

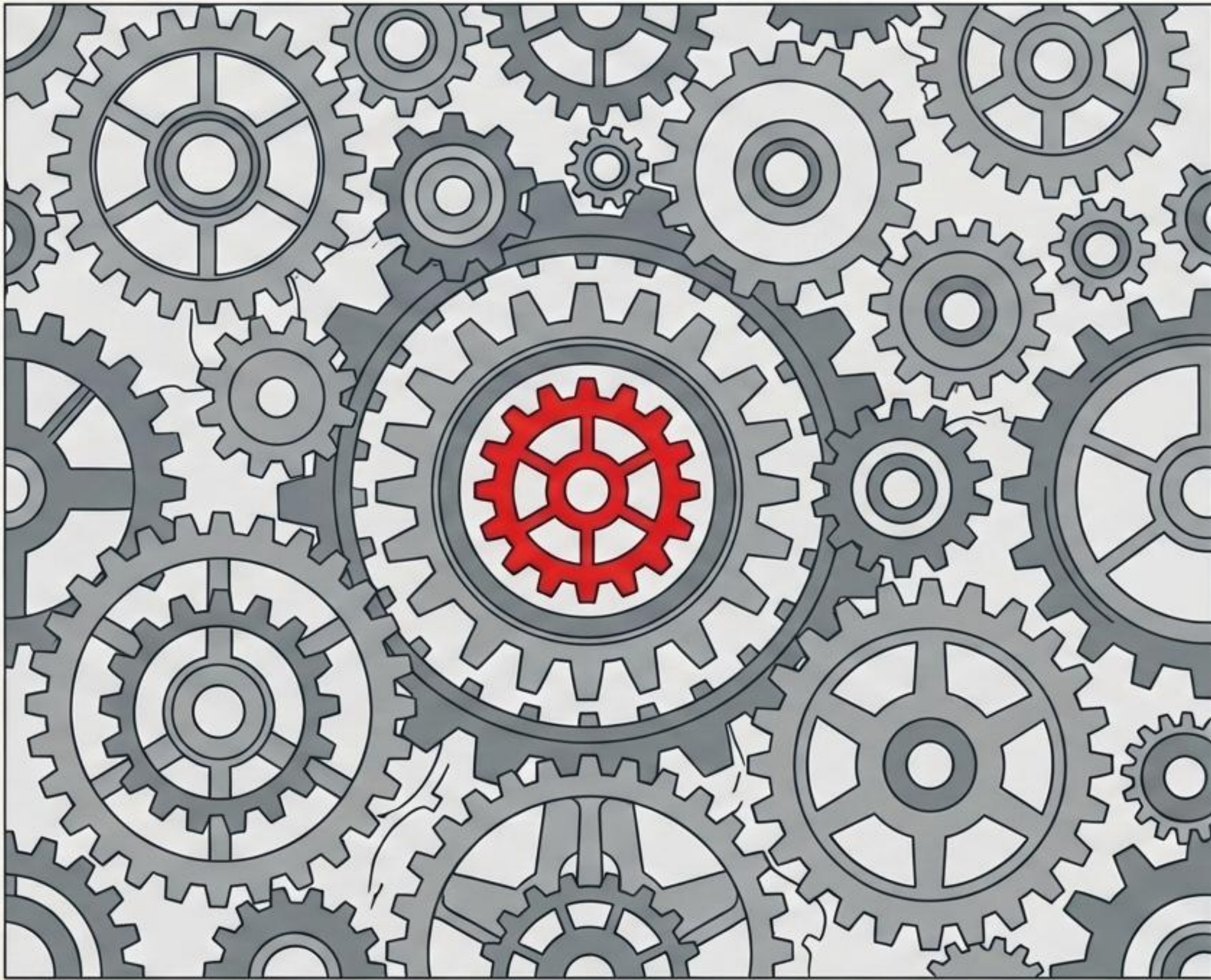


# Navigating the School Turnaround Ecosystem

A STRATEGIC EVIDENCE WORKSHOP FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS

Dr. Ken Savage,  
Deputy Superintendent  
School District of Lee County, FL





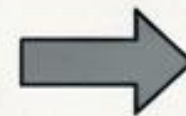
# The core illusion of turnaround leadership

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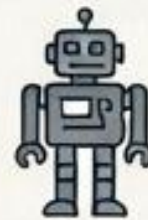
We are conditioned to view school turnaround as a mechanical problem—a static system of cogs and machinery. When schools are treated like machines:



We focus on top-down directives to fix broken parts.



