

Elevating Your Principal through the School Leader Paradigm

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School Leader Paradigm

Ongoing leadership development for all school leaders throughout the journey of "*Becoming* while *Doing*".

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The School Leader Collaborative is a consortium of state principal associations that supports the professional growth of school principals and their leadership teams. It enhances the capacity of partner associations by creating a network of shared resources, best practices, and research.



SCHOOL LEADER COLLABORATIVE

Experiential Learning

Research indicates it takes 3-5 years to change the culture of a school, but you can't wait that long. What kind of leader do you need to accelerate the change process? Who do they need to be? And, where do they start to begin shifting the culture?

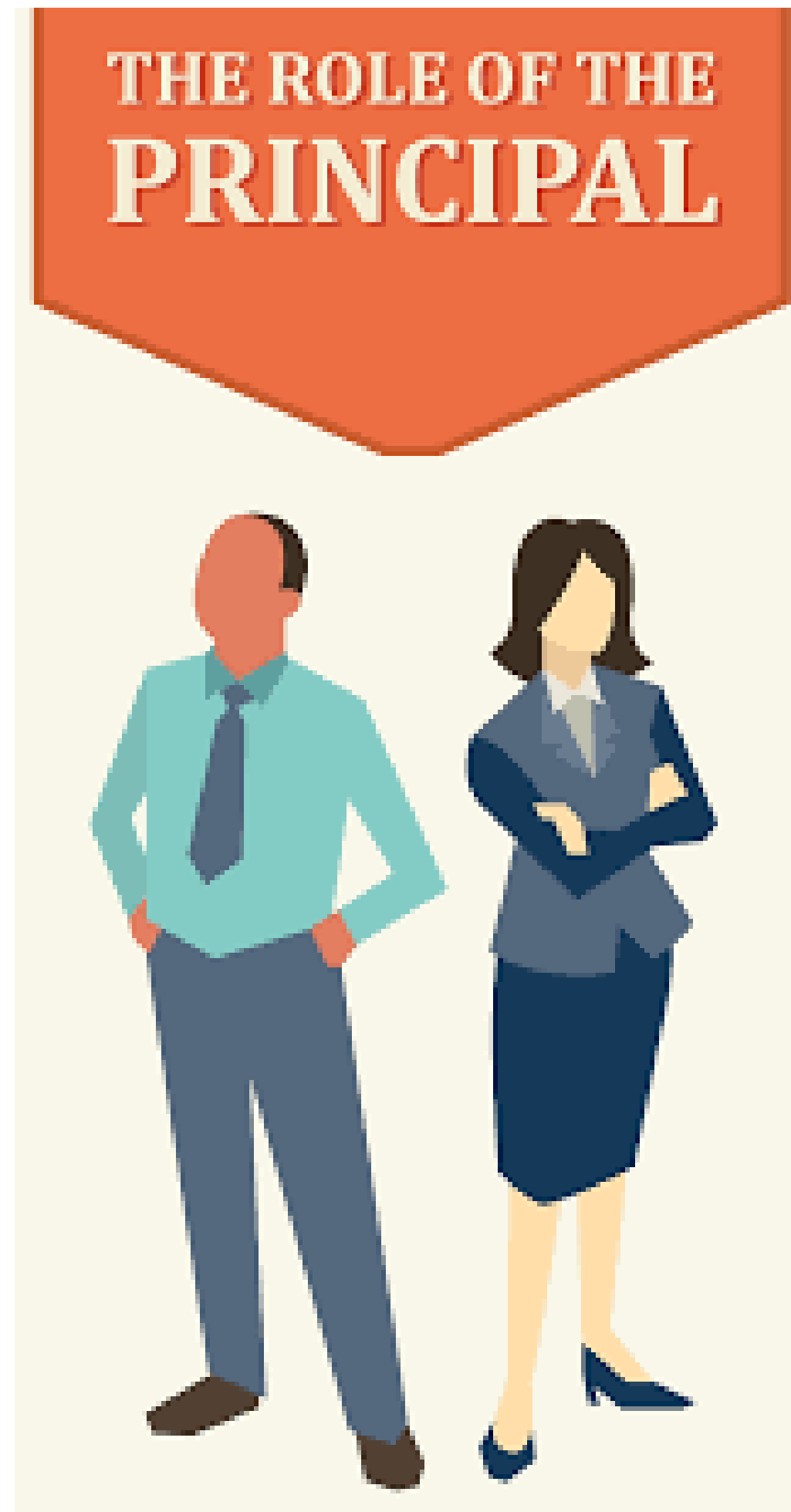
Think - Stare - Pair - Share



Overarching and Guiding Questions:

- What is the current reality facing school leaders across the country?
- How can we all best support the ongoing growth and sustainability of school leaders?
- What is it like for your principal to be on the other side of your leadership?

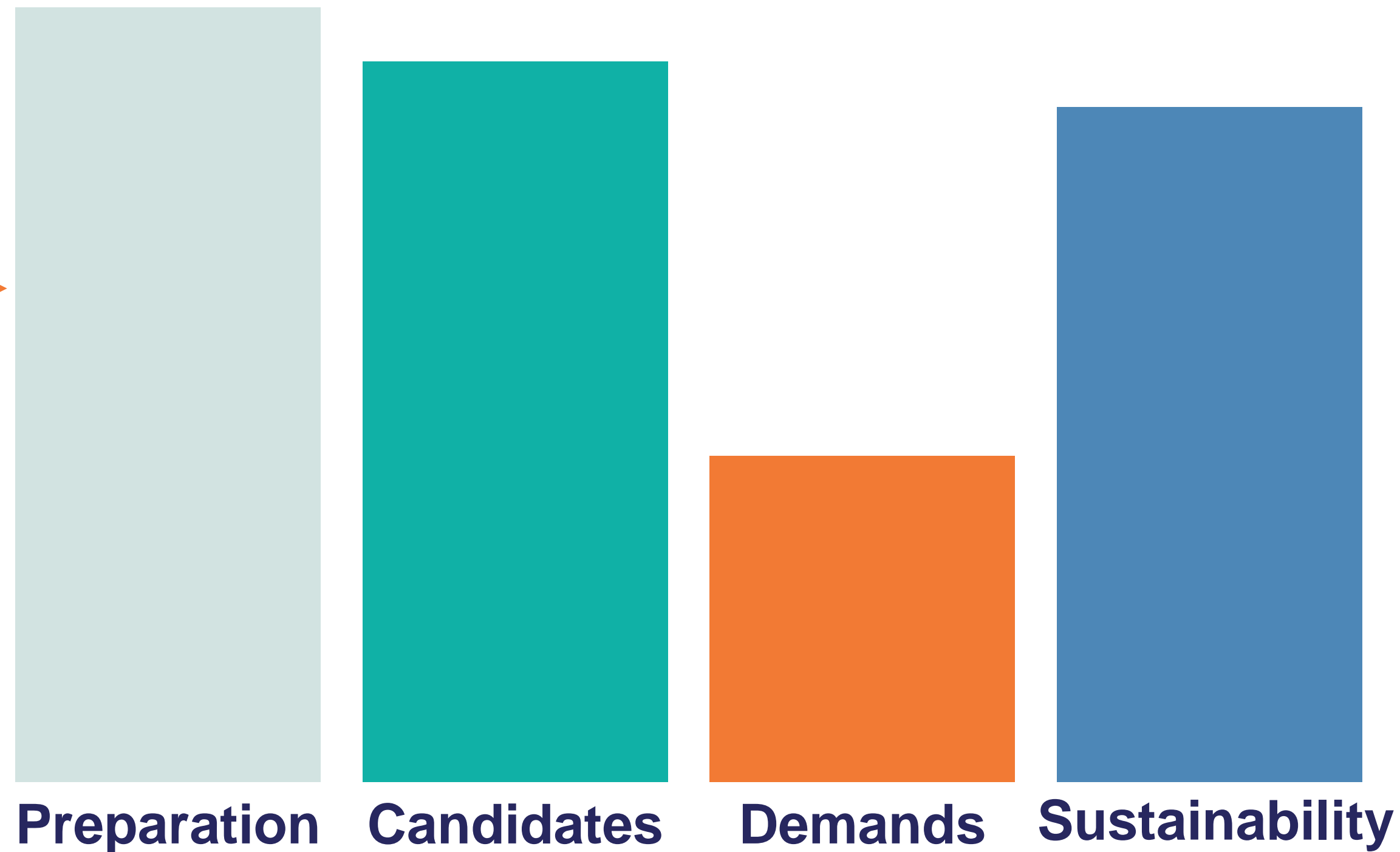
What we know about leadership....



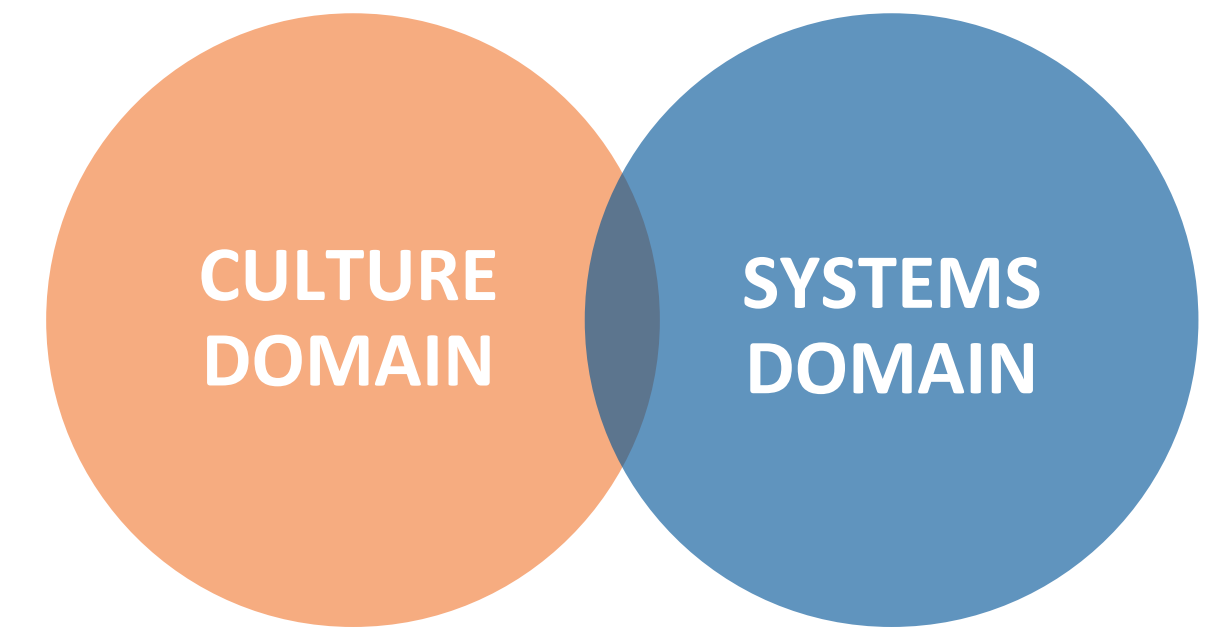
The role of the principal has grown exponentially over the last 15 years to a point where the job is often referred to as unrealistic and untenable. This reality is resulting in alarming turnover rates, low job satisfaction, shrinking candidate pools, and an increase of unqualified leaders stepping into building leadership roles.

What we know about leadership....

Time, Support,
Programs and
Funding for pre-
service and Year
1 Support →



Leadership Then...



Principal as “Manager”

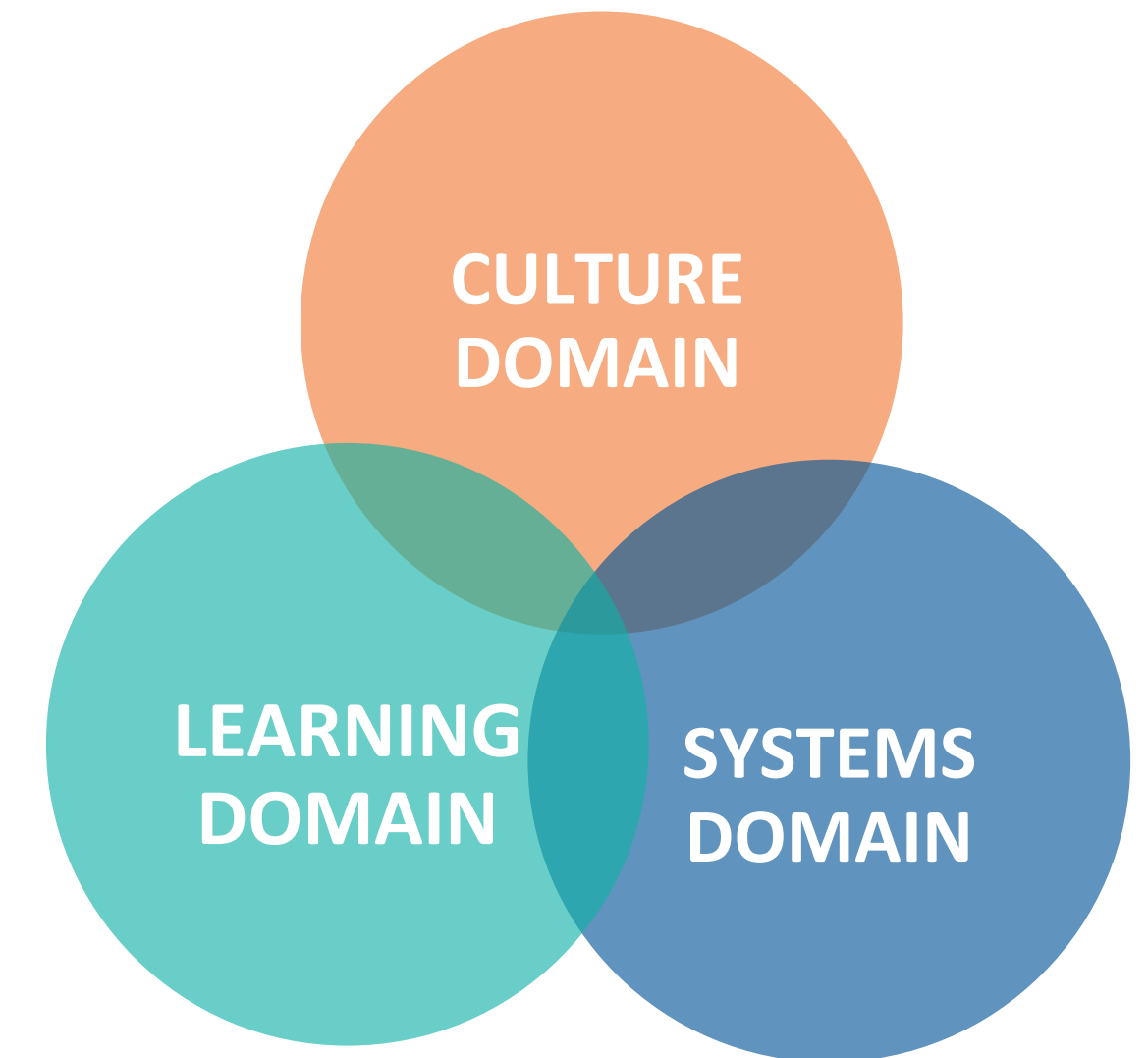
“Most students should be successful.”

