

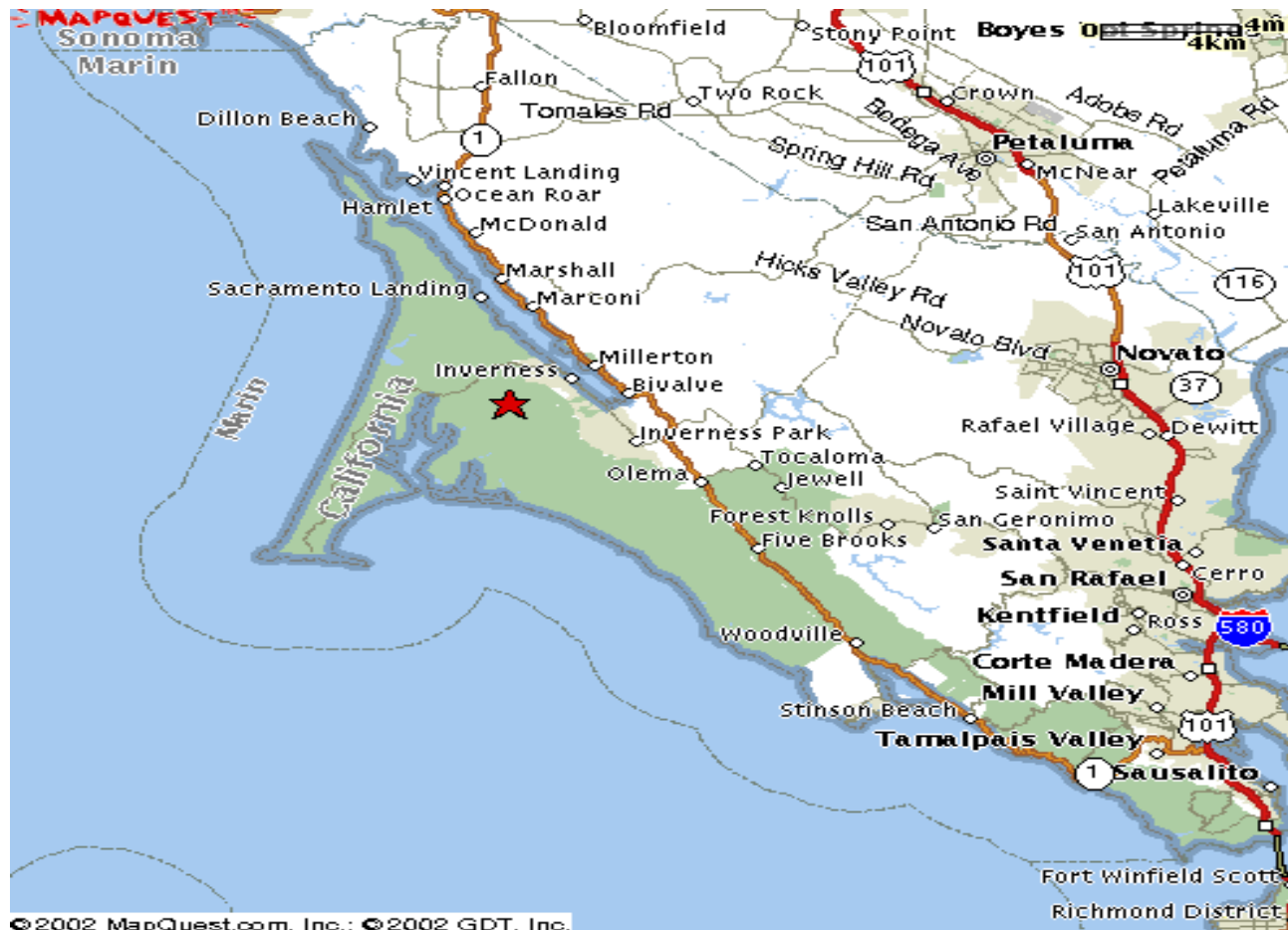
**STUART FOUNDATION  
INVESTMENTS  
AIMED AT  
STRENGTHENING  
THE TEACHING PROFESSION:  
A CLUSTER REVIEW**