We assume a rigid, linear outcome to every input.



We sometimes forget that the machinery is entirely made up of human beings.



# Schools are living ecosystems

Turnaround requires understanding a dynamic environment full of people.

## Interdependence

A shift in one area ripples through the entire environment.

## Flow

Resources, support, and leadership must flow through the network, not just cascade from the top down.

## Vitality

Systems survive and grow only when the human elements are aligned.

# The Workshop Architecture



**01**

## The Ecosystem Audit

Map your current state across the ecosystem's fundamental dimensions based on evidence, not feeling.

**02**

## The Diagnostic Dichotomy

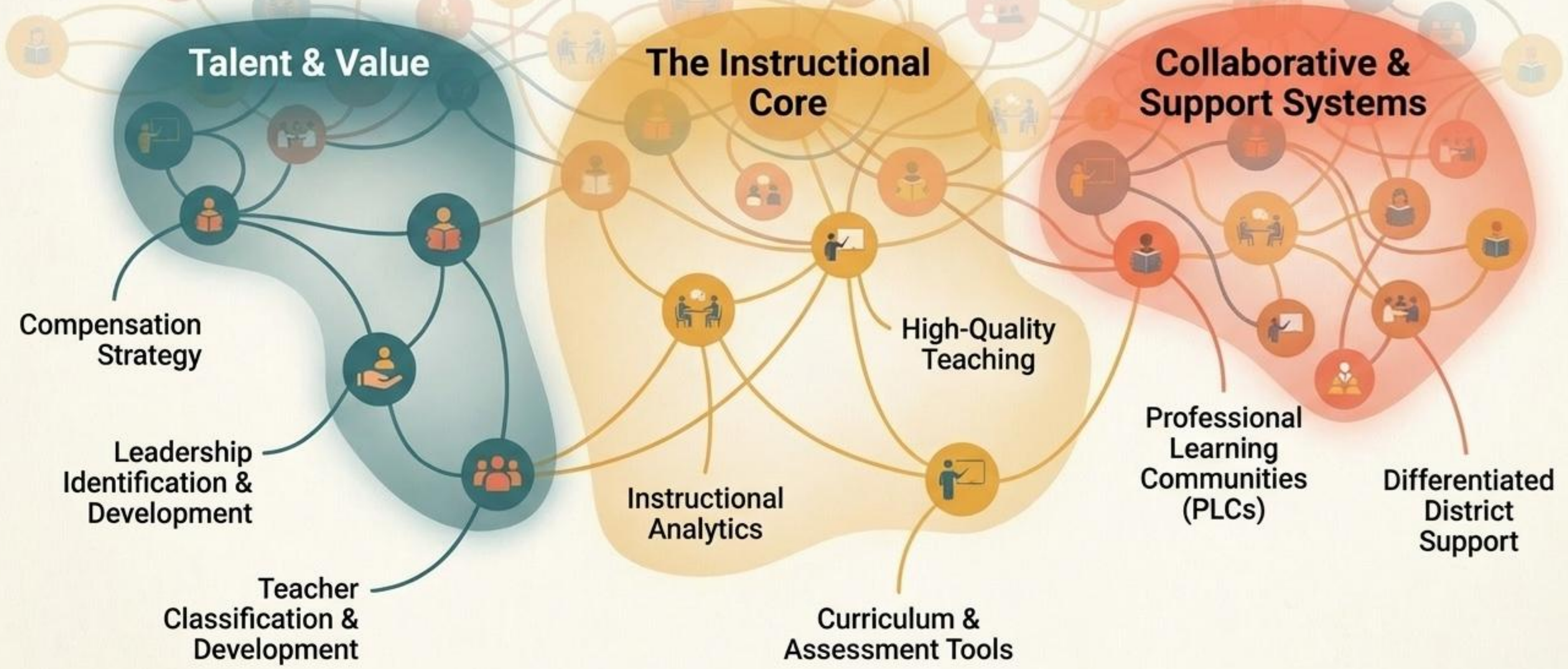
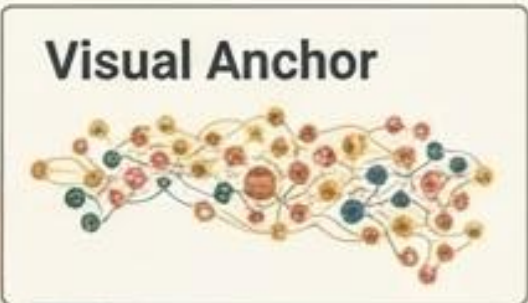
Identify the Bright Spots of maturity and locate the specific Clogs starving the system.