*2010 Demands

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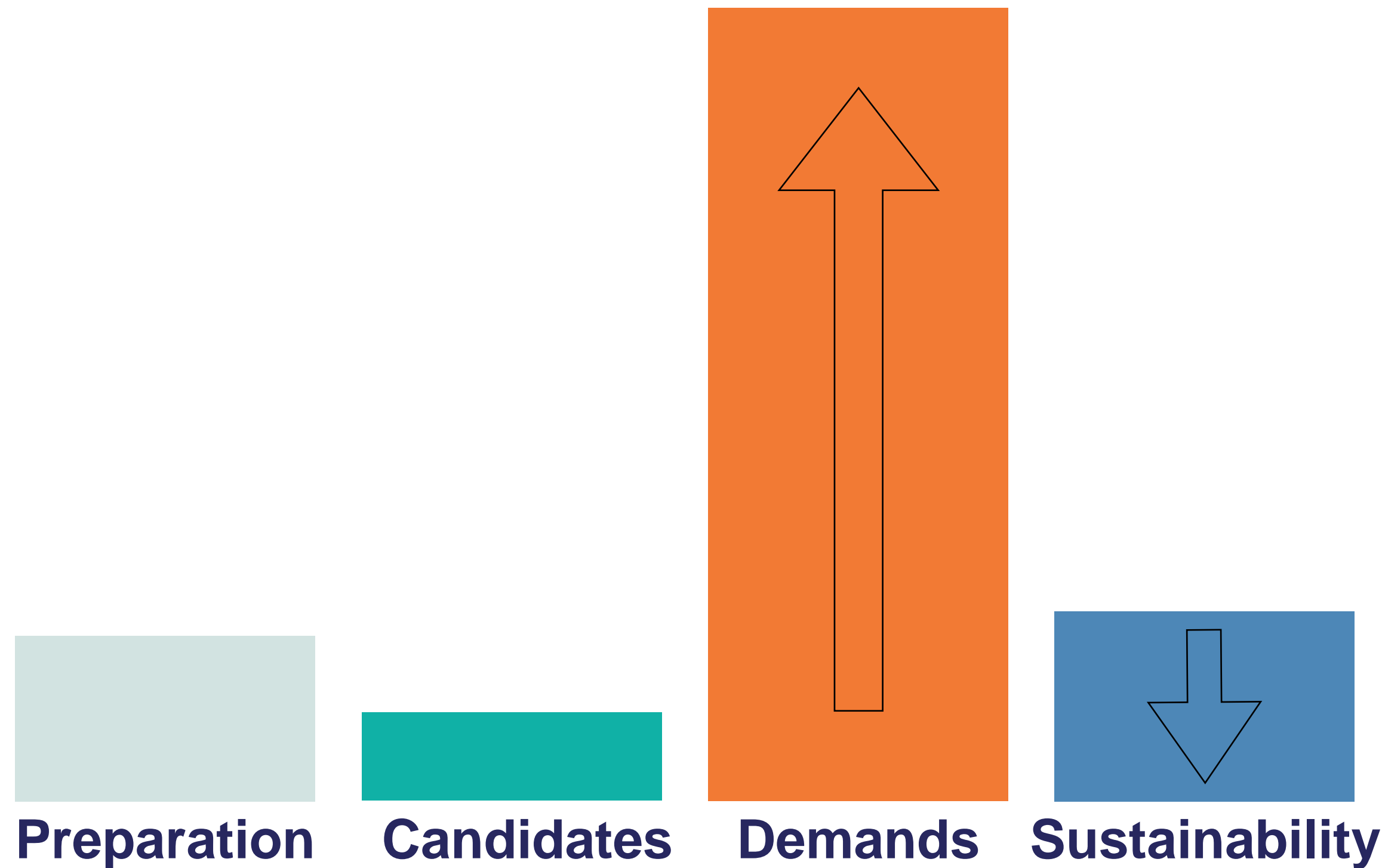
What we know about leadership....

Leadership Now...



Principal as “Manager” and “Instructional Leader”

Time, Support, Programs and Funding for pre-service and Year 1 Support →



“All students must be successful.”

***2025 Demands**

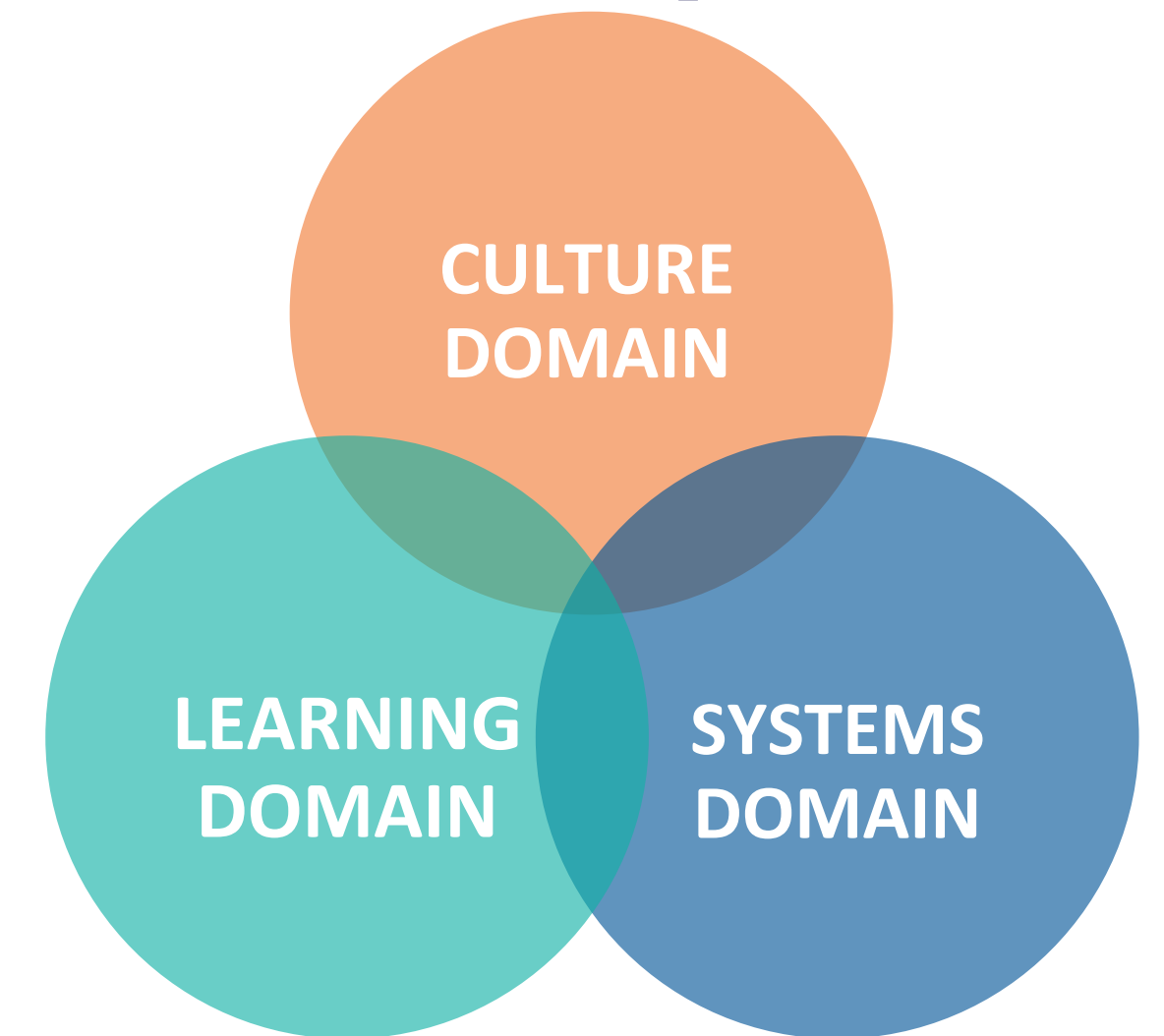
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What we know about leadership....

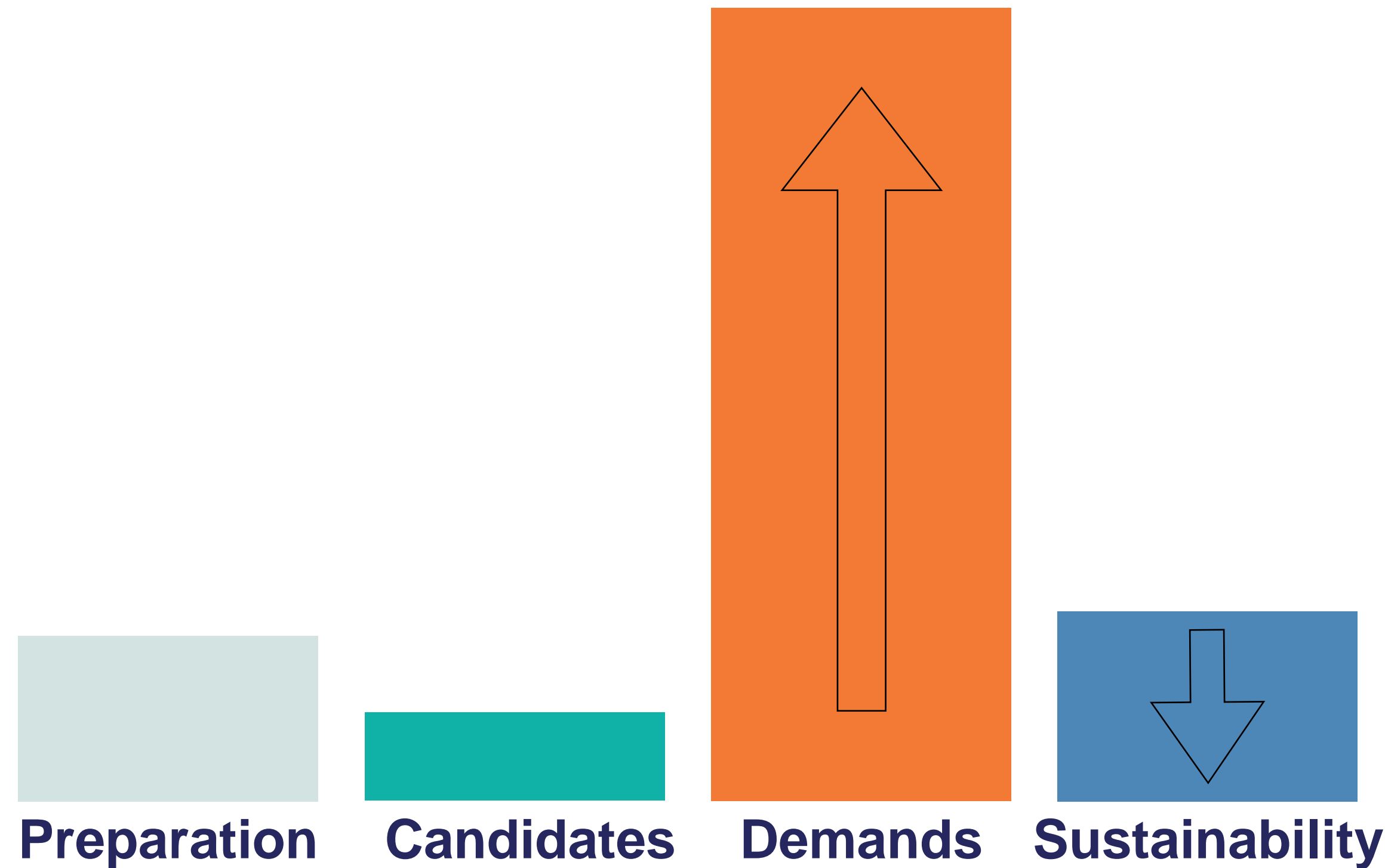
Current Reality = Leadership Turnover

Leadership Now...



Principal as “Manager” and “Instructional Leader”

Time, Support, Programs and Funding for pre-service and Year 1 Support →



“All students must be successful.”

*2024 Demands

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What we know about leadership.....

Leadership turnover is bad for students, staff, districts, and the school community.

5-10 years to institutionalize improvements

Student performance in Math and English Language Arts drops the year after a leader leaves

Up to three years to make up the loss

Loss of faculty support

Cost to prepare and onboard a new principal is \$75,000



What we know about leadership....

“The loss of a school leader has ripple effects on school **staff**, **students**, and the local **community**.

Inclusive, equitable, and effective schools require a dynamic school leader who has deep knowledge of a school’s history and connections to the local community.”

University of Washington
Policy Brief

Principal Retention and Turnover During the COVID-19 Era.
Do students have equitable access to stable school leadership?

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | DECEMBER 2023

POLICY BRIEF

PRINCIPAL RETENTION AND TURNOVER DURING THE COVID-19 ERA

Do students have equitable access to stable school leadership?

INTRODUCTION

Principals play a critical role in creating healthy, inclusive, and effective learning environments. As instructional leaders, principals oversee teacher hiring, development, and retention, help set schoolwide expectations, and represent the school in the local community. As community leaders, principals are responsible for leveraging resources to disrupt inequities in educational opportunity.

Like teachers, principals have faced unprecedented pressure during the COVID-19 period. Survey data suggest they experienced increased levels of stress and burnout.ⁱⁱ How that trend affects job performance and turnover will have consequences for students. While studies highlight recent increases in teacher attrition, limited research examines principal turnover during the COVID-19 era.ⁱⁱⁱ

Figure 1 compares principal and teacher turnover three years into the COVID-19 pandemic for the state of Washington. Principal turnover declined in the first year of the pandemic, but increased in the subsequent two years, with the largest increase in the most recent year, turnover from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Teacher turnover is similar, but the recent increase is not as large.

In this brief, we present an analysis of principal turnover in Washington State during the COVID-19 period. We then offer recommendations for improving principal retention and equitable access to stable school leadership.

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| Year | Teachers (%) | Principals (%) |
|---------|--------------|----------------|
| 2009-10 | ~12.5 | ~15.0 |
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| 2013-14 | ~13.5 | ~16.0 |
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| 2018-19 | ~13.0 | ~15.5 |
| 2019-20 | ~12.5 | ~15.0 |
| 2020-21 | ~12.0 | ~14.5 |
| 2021-22 | ~13.0 | ~15.5 |
| 2022-23 | ~18.7 | ~24.9 |

BACKGROUND

While a small amount of employee turnover can improve organizational capacity, diversifying perspectives and bringing new ideas, high attrition levels can be detrimental.^{iv} Chronic principal turnover disrupts relationships and represents a loss of continuity, school vision, and human capital. Studies show principal turnover is associated with declines in student achievement and increased teacher turnover.^v Chronic principal turnover disproportionately impacts higher-poverty schools and schools enrolling higher shares of Students of Color.

On average, principals rated as less effective tend to have higher turnover rates, but some evidence suggests

UW 2024

What we know about leadership....

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UW 2024

What we know about leadership....