*Inverness Research Associates*

*April 2006*

# Inverness Research Associates

# Inverness California



# Inverness Research Associates

- Evaluator of National Science Foundation investments for last twenty years
- Evaluator of National Writing Project for last twelve years
- Evaluator of 4 Stuart-funded projects in this cluster
  - Seattle Writing; Wash Initiative; CSTP; NWP FOS
- Advisor to other foundations
  - NSF; Hughes; Annenberg/CPB; Pew; Packard

# Overview of This Presentation

- Background
  - Inverness Research
  - This Cluster Review
  - The Inverness Perspective On Investments Made In Educational Improvement
- The Place And Role Of The Stuart Investments Within The Educational Landscape
- The Scale Of The Stuart Investments Within The California and Washington Educational Landscapes
- The Defining Features Of Stuart Grantmaking Within This Cluster
- Characterizing The Portfolio
- Overall Assessment of the Stuart Cluster
- A Summary Assessment

This Cluster Review

# This Cluster Review

- A focus on the “cluster”
  - Not an evaluation of the individual grants
- The review looks at the portfolio as a whole
  - Seen as a diverse, mutually supportive set of grants
  - Multiple grants but a singular mission for the portfolio
- Goal of the review – to help the Board gain an independent perspective on the nature and value of the investment made in this cluster

# Inverness Review Tasks

- Extensive discussions with program staff
- Review of evaluation reports
- Focus group with grantees and evaluators
- Survey of grantees and evaluators
- Independent interviews with key people
- Reflections on our own firsthand experiences with Stuart projects and grantmaking

# The Inverness Research Perspective On Investments Made in Educational Improvement

# Investing in the Improvement of Education

- The Idea of the ***Improvement Infrastructure***
  - Educational landscape consists of successive layers of system supports
  - 3 degrees of separation between investments and students