**03**

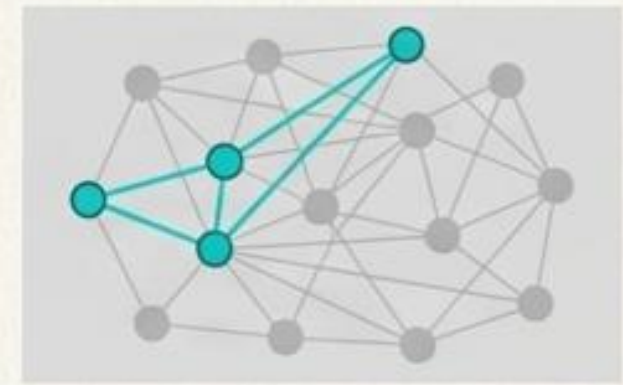
## Commitment to Action

Engage in peer consultation to define one organized, measurable work cycle to restore flow.

# Mapping the eight dynamic dimensions



# Audit Zone 1: Talent & Value



## Compensation Strategy

**Current State:** How do you currently compensate leaders and teachers?

**Alignment Check:** Does your approach actively enhance, or inadvertently undermine, your turnaround strategy?

## Leadership Identification

**Current State:** What is your precise strategy for identifying and developing turnaround leaders?

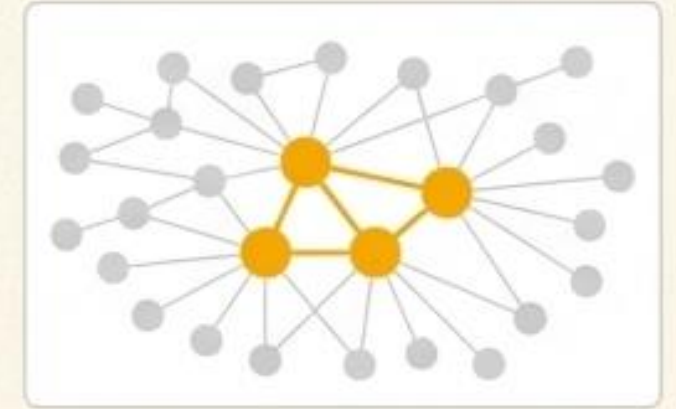
**Evidence:** Where is the data proving this pipeline works?

## Teacher Classification

**Current State:** How are teachers classified and continuously developed?

**Evidence:** What proves your pipelines are producing turnaround-ready staff?

# Audit Zone 2: The Instructional Core



## High-Quality Teaching

**Current State:** How is high-quality teaching officially defined in your district?

**Alignment Check:** How is it actually monitored and supported in practice?

## Instructional Analytics

**Current State:** How do you measure your impact on student learning (both positive and negative)?

**Evidence:** How robust and immediate is this analytical capability?

## Curriculum & Assessment Tools

**Current State:** What are the primary tools driving your instructional process?

**Evidence:** What is your definitive proof that these tools are sufficient to drive necessary learning outcomes?

# Audit Zone 3: Collaborative & Support Systems



## Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

**Current State:** Describe the frequency and organization of your professional collaborative structures.

**Alignment Check:** Do these teams utilize a strict, frequent work cycle (Plan -> Implement -> Study Impact -> Review/Refine)?

## Differentiated District Support

**Current State:** Given the vast discrepancy in individual school implementation abilities, how does the district provide support?