“Schools that serve a higher percentage of **low-income students** and **students of color** have higher principal turnover rates, and the magnitudes of effects are **relatively large.**”

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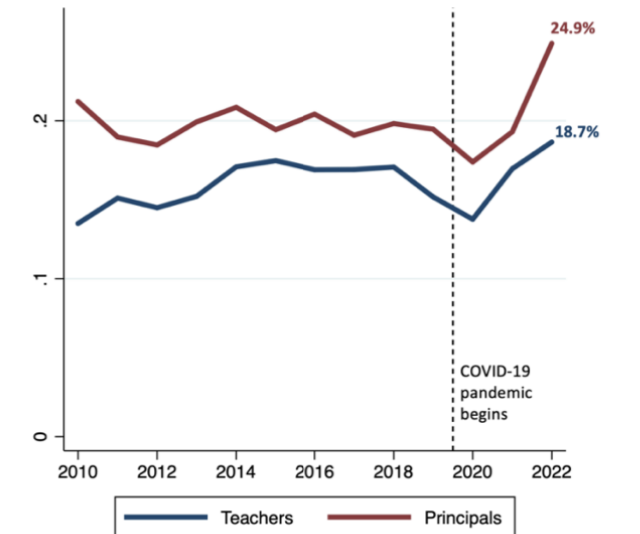
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Figure 1. Annual turnover rate for teachers and principals in Washington State, 2009-10 to 2022-23

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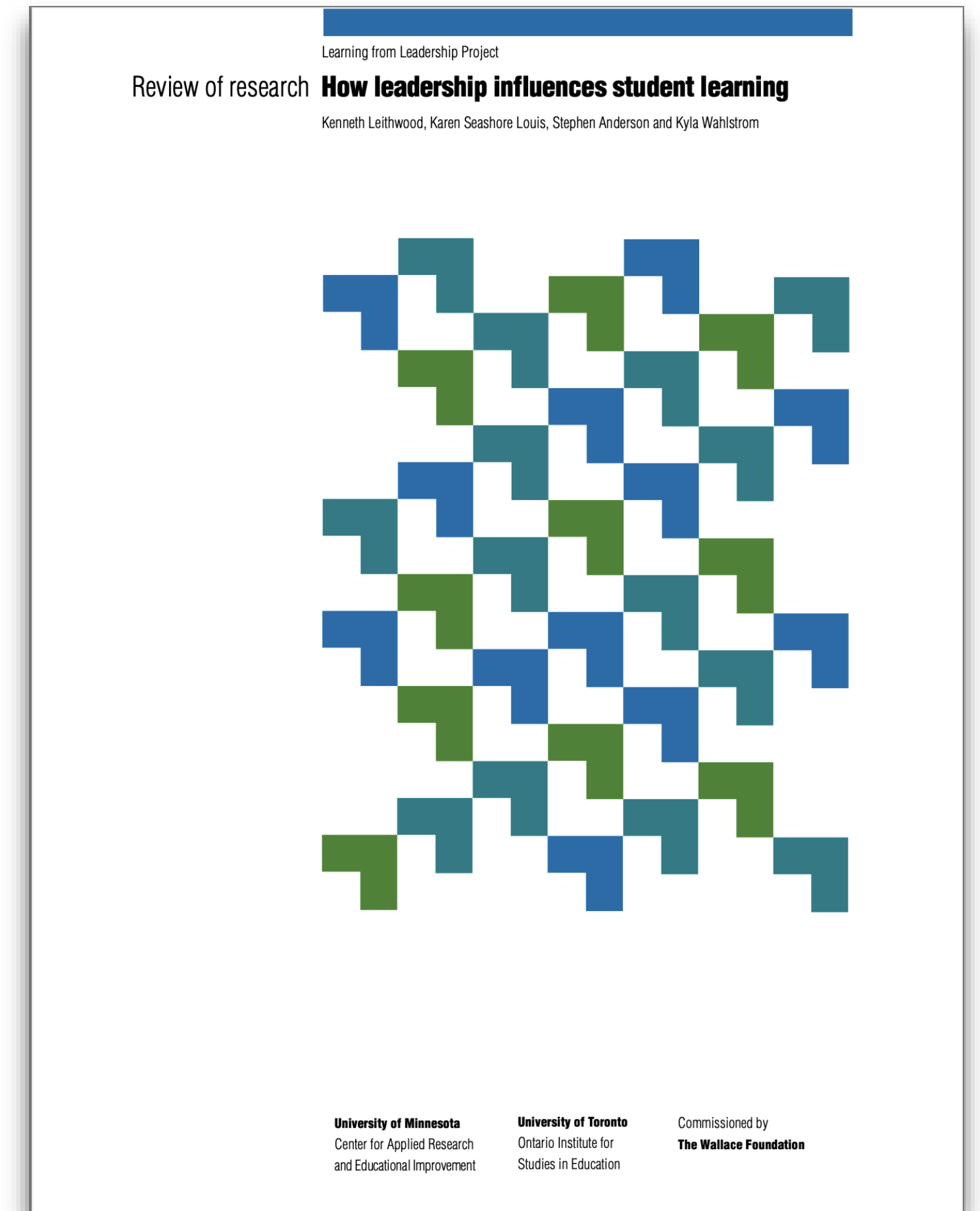
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What we know about leadership....

“It turns out that leadership not only matters: it is **second only to teaching** among school-related factors in its impact on student learning.”

Wallace Foundation

“How Leadership Influences Student Learning” 2007

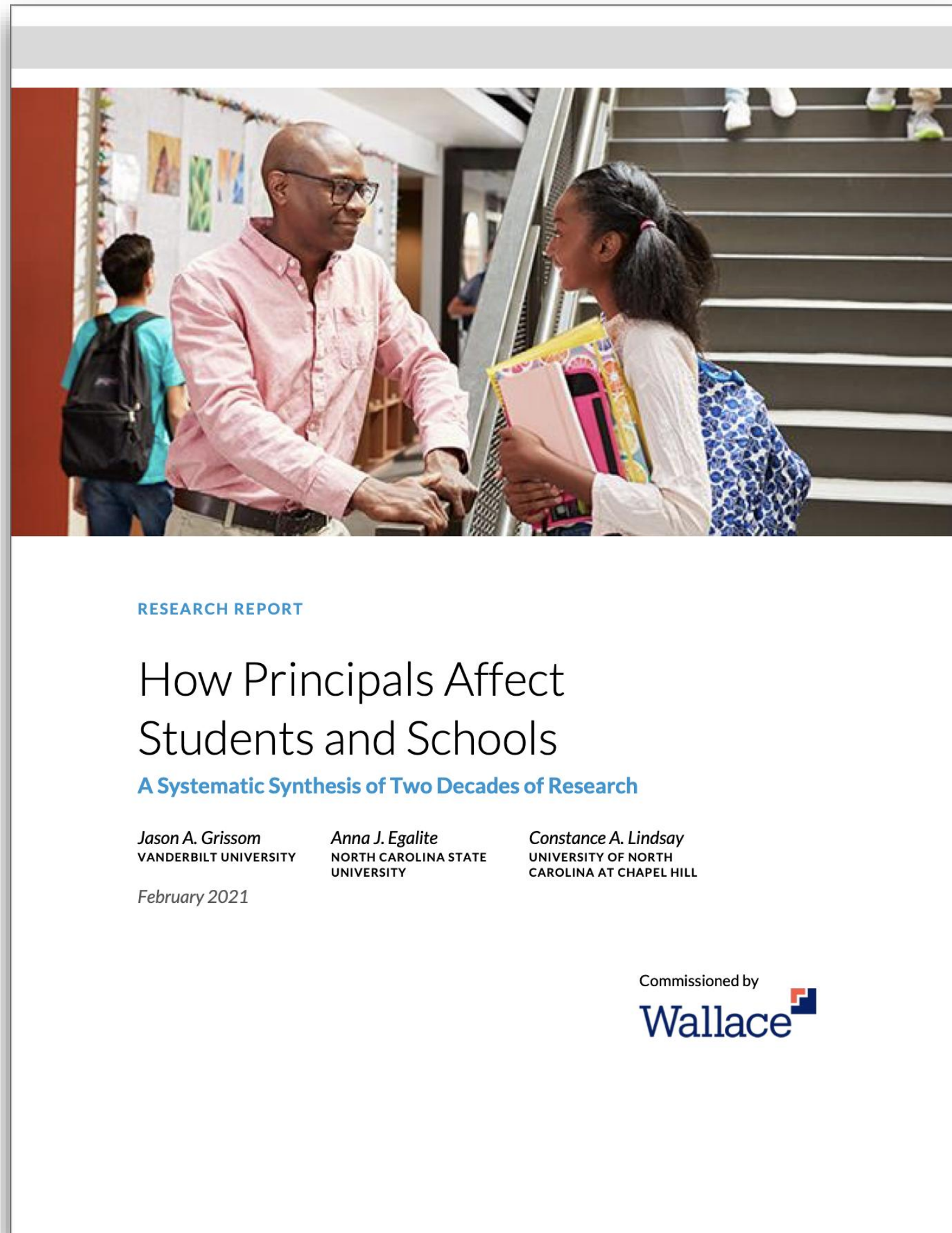


What we know about leadership....

“**The impact of an effective principal has likely been understated**, with impacts being both **greater and broader than previously believed: greater in the impact on student achievement** and **broader in affecting other important outcomes, including teacher satisfaction and retention** (especially among high-performing teachers), **student attendance**, and **reductions in exclusionary discipline.**”



What we know about leadership....



“An effective principal’s impact is stronger and broader than previously thought, making it “difficult to envision” a higher return on investment in K-12 education than the cultivation of high-quality school leadership.”

Wallace Foundation

“How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research” 2021

What we know about leadership....

The absence of systems to grow, support, and sustain school leaders is one of the greatest **inequities in education.**

What we know about leadership....

If we know that leadership matters...

...then supporting leaders should be a top priority in the system.

What **else** we know about leadership....

Leadership takes time.

What **else** we know about leadership....

Leadership takes time.

Effective and sustained leadership creates and maintains **CULTURE**, dismantles and then builds **SYSTEMS**, and leads ongoing **LEARNING** that results in **HOPE** for students and adults.



What *else* we know about leadership....

Years 1-2

Years 3-5

Years 5+

“Culture, like trust, must start on day one, takes years to build, and only seconds to lose.”