# The First Degree

*STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT*

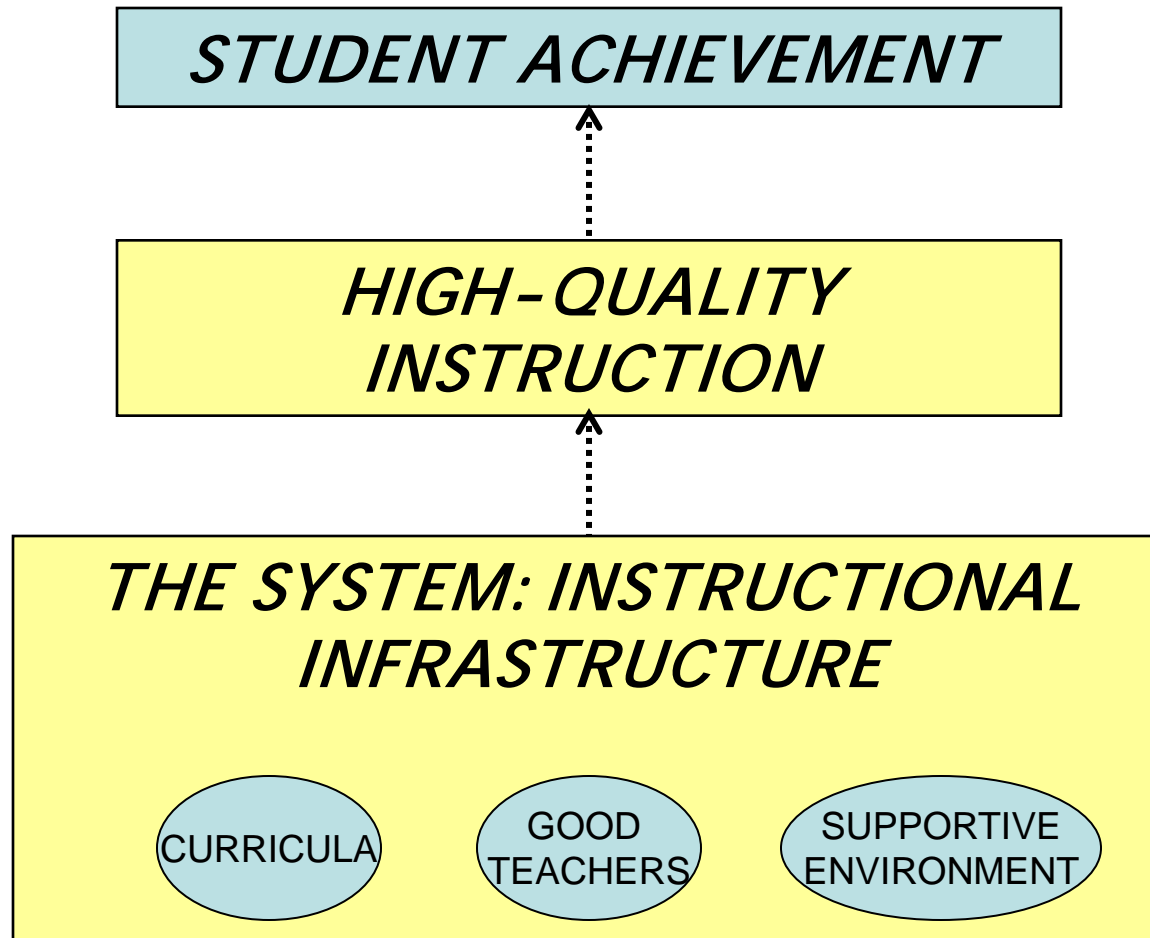


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graph BT; A[STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT] -.-> B["HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION AND AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN (Formal and Informal)"]
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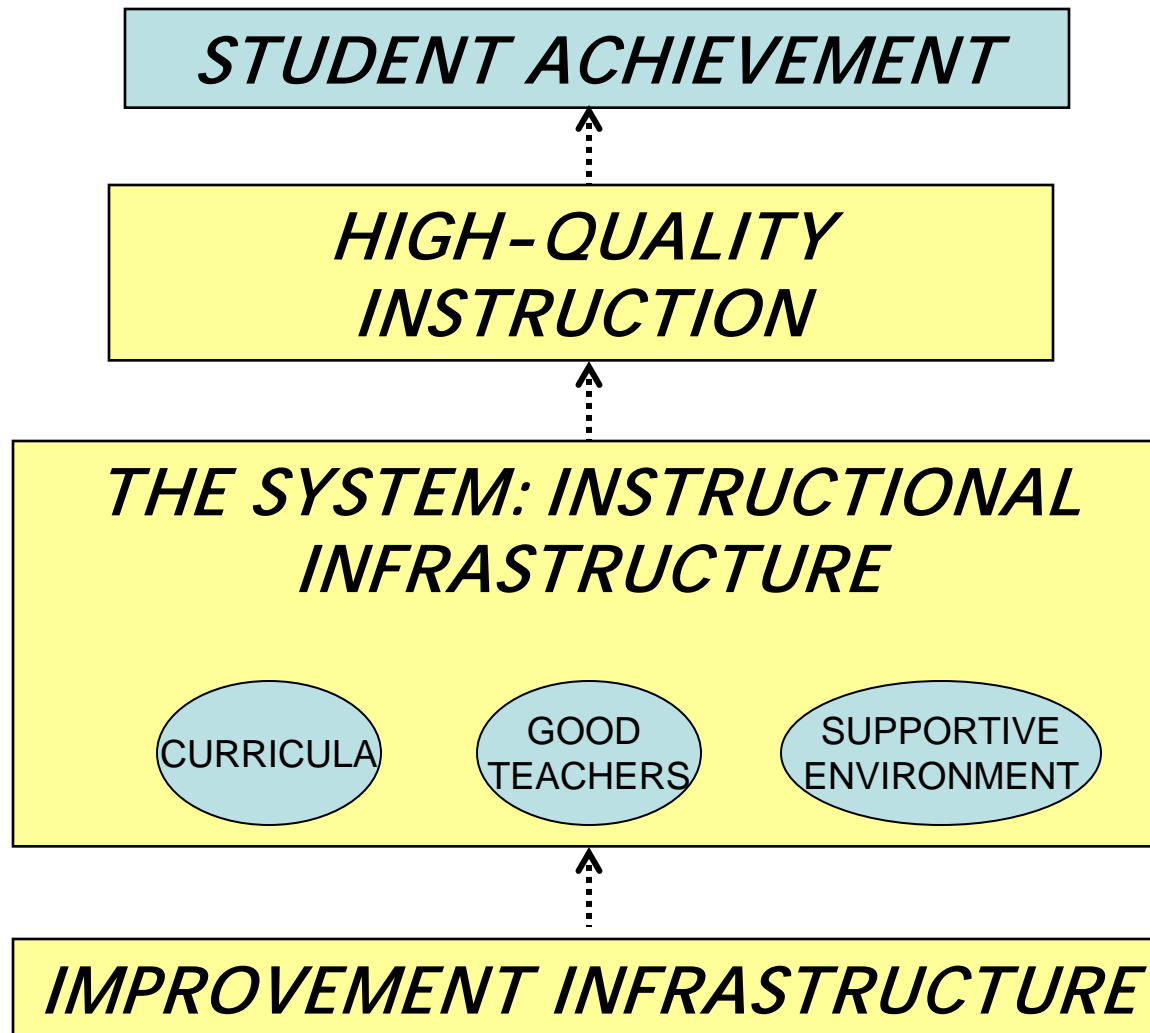
The diagram illustrates a causal relationship between instructional quality and student achievement. At the top, a light blue rectangular box contains the text *STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT*. Below this box, a vertical dotted line with an upward-pointing arrowhead connects to a larger yellow rectangular box. This yellow box contains the text *HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION AND AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN (Formal and Informal)*, indicating that these factors lead to student achievement.

*HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION  
AND  
AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN  
(Formal and Informal)*

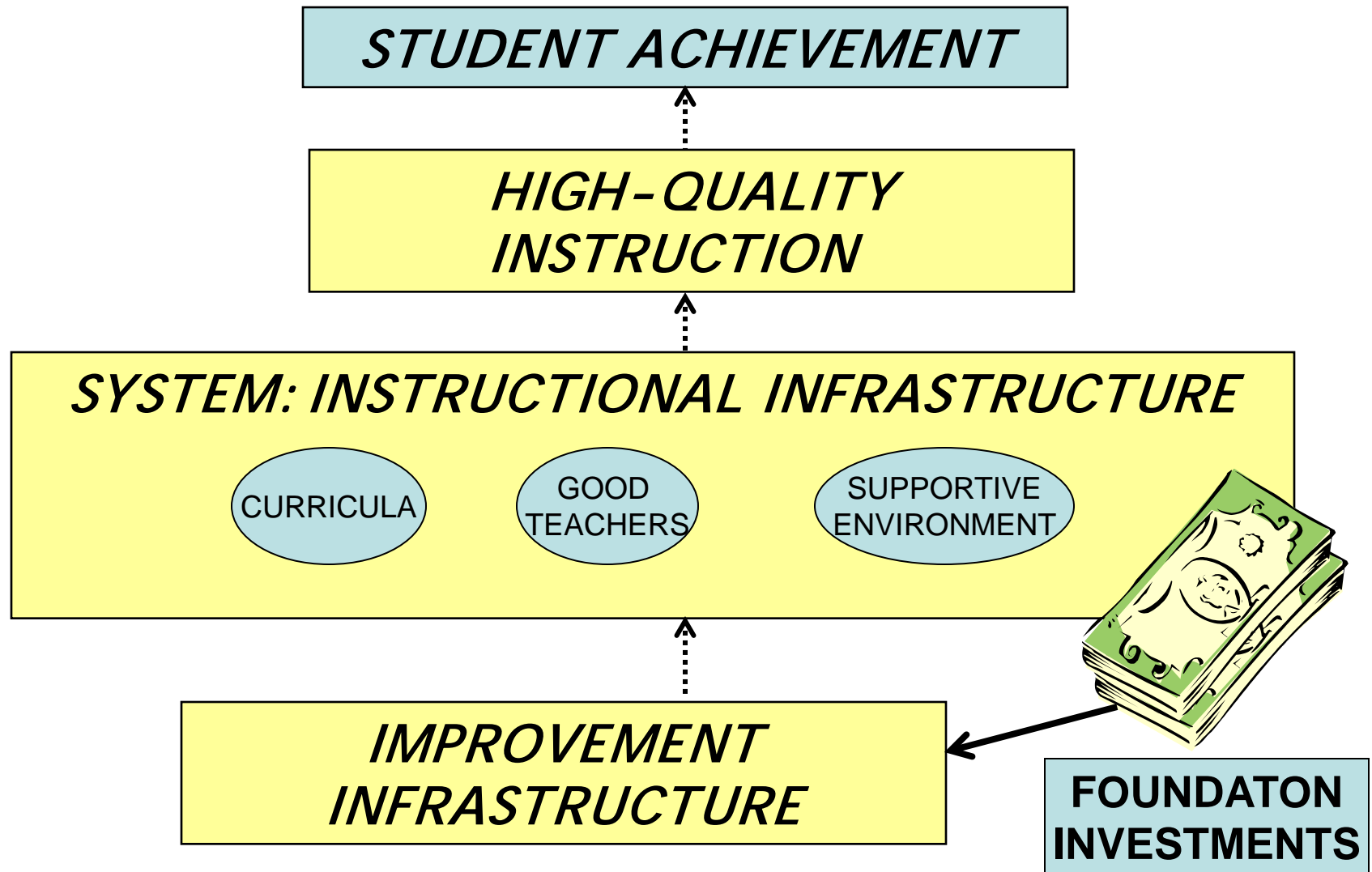
# The Second Degree: Instructional Infrastructure