**Evidence:** What is your approach to differentiating and quality-controlling this support across all schools?

# The Diagnostic Dichotomy

## The Bright Spot

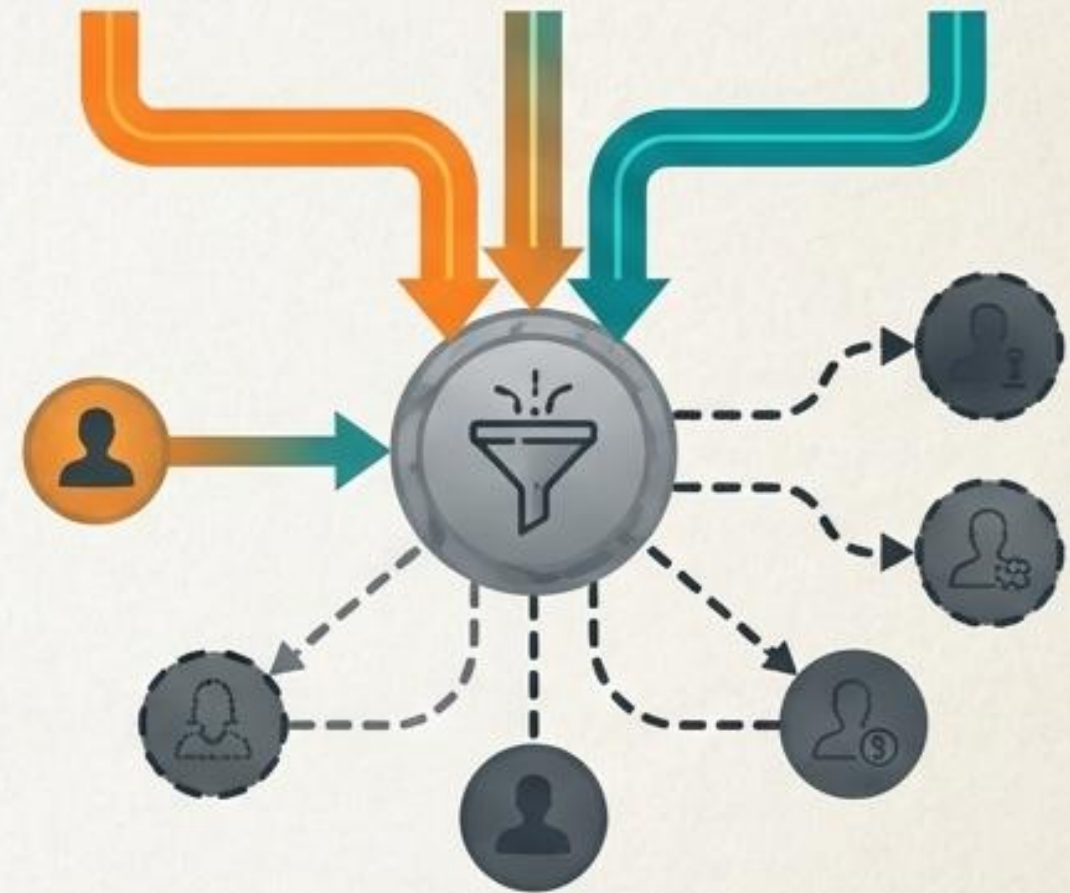


## Maturity & Flow

Where is the ecosystem thriving?

Mature systems act as powerful nutrient streams, feeding the human elements of the school.