CULTURE



ASPIRING



EMERGING



DEVELOPING



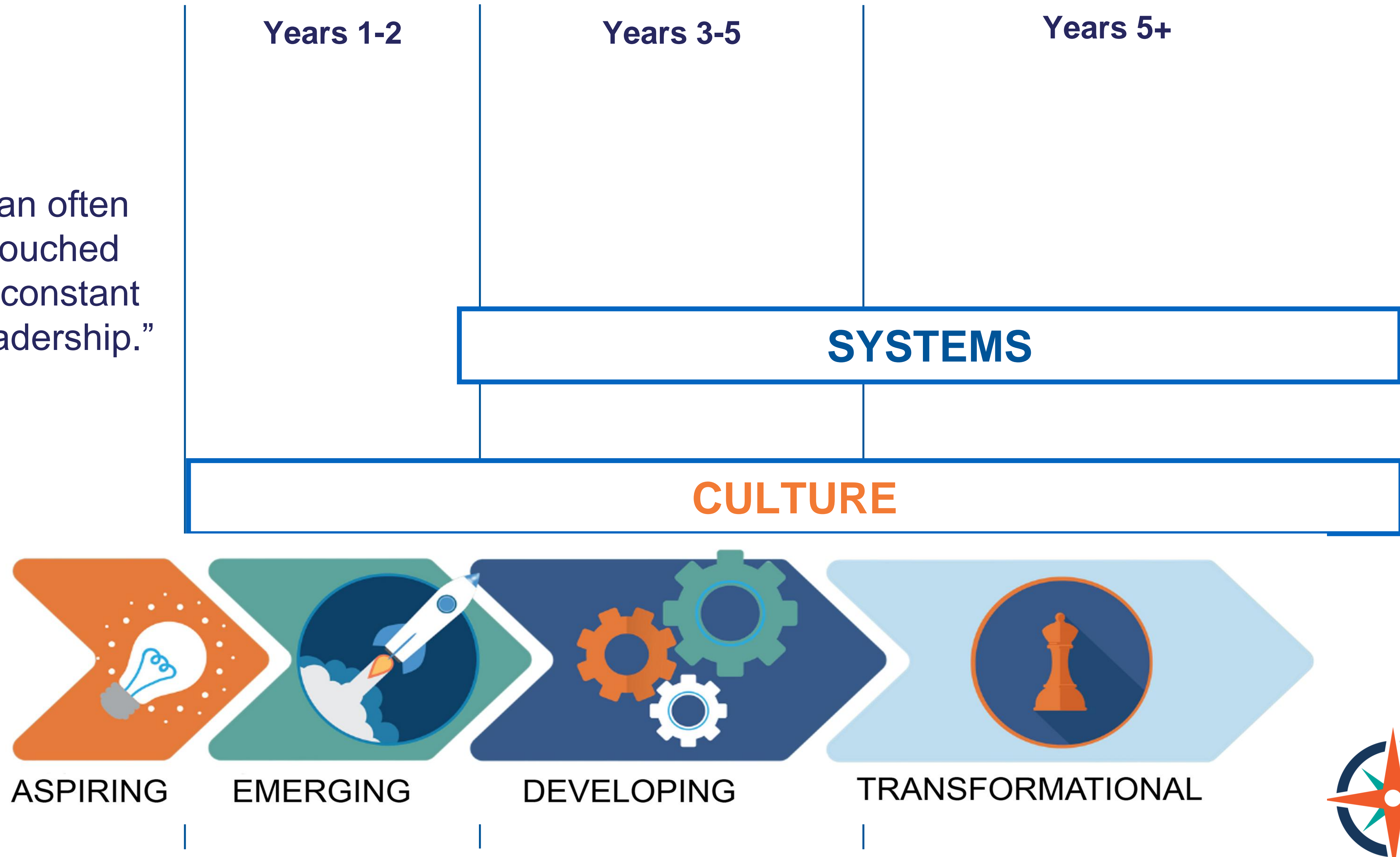
TRANSFORMATIONAL



**SCHOOL
LEADER**
COLLABORATIVE

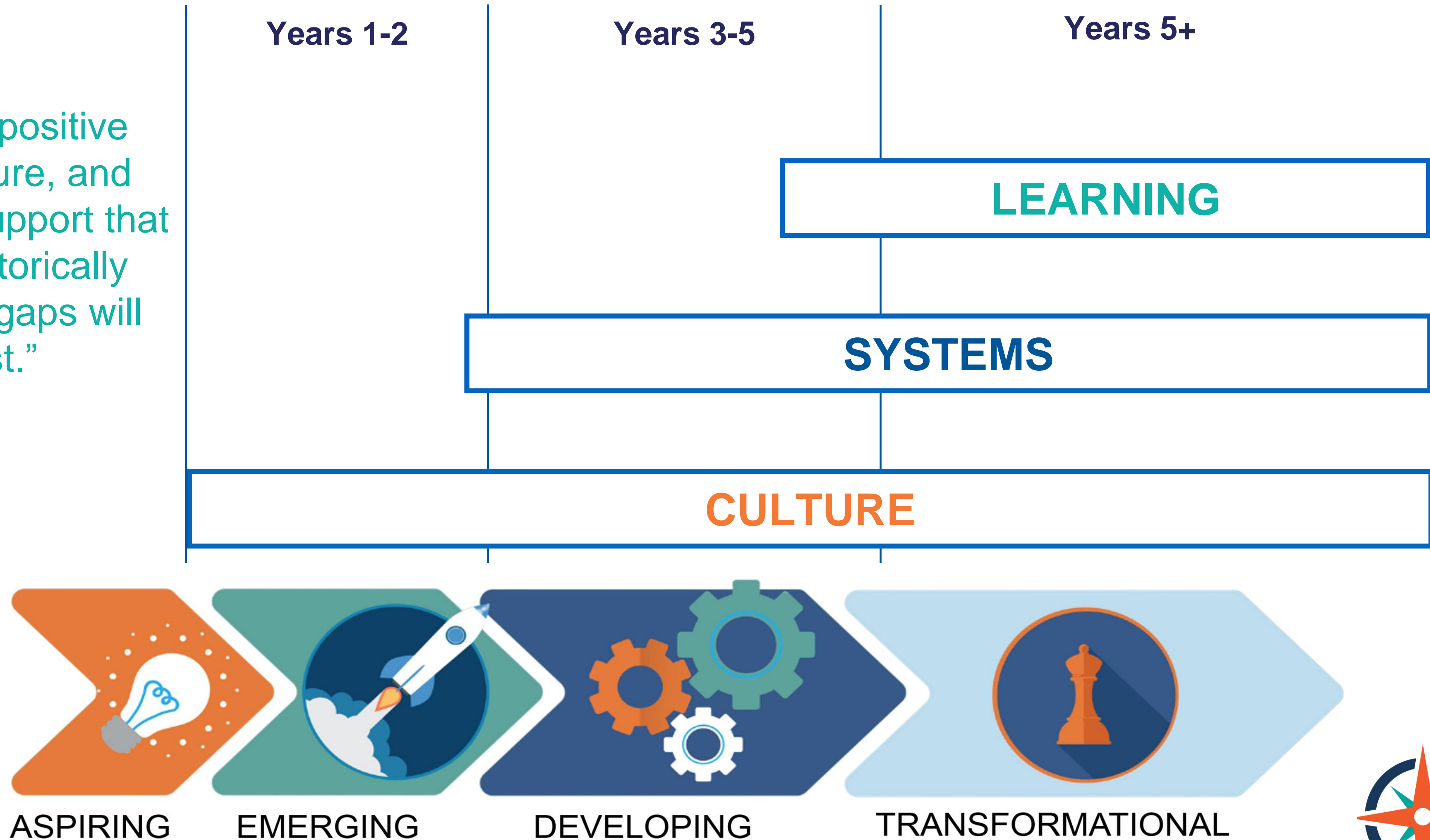
What *else* we know about leadership....

“Systems can often remain untouched through the constant change of leadership.”



What *else* we know about leadership....

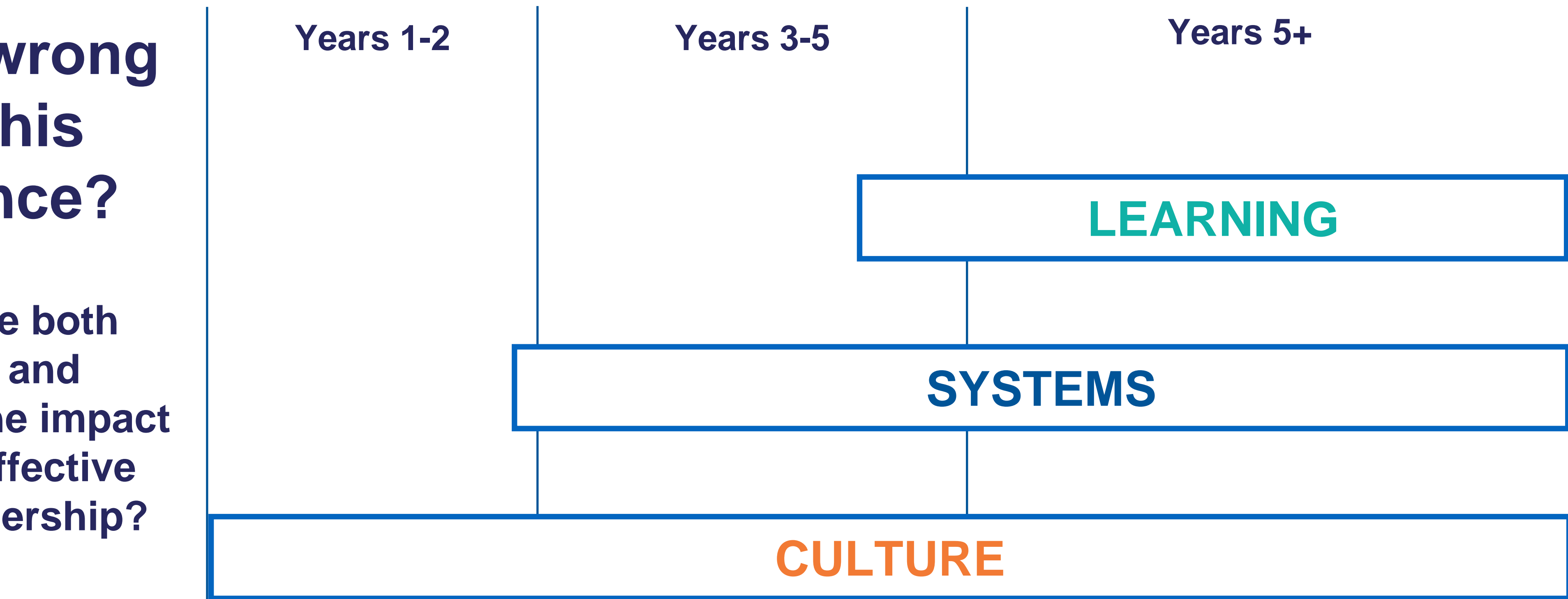
“Without a positive school culture, and systems to support that culture, historically inequitable gaps will persist.”



What *else* we know about leadership....

What's wrong with this sequence?

How do we both support and accelerate the impact of highly effective school leadership?



ASPIRING



EMERGING



DEVELOPING



TRANSFORMATIONAL

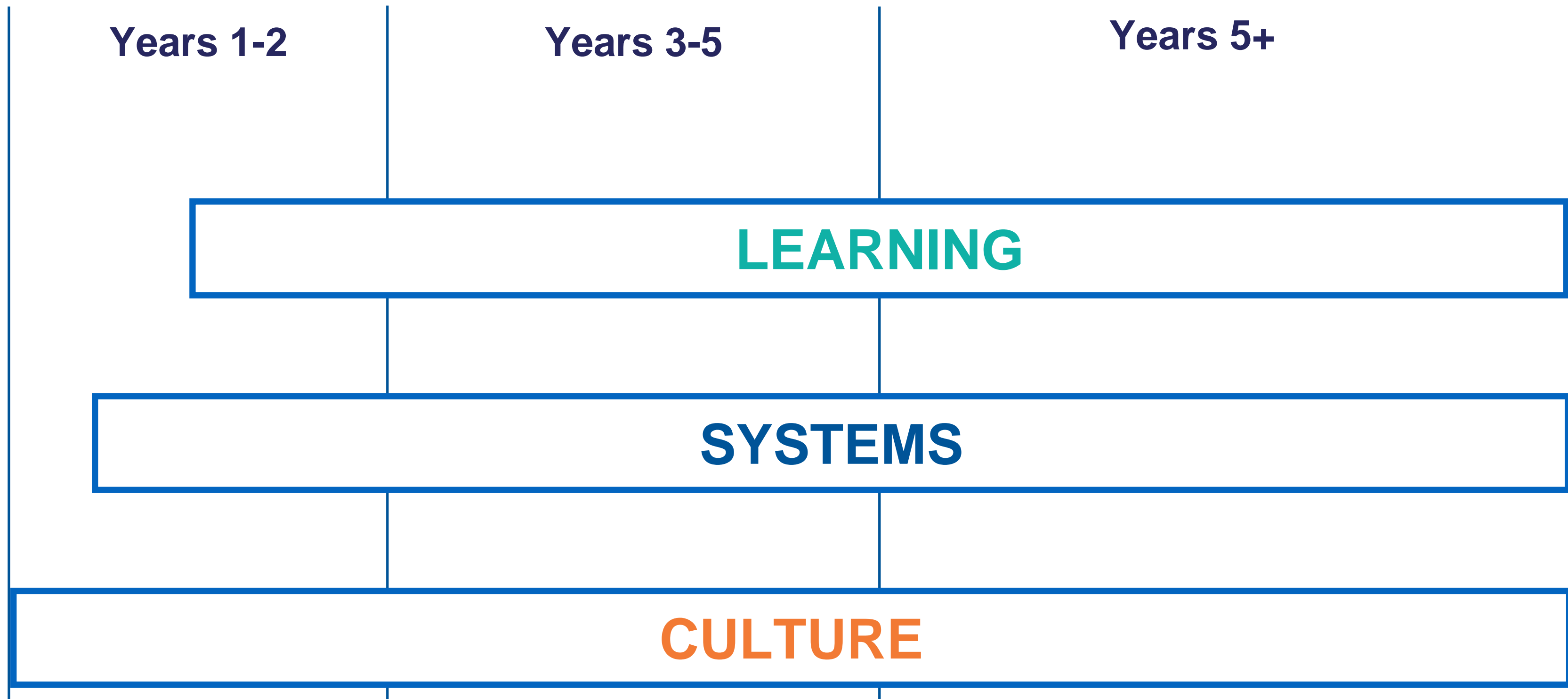


SCHOOL LEADER COLLABORATIVE

What *else* we know about leadership....

How do we both support and accelerate the impact of highly effective school leadership?

How does **CONTEXT** (individual, school, community and political) influence leadership effectiveness?



ASPIRING



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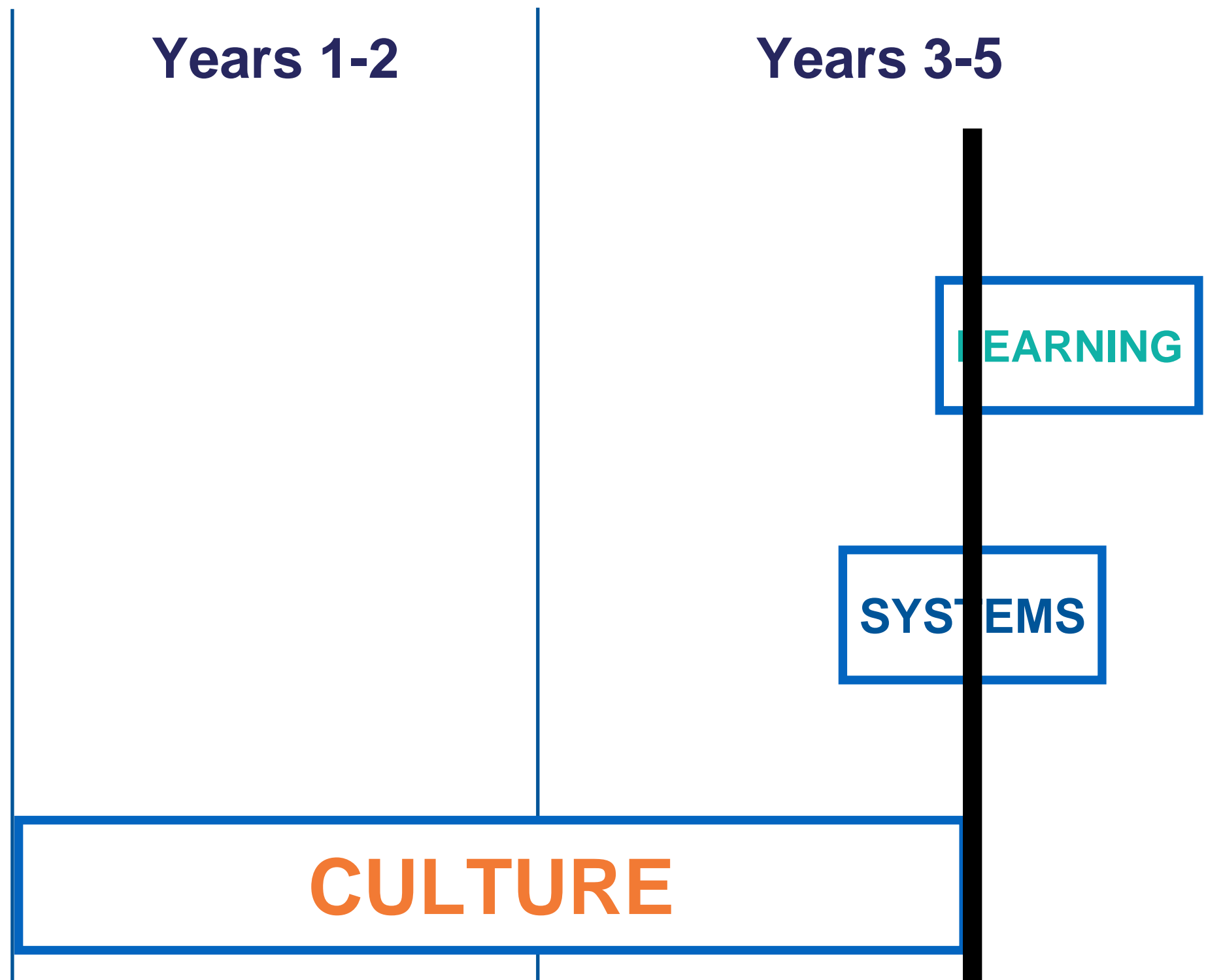


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“1 in 4 principals are in the same building after 5 years.” -NASSP Research

“Schools with the greatest need turn over leaders at twice the rate.” - SLC Data

“It takes 3-5 years to change an elementary school, 5-7 to change a middle school, and 7-10 to change a high school.” -Wallace Foundation



ASPIRING



EMERGING



DEVELOPING



TRANSFORMATIONAL



SCHOOL LEADER COLLABORATIVE

What *else* we know about leadership....

Is it *Context* or *Leadership*?
Or both?

How do we both support and accelerate the impact of highly effective school leadership?

How does **CONTEXT** (individual, school, community and political) influence leadership effectiveness?