# The Third Degree: The Improvement Infrastructure

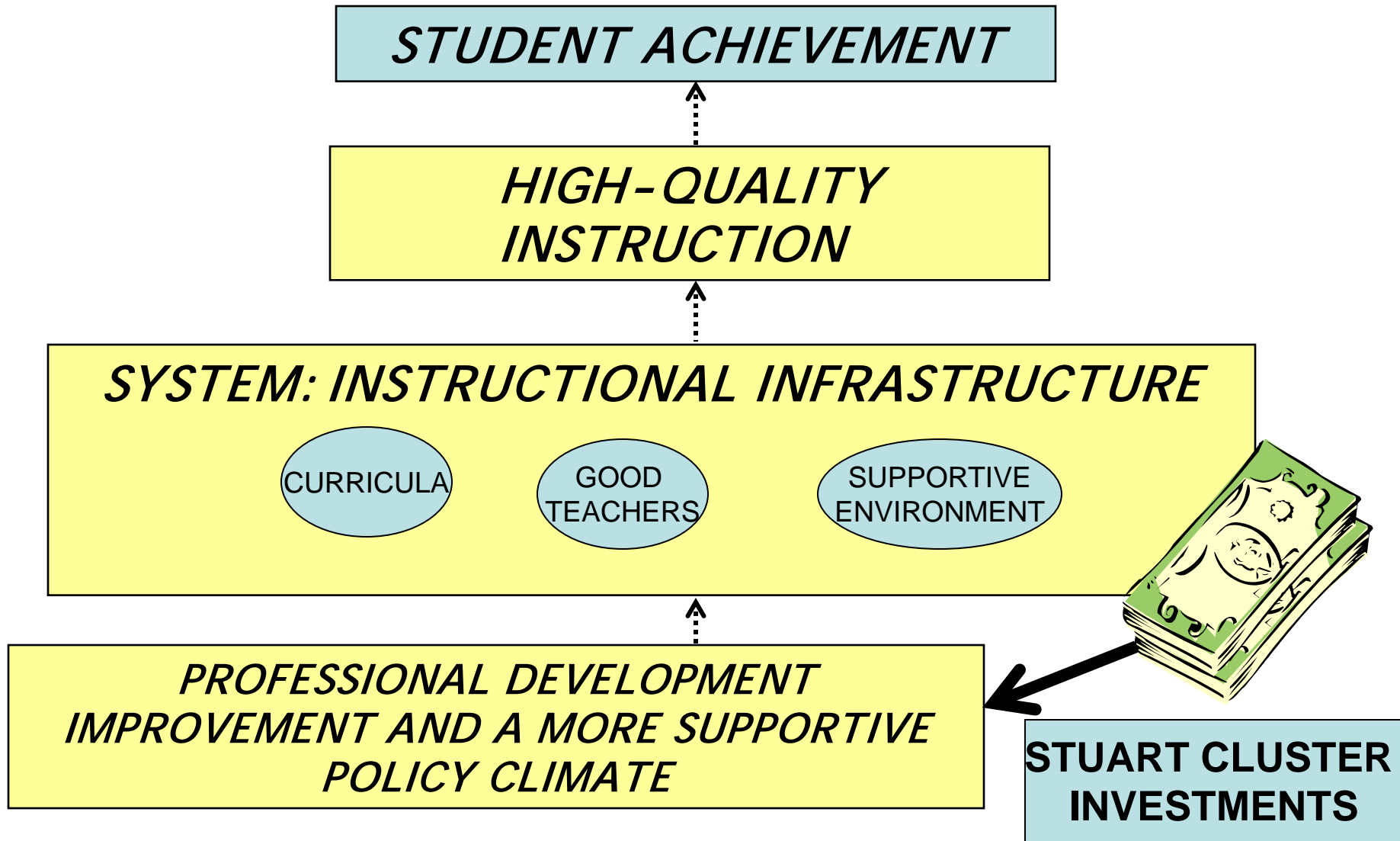


# The Nature of Investments Made In Educational Improvement



# The Place And Role Of The Stuart Investments Within The Educational Landscape

# The Place and Role of This Cluster



# ELEMENTS OF THE IMPROVEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION

*PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
IMPROVEMENT AND A MORE  
SUPPORTIVE POLICY CONTEXT*

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graph TD; A["PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
IMPROVEMENT AND A MORE  
SUPPORTIVE POLICY CONTEXT"] --- B["PD IMPROVEMENT"]; A --- C["MORE SUPPORTIVE POLICY  
CONTEXT"]
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## **PD IMPROVEMENT**

- *New PD strategies*
- *New PD curricula*
- *Support for PD leaders*
- *New PD communities*

## **MORE SUPPORTIVE POLICY CONTEXT**

- *Use of Research and Data*
- *Identification of critical issues*
- *Forums and events*
- *Reports and recommendations*
- *Technical assistance to policymakers*

The Scale of the Stuart  
Investments  
Within the California And  
Washington  
Educational Landscapes

# The 5% rule

The investment needs to be about 5% of the total funding of the domain you seek to influence

## K-12 Annual Spending

\$ 455 Billion (National)

\$ 57 Billion (California)

\$ 9 Billion (Washington)

## Stuart Foundation

### Portfolio Funding (1998-2005):

\$ ~28 Million (20 projects)