## The Misalignment



## The Clog

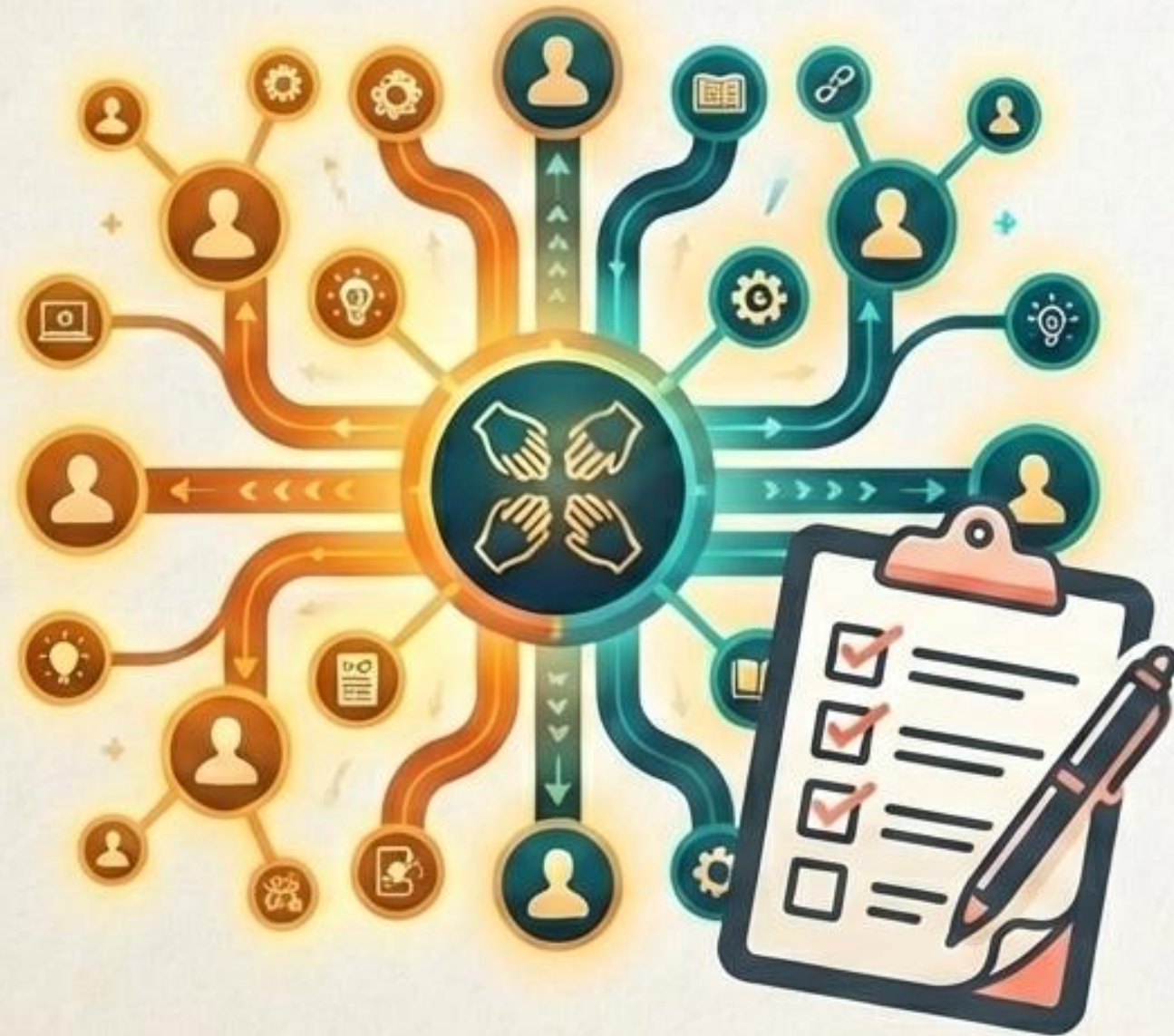
Where is the ecosystem failing?

Misalignments act as clogs, starving downstream nodes of support, resources, and vital data.

# Pinpointing your Bright Spot

Identify a dynamic dimension working best in your district right now.

Living Network Map



## The Evidence Collection Imperative

Do not rely on intuition. To prove system maturity and alignment, document your observable reality:

