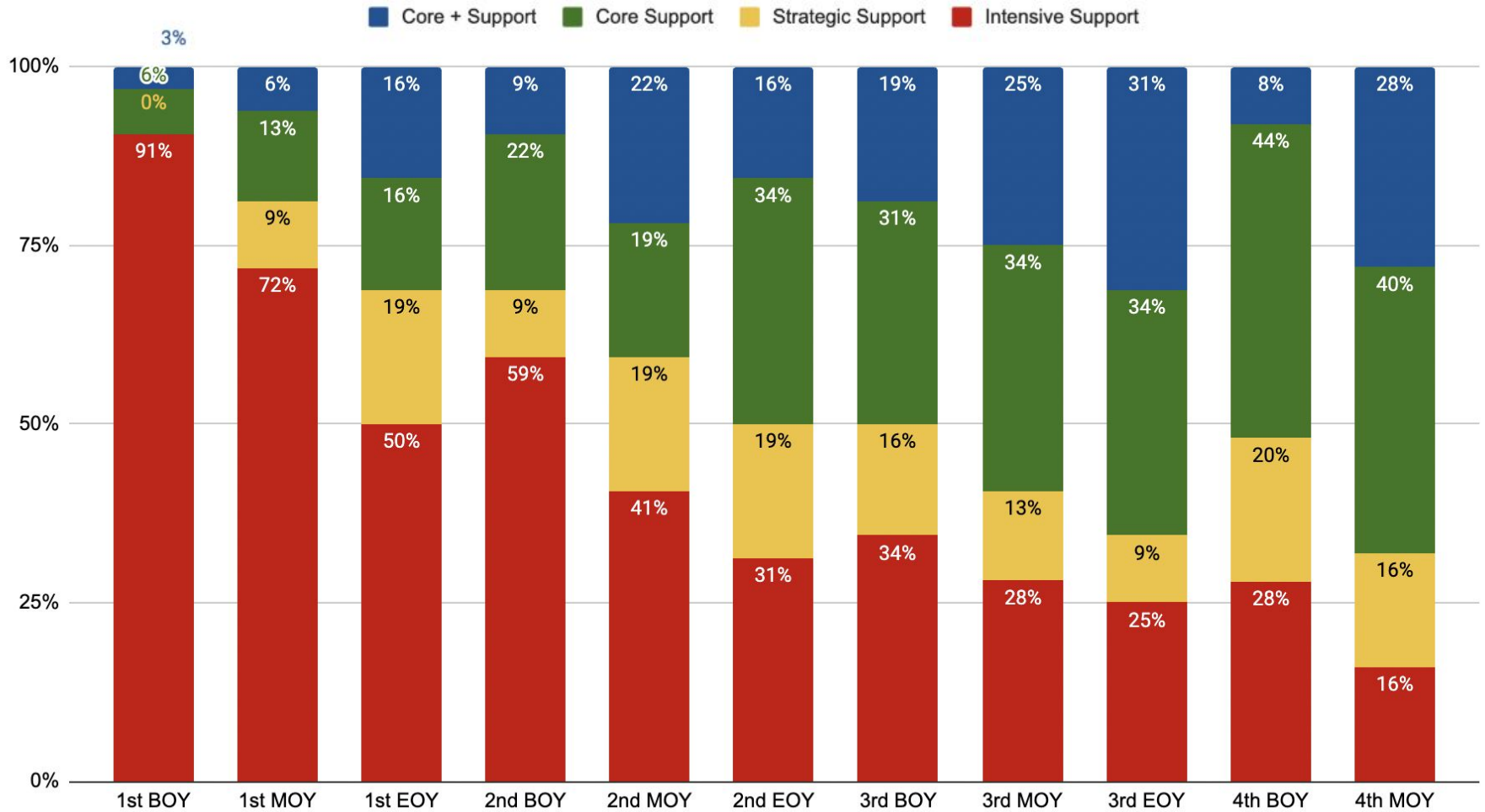
**All at Once...
Then Giving Up**



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4th Grade Cohort (Stable)



Working Together

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“Each new administration feels compelled to plant its own flag, creating a graveyard of abandoned initiatives that never had time to bear fruit.”

Leadership

What's already in place?

What's needed to maintain existing plot(s)?

What resources are left over for expansion?

Expand as resources allow.

Funders

What's already in place?

What's needed by the people implementing?

How will we know if we're helping?

Funders and Researchers

What's already in place?

What's needed by the people implementing?

How will we know if we're helping?

Teachers

What would a good-faith effort look like?

How will we know if our work is working?

What help do we need to succeed?

Reflections and Questions

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