Years 1-2

Years 3-5

Years 5+

LEARNING

SYSTEMS

CULTURE

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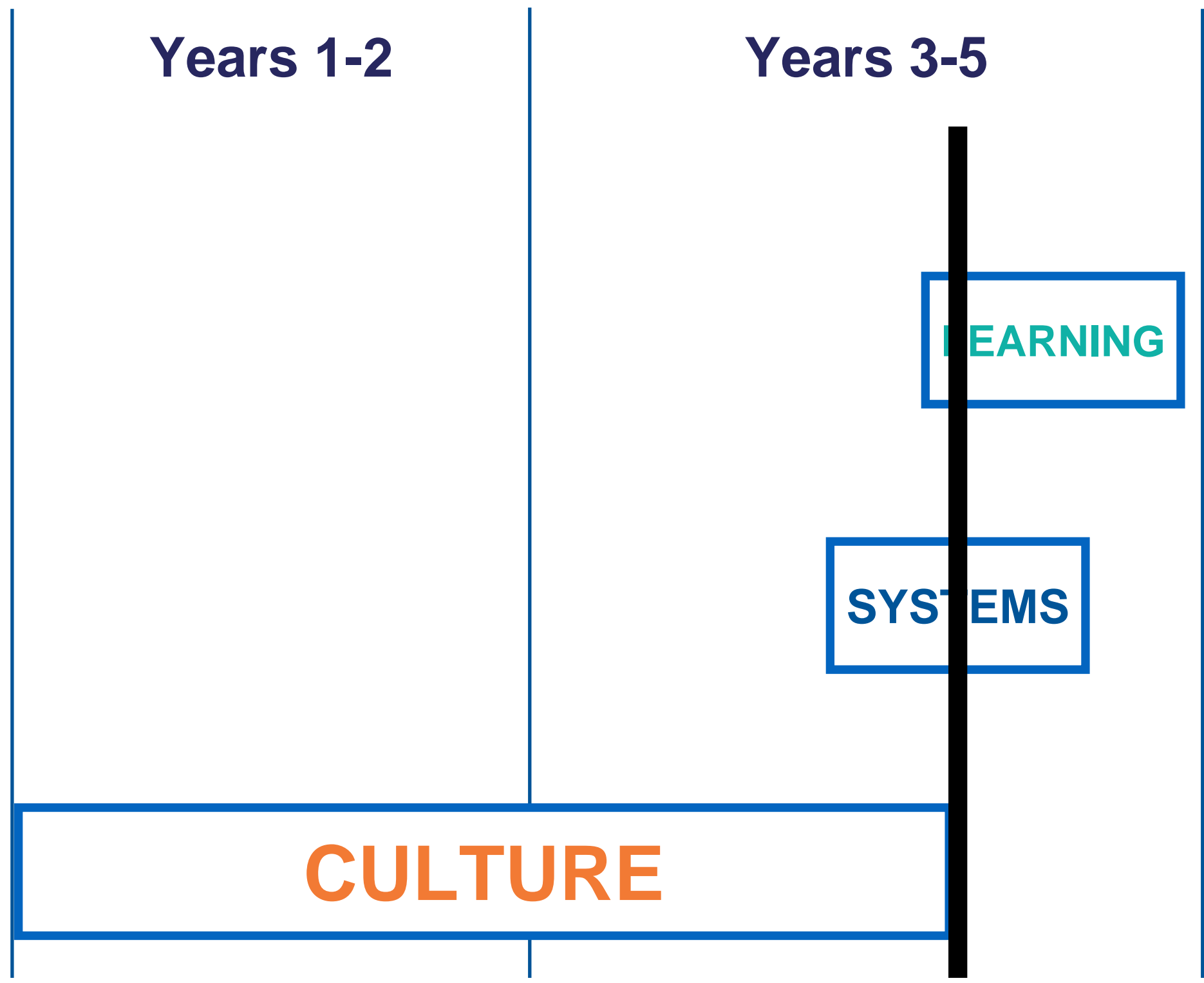


SCHOOL
LEADER
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What *else* we know about leadership....

How do we both support and accelerate the impact of highly effective school leadership?

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What does it take to surthrive and be an effective leader in today's schools?

What are the leadership traits required to build **CULTURE**, change **SYSTEMS**, and lead **LEARNING** at an accelerated pace in this continuum?

© A School Leader Collaborative Continuum



What we know about leadership....

What does it take to surthrive and be an effective leader in today's schools?

A relevant leadership *language* and *system* of support for leaders as they are *becoming while doing* the work.

Our Theory of Action

A common leadership *language* and *system* of support for leaders as they are *becoming while doing* the work.

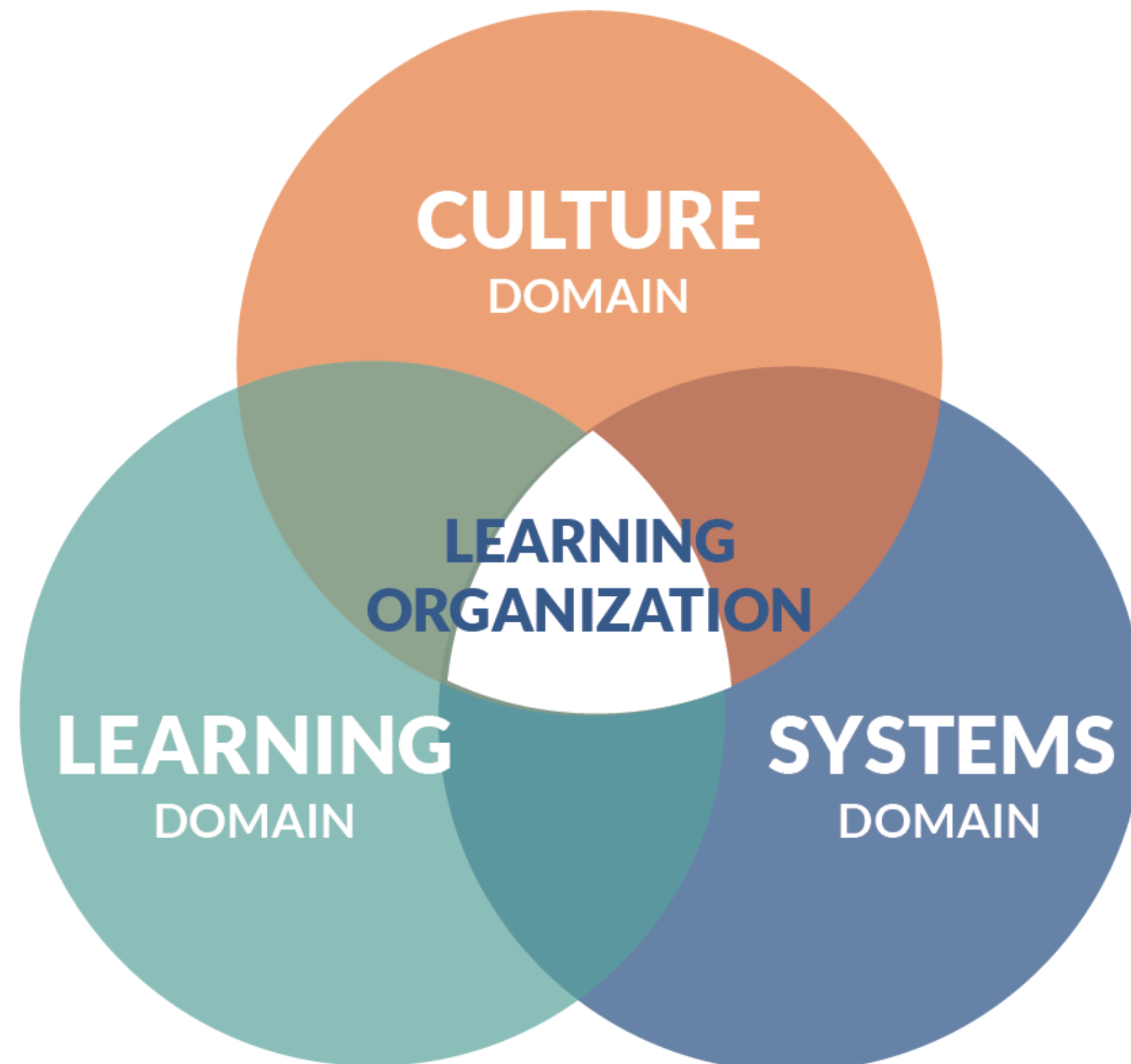
If we insist upon a leadership language that captures the complexity and demand facing school leaders, then we can build a continuum of resources that accelerate and increase leadership effectiveness and sustainability while reducing the harmful compounding consequences of leadership turnover.

SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Becoming While Doing



**Dispositions
"Becoming"**



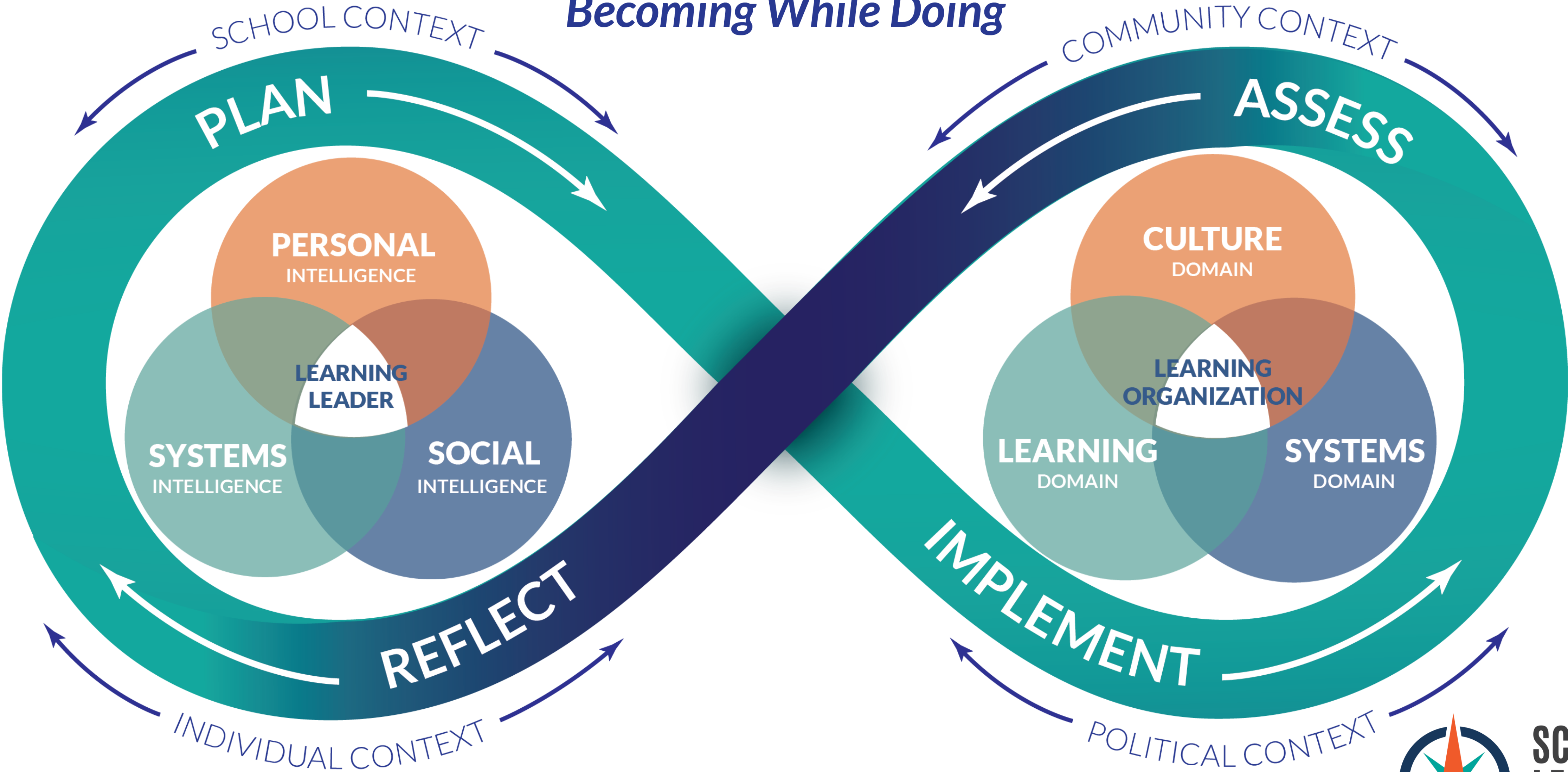
**Actions
"Doing"**



**SCHOOL
LEADER
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SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Becoming While Doing

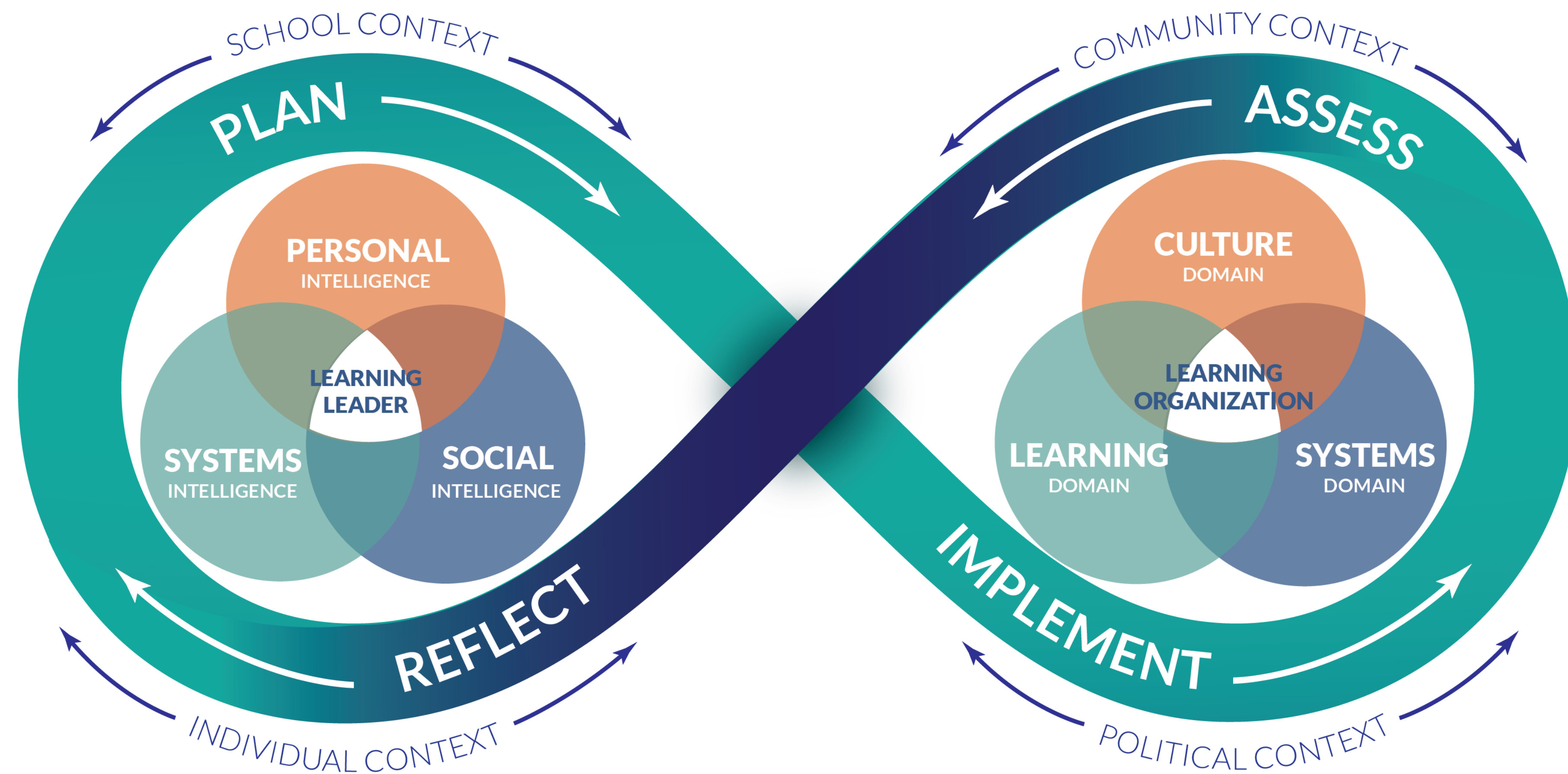


**SCHOOL
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SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Becoming While Doing