**Key Observations:** What leadership behaviors are visibly different here?

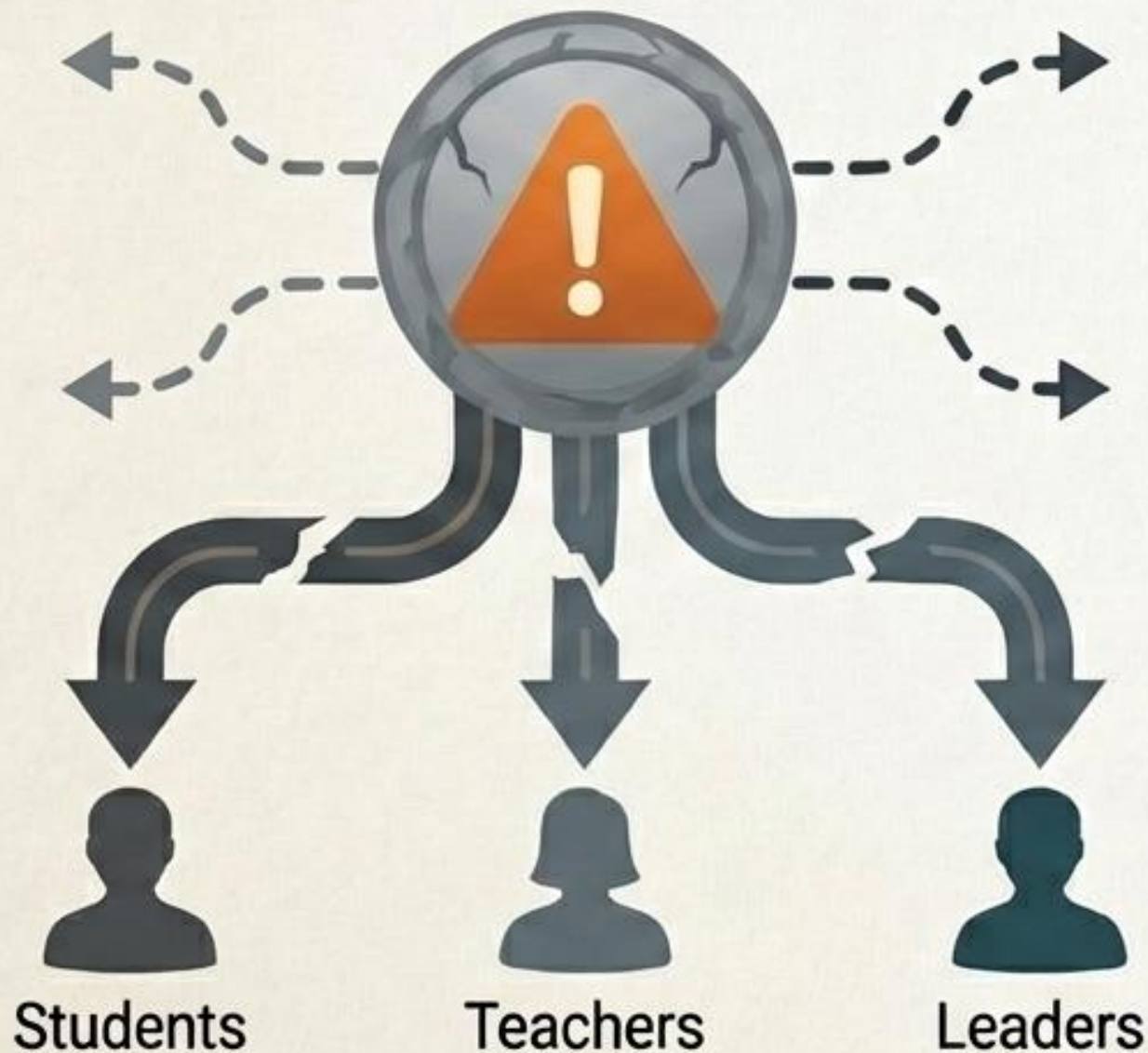
**Data Points:** What metric definitively proves this system is functioning?

**Outcomes:** What specific impact is this having on students, teachers, or leaders?

Take 3 minutes to document your evidence baseline.

# Locating the Misalignment

Identify the dynamic dimension that is currently out of alignment or severely lacks maturity in planning or implementation.



## The Impact Assessment

How does this specific gap act as a clog in the living ecosystem?



What learning outcomes are being restricted?



What essential support or data is failing to reach the classroom?



How is this bottleneck blinding or inhibiting your building leaders?

Take 3 minutes to document the human cost of this clog.

# Peer Consultation Sprint

Transform your private reflection into a collaborative diagnostic tool.

10-Minute Timer



## The 10-Minute Exchange

1. Present your chosen Misalignment and its human impact to your partner.

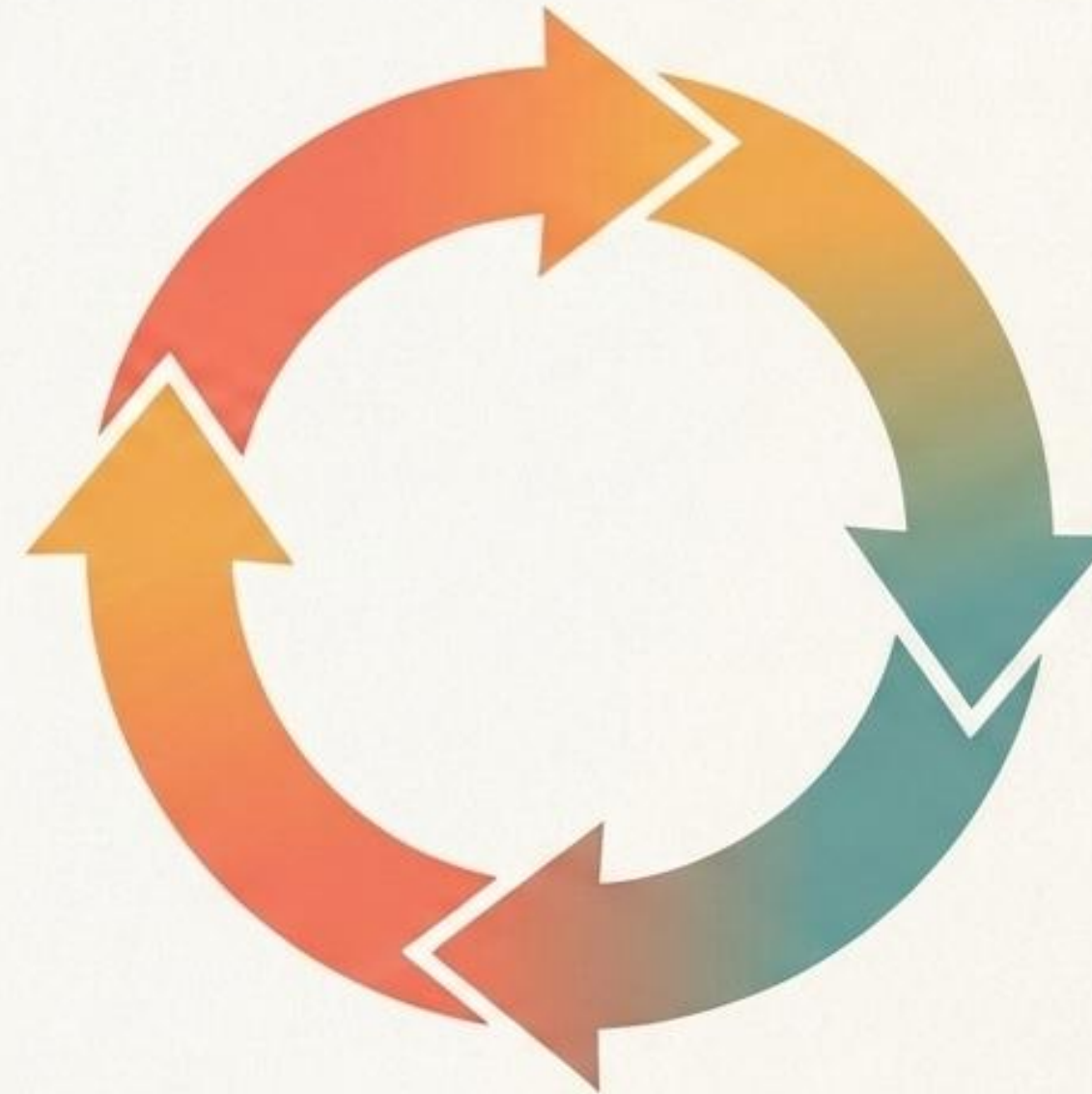
2. Defend the lack of maturity—why is the clog there?

3. **The Core Question:** What did my colleague notice about my misalignment that I might have missed?

# Commitment to an Organized Work Cycle

In an ecosystem, interventions must be cyclical and monitored. Identify one specific change you can implement to move your misaligned dynamic dimension toward maturity.

**Review / Refine**  
Adjust the approach based on the data, and begin planning the next cycle.



**Plan**  
Define the specific intervention to remove the clog.

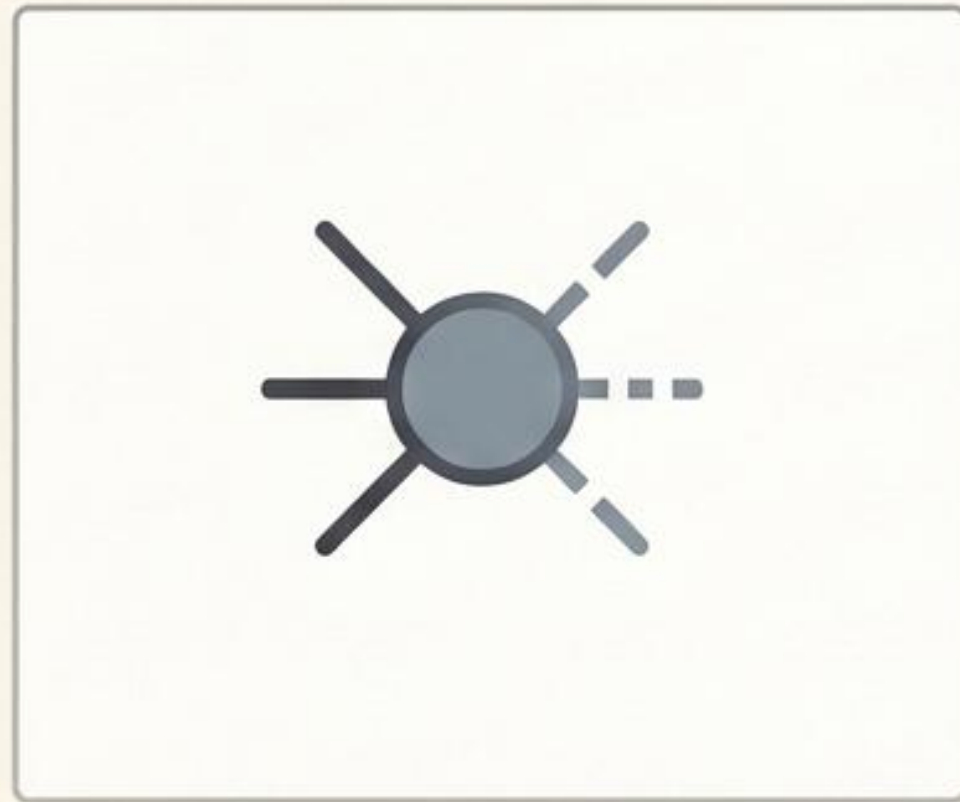
**Implement**  
Execute the change within a defined timeframe.