The Language of Leadership



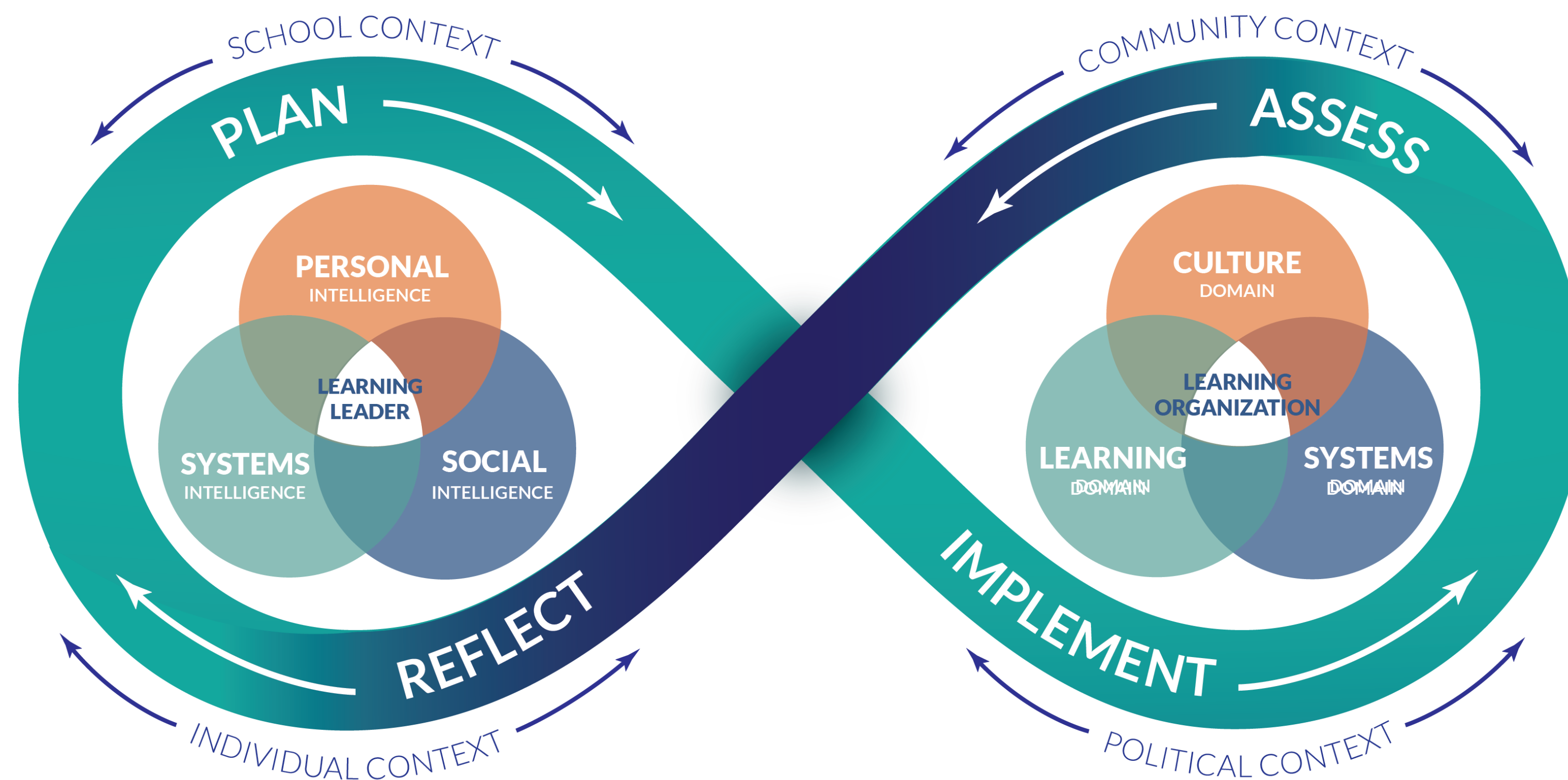
What are the big rocks of the Paradigm? What jumps out at you?

What terms match or relate to the leadership language currently used in your district?

Think - Stare - Pair - Share

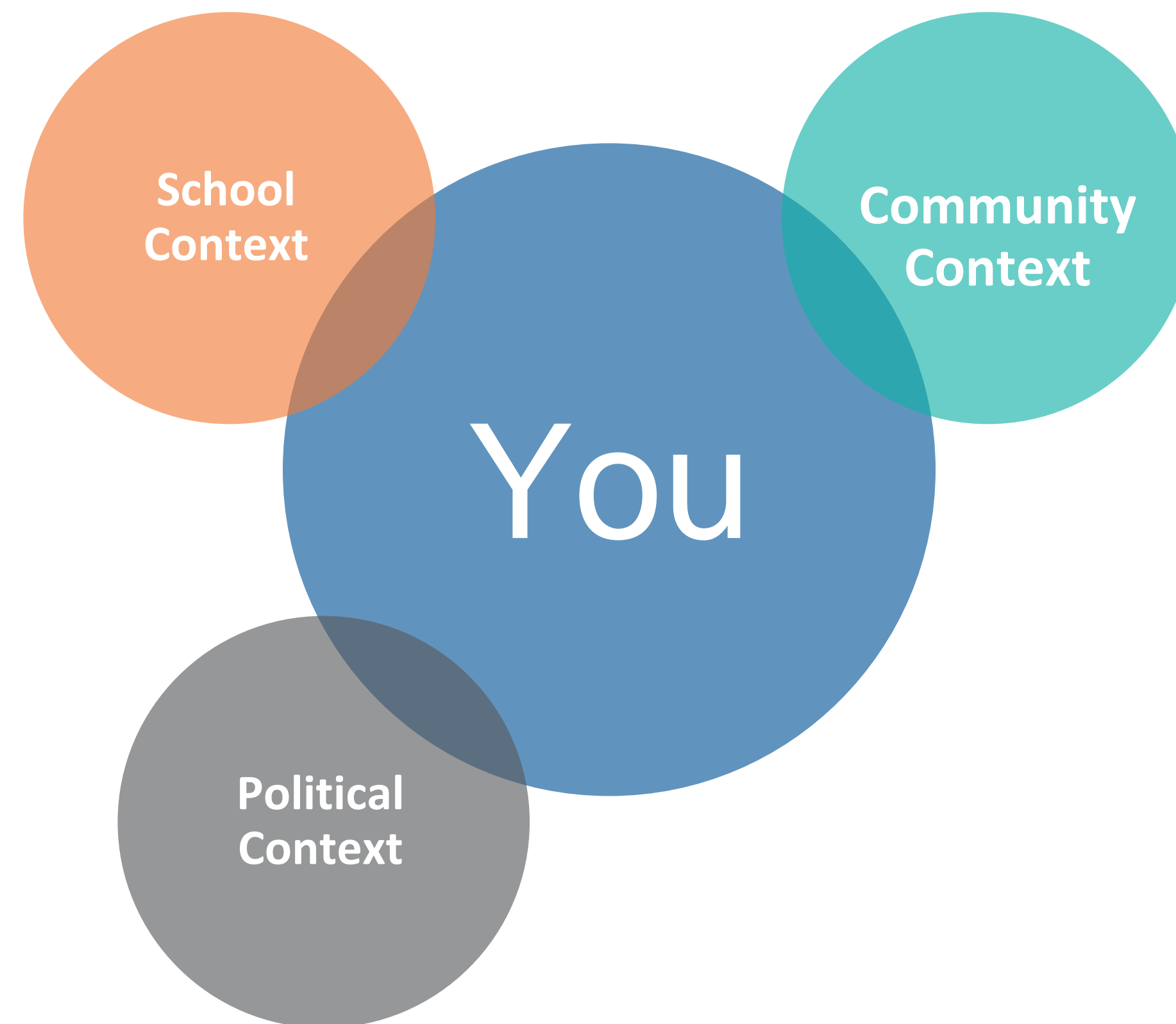
Foundational Blocks of the School Leader Paradigm

- Contexts (Individual, School, Community & Political)
- Domains (Culture, Systems & Learning)
- Intelligences (Personal, Social & Systems)
- Cycle of Inquiry (Plan, Implement, Assess & Reflect)



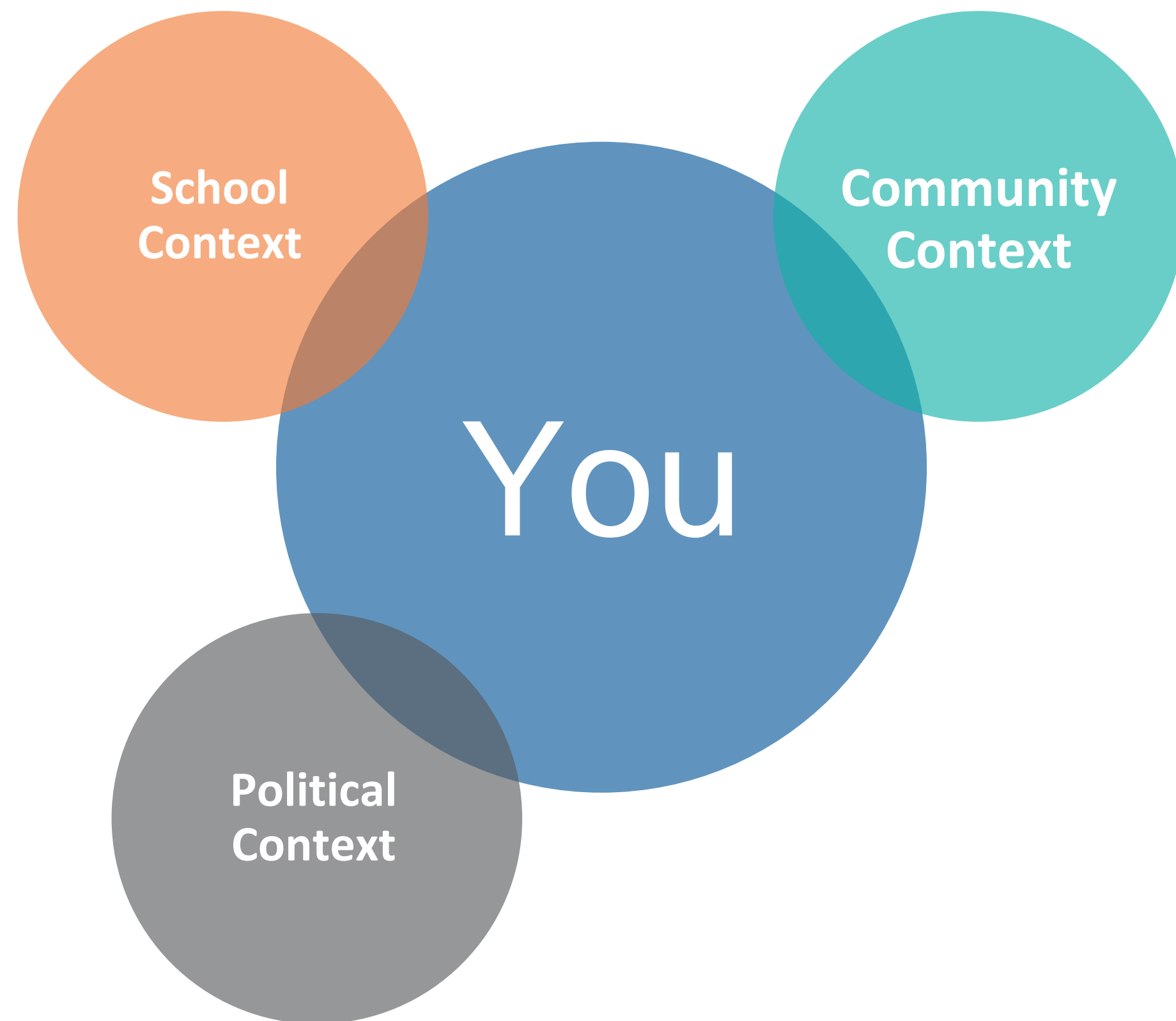
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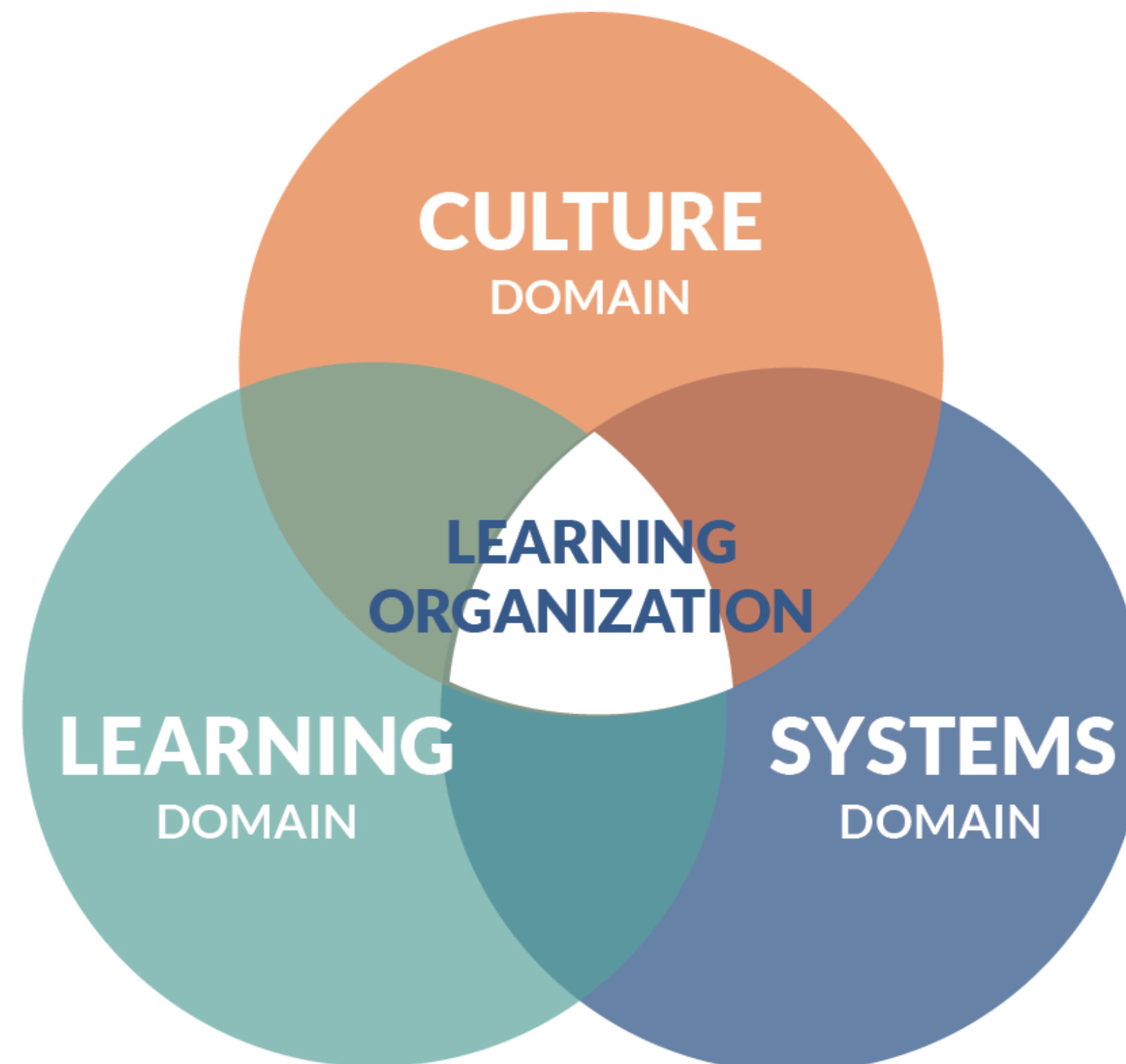


Key **CONTEXT** Questions:

- What is context?
- Why does it matter?
- What are the differences between contexts?
- How does context influence the impact of leadership?
- What are the contextual influences at play in your school or district?