**Study Impact**  
Measure the immediate effect on the ecosystem.

## Restoring the flow

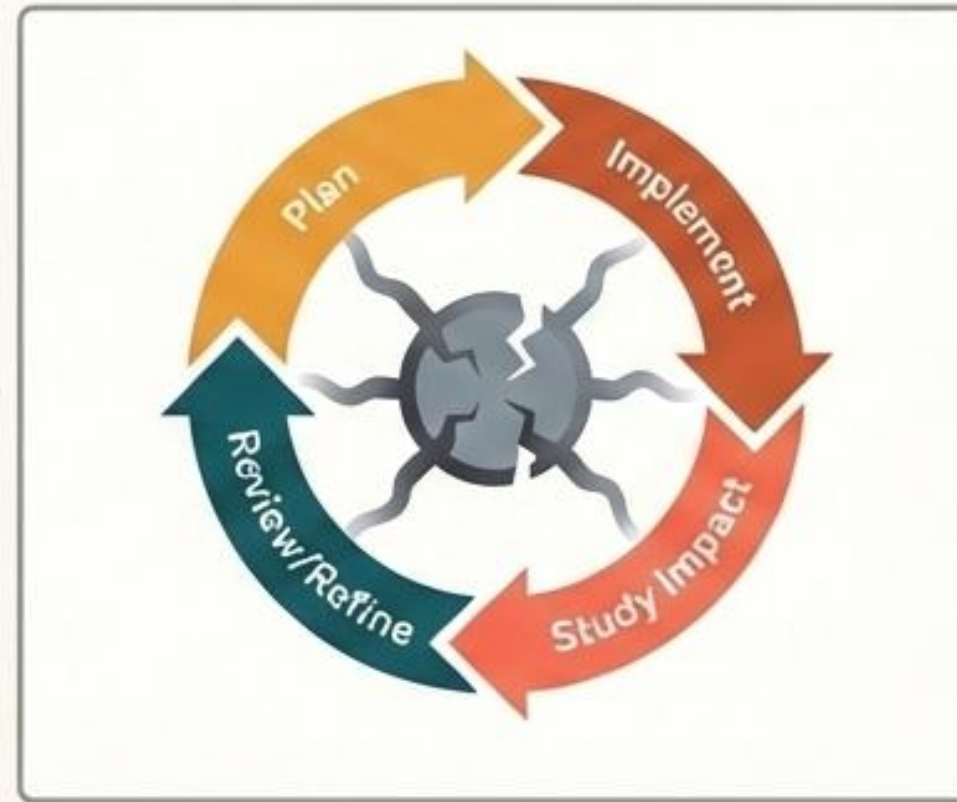
Because the ecosystem is deeply interdependent, clearing a single bottleneck does not just fix one dynamic dimension. Aligning one dimension restores health, data, and support to the entire living network.

Static Bottleneck



Isolated Misalignment

Active Catalyst



The Work Cycle in Motion

Revitalized Network



Ecosystem Flow Restored

**“School turnaround  
fixing broken  
It is the deeply con  
work of nurturing h**

2026 Leadership Learning Annual  
Convening Breakout Session  
Round 1 Exit Survey



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