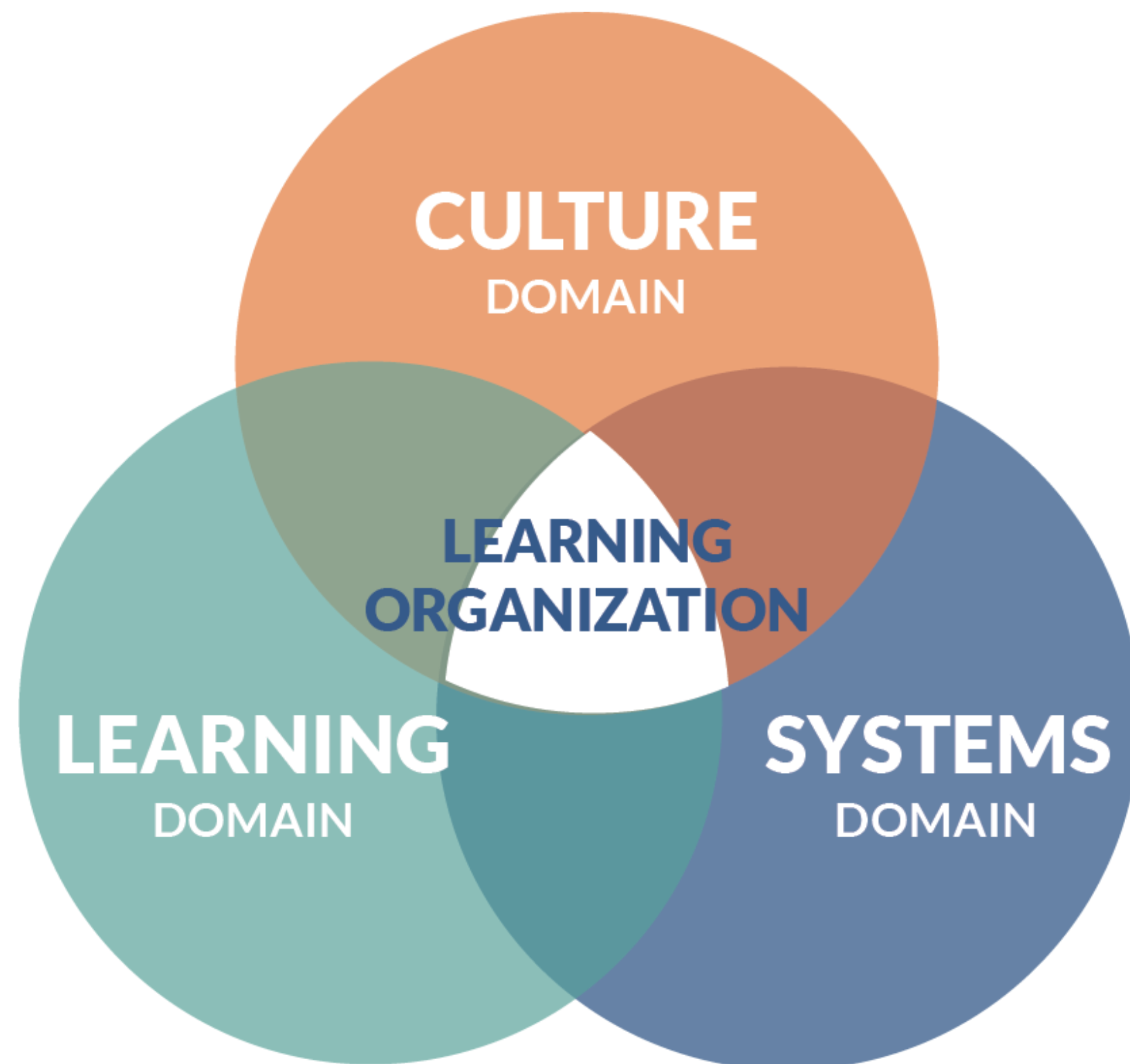
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Key DOMAIN Questions:

- What is your primary Domain strength?
- What is not your strength area?
- Why does it matter?
- How are you leading with your strength?
- What are the strengths of those around you?
- What/Who is the Learning Organization?

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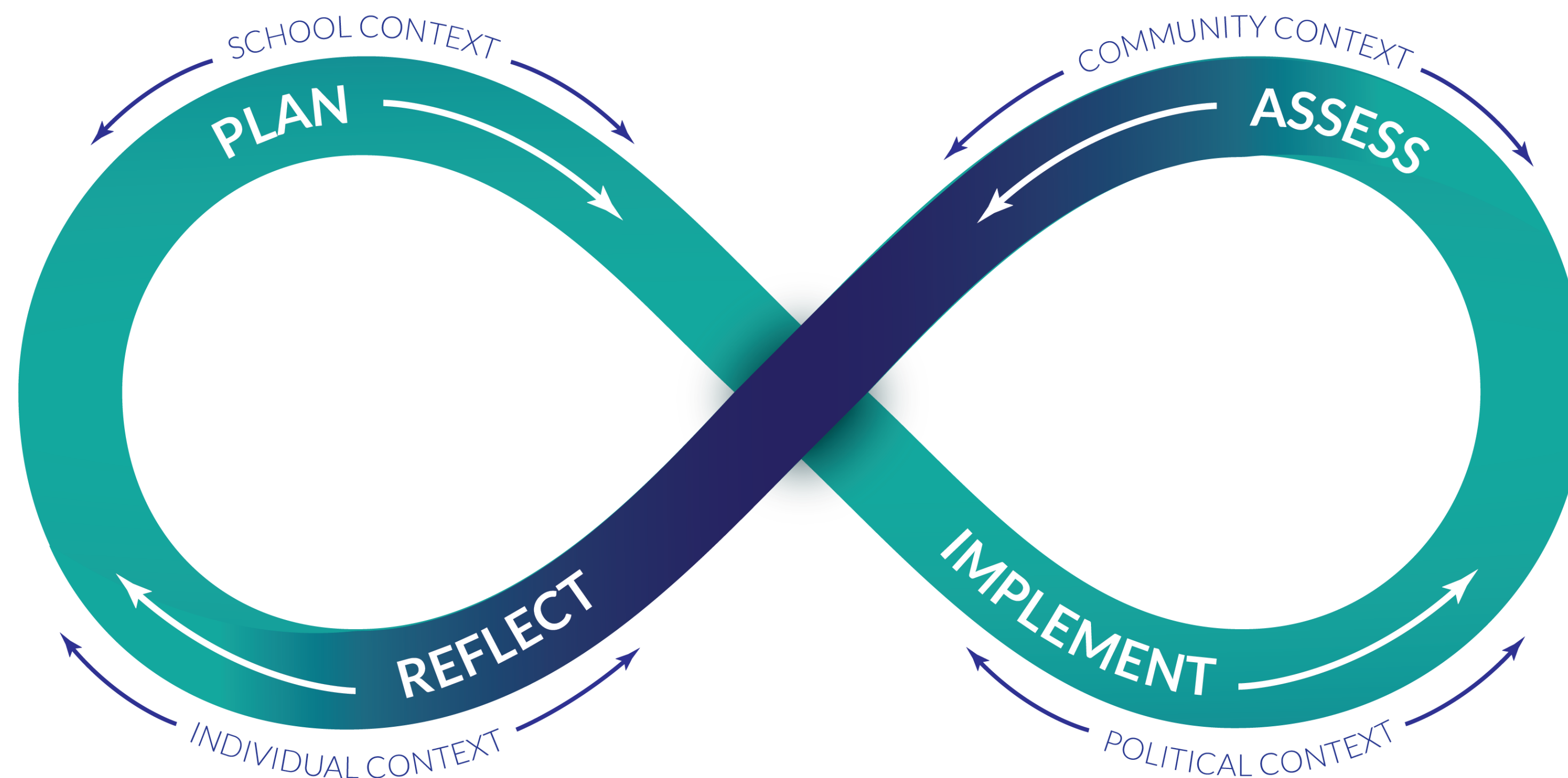


Key INTELLIGENCE Questions:

- What is your primary Intelligence?
- What makes you effective?
- What are the blind spots of your leadership?
- How are you leading with your strengths?
- What are the strengths of those around you?
- Who is the Learning Leader?

Foundational Blocks of the School Leader Paradigm

- Contexts (Individual, School, Community & Political)
- Domains (Culture, Systems & Learning)
- Intelligences (Personal, Social & Systems)
- **Cycle of Inquiry (Plan, Implement, Assess & Reflect)**

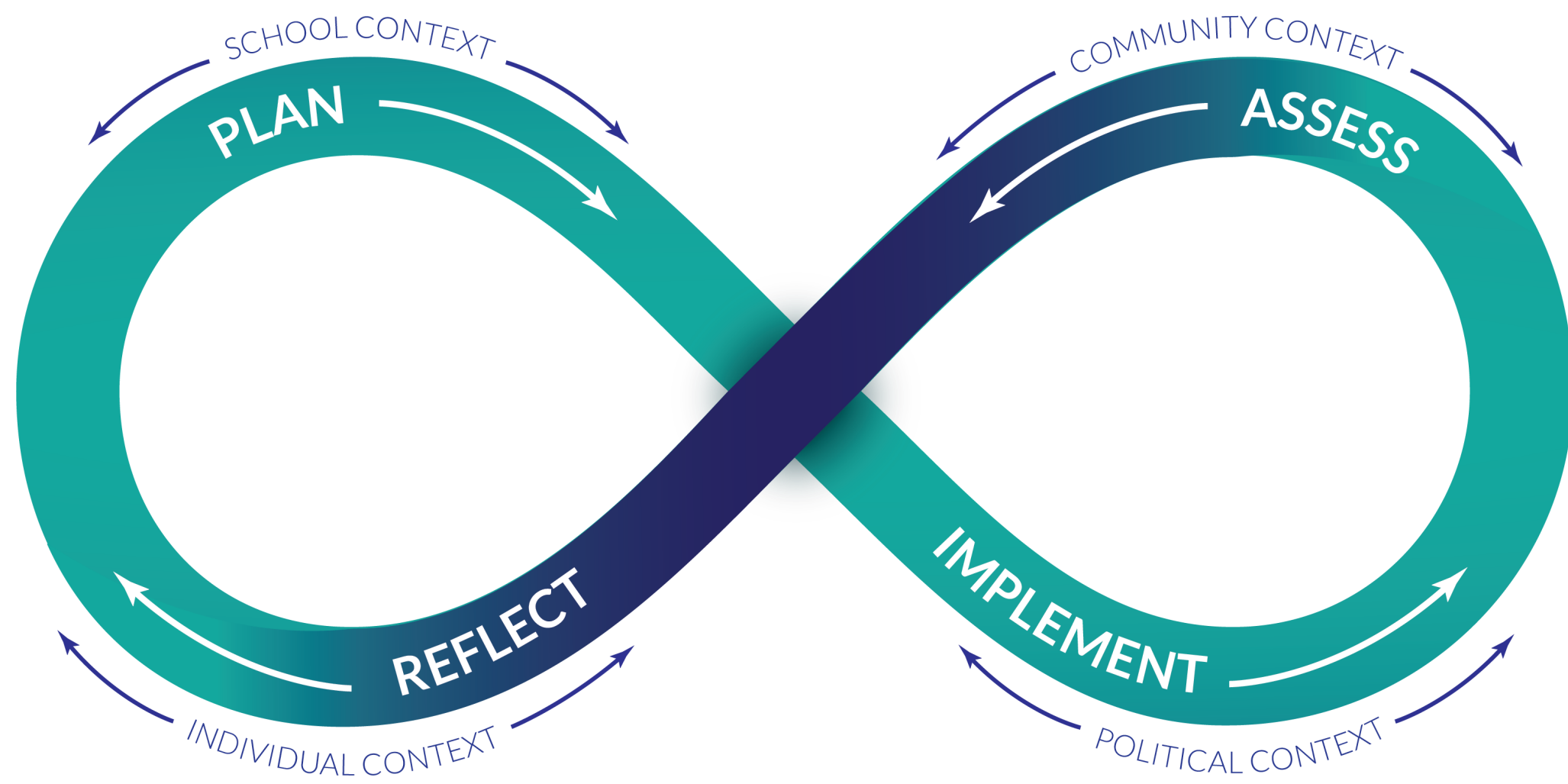


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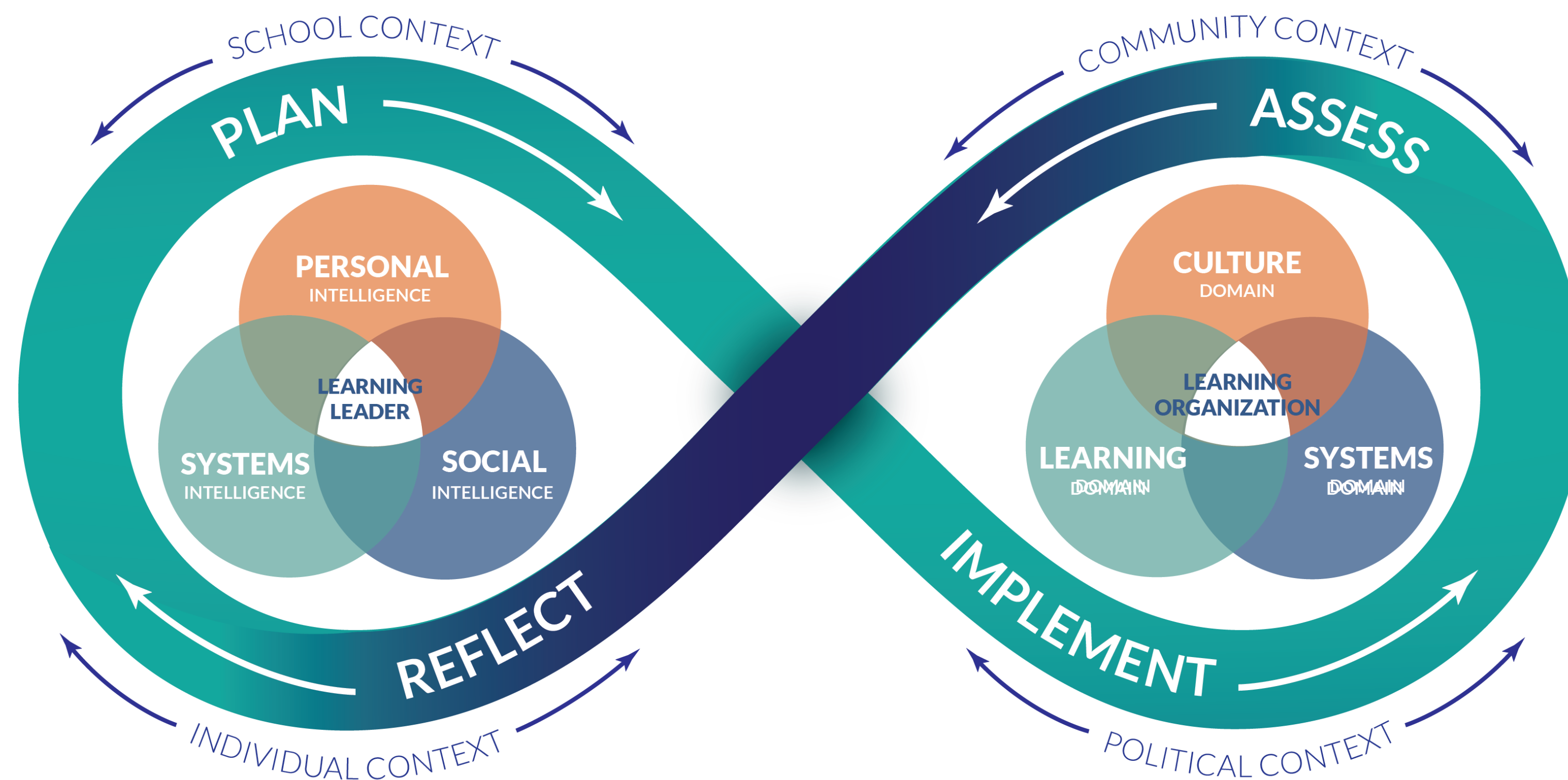
Key INQUIRY Questions:

- What is something that we need to address? How do we know?
- How are we going to tackle making the change?
- How are we going to monitor our progress and make adjustments as needed?
- How are we going to reflect, assess, and learn from this leadership experience? How will we move what we learned into our goals for next year?



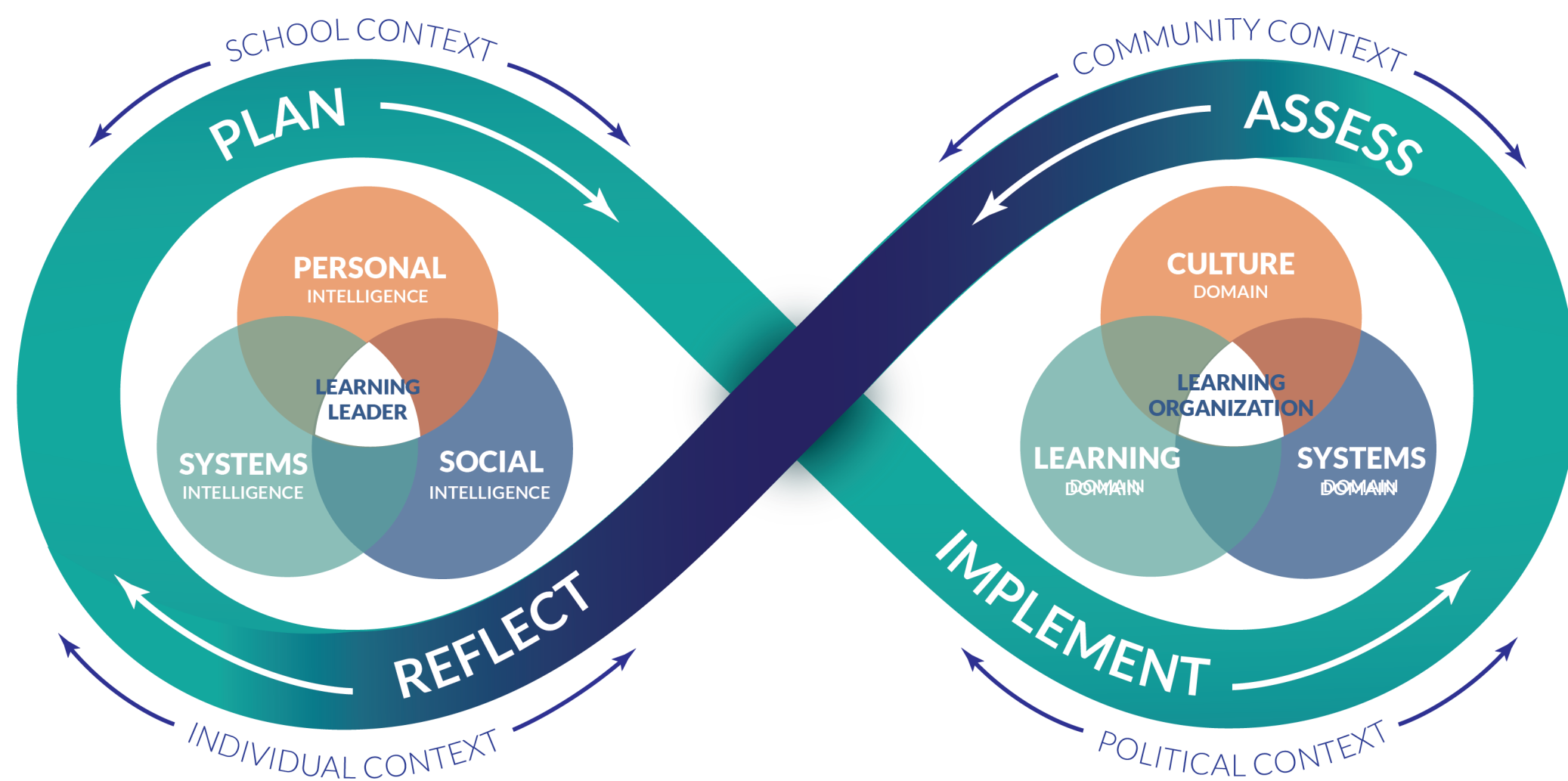
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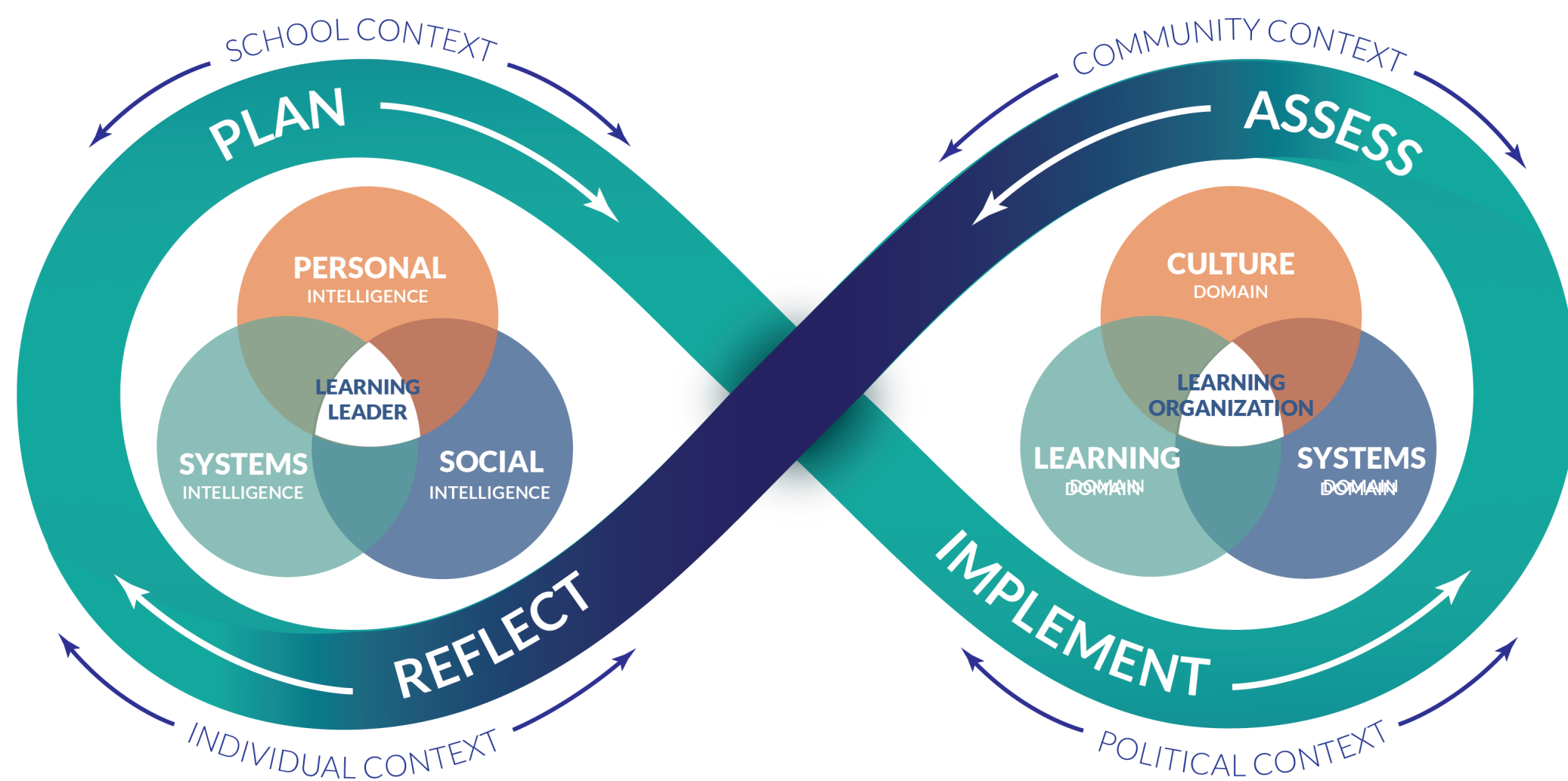


Key PARADIGM Questions:

- Where are YOU in the leadership journey?
- What is the interplay between the Learning Leader and the Learning Organization?
- How can you leverage this language in your school/district?
- How can principal supervisors shift the conversation from evaluation to ongoing reflection and growth?

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Collaborative Top 10 Growth Support Questions:

- How are you? No really, how are you?
- How is your Problem of Practice going?
- Have you had to adjust your Theory of Action? How so?
- What data are you tracking and sharing?
- What Domains are you working in?
- How is context impacting your effectiveness?
- What (or who) is impacting your progress?
- How are you (and your team) leading with your strengths?
- What have you learned about yourself (and your team)?
- How can I/we help you? What do you need from me/us?

EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Impact (desired): Define the current situation in sentence or two; Describe the desired state by

DESIRED

What data is needed? How will it be collected?

COLLECTION METHOD

Contextual Influences. What contexts should you be

POLITICAL

What are the potential Theory of Action?

What are the potential leadership moves to make the Theory of Action come alive?

Creating Hope for All through Reflective, Effective, and Intentional Leadership

A SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM RESOURCE

AWSP | 800.562.6100 | www.awsp.org

LEARNING LEADER: "BECOMING"

PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE

- Wellness
- Ethical
- Fit/Healthy
- Optimistic
- Self-Aware
- Growth Mindset
- Humble
- Reflective
- Interpersonal
- Accountable

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Service
- Empathetic
- Trustworthy
- Generous
- Protective
- Community Building
- Relational
- Collaborative
- Connective
- Constancy

SYSTEMS INTELLIGENCE

- Mission/Vision/Strategic Planning
- Analytic
- Strategic
- Articulate
- Visionary
- Operations & Management
- Responsible
- Transformative
- Responsive
- Methodical

ASSESS

What is the evidence of the impact of YOUR leadership?

| What is the evidence of impact? How did you identify a problem or opportunity and then developing a theory of action impact stakeholder learning, school improvement, and/or identified gaps? | Becoming: How did you learn and grow as the lead learner? Where did you build reflection into the process to guide your leadership? Who helped shape your leadership growth? | Doing: What domains were impacted? Which dimensions were specifically targeted? How did the learning organization progress-monitor and adjust? |
|---|--|--|
| Qualitative Data | | |
| Quantitative Data | | |

REFLECT

What lessons were learned through the leadership journey?

What is Educational Context? The intersectionality, relationship, and collision of ever changing competing and collaborative forces in a school and/or district.

What did you learn about yourself throughout this process?

What lessons did your team learn throughout this process?

What is your leadership strength area: Culture, Systems, or Learning, and how did you use your strength during this Cycle of Inquiry?

What attributes did you identify as areas you need to continue to focus on as the lead reflective learning leader?

How did your team navigate conflict, stress, and challenges as you collectively went through the Cycle of Inquiry?

How does the Cycle of Inquiry impact the building school improvement goals?

Evidence of Impact Tool 2.0. © The School Leader Collaborative 2023.



The Research


“Ensuring all students have access to stable, high-quality school leadership is a **shared responsibility** of district leaders, regional service providers, and state education leaders.”

University of Washington
Policy Brief - 2024

Principal Retention and Turnover During the COVID-19 Era.
Do students have equitable access to stable school leadership?

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | DECEMBER 2023

POLICY BRIEF



PRINCIPAL RETENTION AND TURNOVER DURING THE COVID-19 ERA

Do students have equitable access to stable school leadership?

INTRODUCTION

Principals play a critical role in creating healthy, inclusive, and effective learning environments. As instructional leaders, principals oversee teacher hiring, development, and retention, help set schoolwide expectations, and represent the school in the local community. As community leaders, principals are responsible for leveraging resources to disrupt inequities in educational opportunity.

Like teachers, principals have faced unprecedented pressure during the COVID-19 period. Survey data suggest they experienced increased levels of stress and burnout.¹ How that trend affects job performance and turnover will have consequences for students. While studies highlight recent increases in teacher attrition, limited research examines principal turnover during the COVID-19 era.²

Figure 1 compares principal and teacher turnover three years into the COVID-19 pandemic for the state of Washington. Principal turnover declined in the first year of the pandemic, but increased in the subsequent two years, with the largest increase in the most recent year, turnover from 2021-22 to 2022-23. Teacher turnover is similar, but the recent increase is not as large.

In this brief, we present an analysis of principal turnover in Washington State during the COVID-19 period. We then offer recommendations for improving principal retention and equitable access to stable school leadership.

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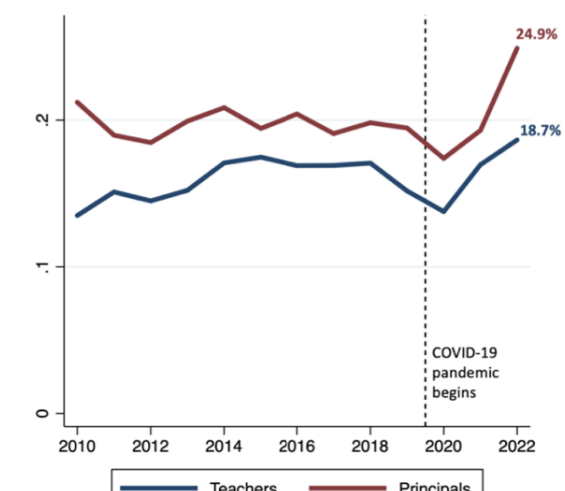


Figure 1. Annual turnover rate for teachers and principals in Washington State, 2009-10 to 2022-23

BACKGROUND

While a small amount of employee turnover can improve organizational capacity, diversifying perspectives and bringing new ideas, high attrition levels can be detrimental.³ Chronic principal turnover disrupts relationships and represents a loss of continuity, school vision, and human capital. Studies show principal turnover is associated with declines in student achievement and increased teacher turnover.⁴ Chronic principal turnover disproportionately impacts higher-poverty schools and schools enrolling higher shares of Students of Color.

On average, principals rated as less effective tend to have higher turnover rates, but some evidence suggests

UW 2024



Elevating Your Principal through the School Leader Paradigm

Ongoing leadership development for all school leaders
throughout the journey of "*Becoming* while *Doing*".

Questions? Comments?