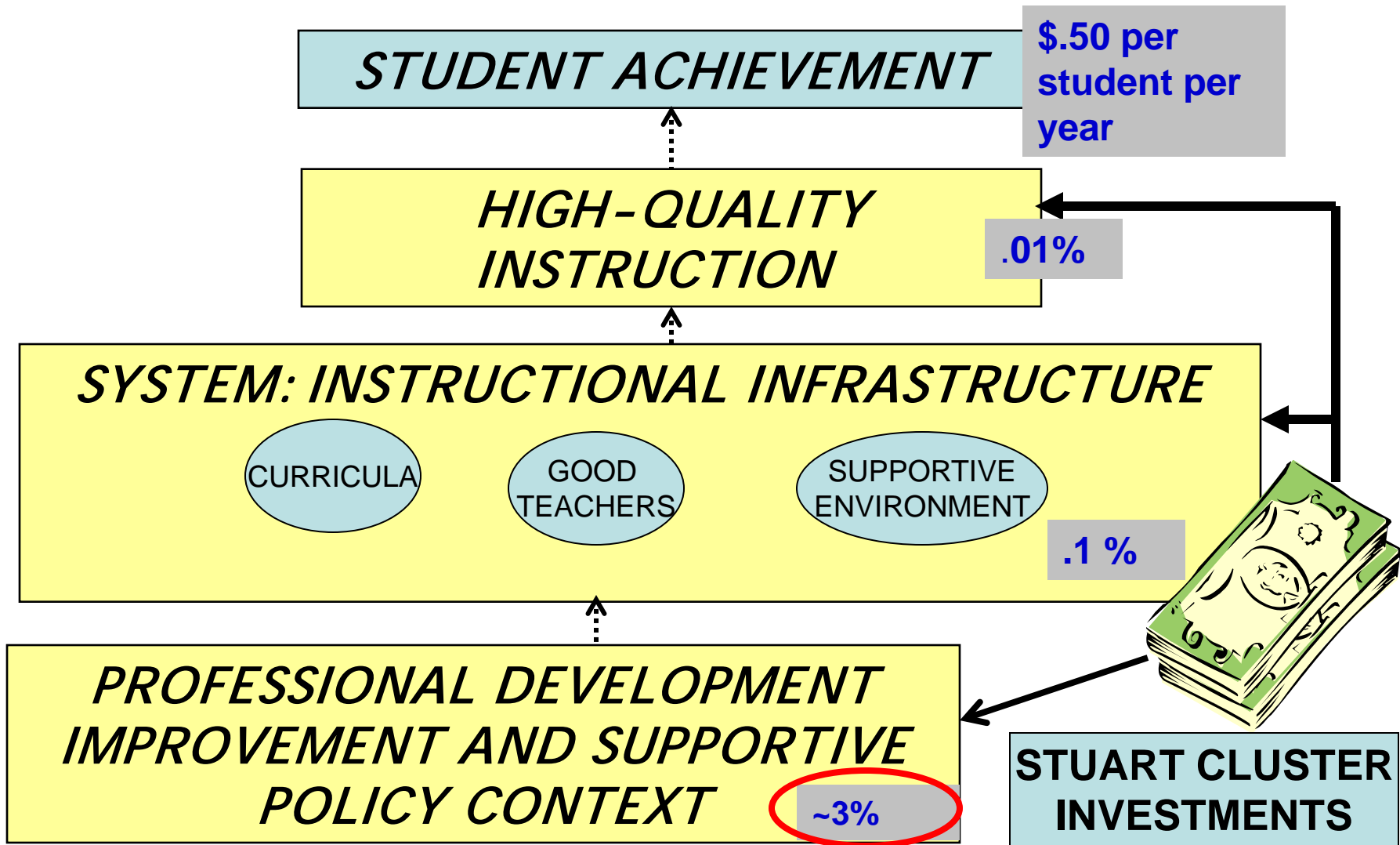
\$ ~ 22 Million (14 - CA)

\$ ~ 6 Million (6 - WA)

# National Education Statistics

	<u>National</u>	<u>California</u>	<u>Washington</u>
# teachers	3.0 million	306,548	59,072
# schools	96,000	9,397	2,008
# students	47.6 million	6.3 million	1.0 million

# The Place and Role of Stuart Investments in Professional Development



# Decreasing Levels Of Public Investment In Deeper Layers Of Support

***365,000 Teachers in CA and WA***

***~ 20 Billion Dollars***

***Professional Supports For Teachers  
Related To The Improvement Of Instruction***

***~ 1 Billion Dollars***

***Investments In The Strengthening  
Of Professional Development And  
The Improvement Of Policies***

***~ 100 Million Dollars***

# The Defining Features Of Stuart Grantmaking Within This Cluster

# Defining Features – Foundation Perspective

- A focus on improving student learning through improving the quality of teachers and teaching
- An approach that recognizes teaching as a complex endeavor requiring professional knowledge and judgment
- A clear point of view about what constitutes high-quality professional development
- Investing in the right people (leadership, know-how), positioned in hospitable organizational settings that will facilitate their work
- Symbiotic funding relationships – complementing the investments of others – catalyst grants, collaborative funding, gap funding
- Investing in the development of capacity and a supportive policy context

# Defining Features – Grantee and Evaluator Perspective

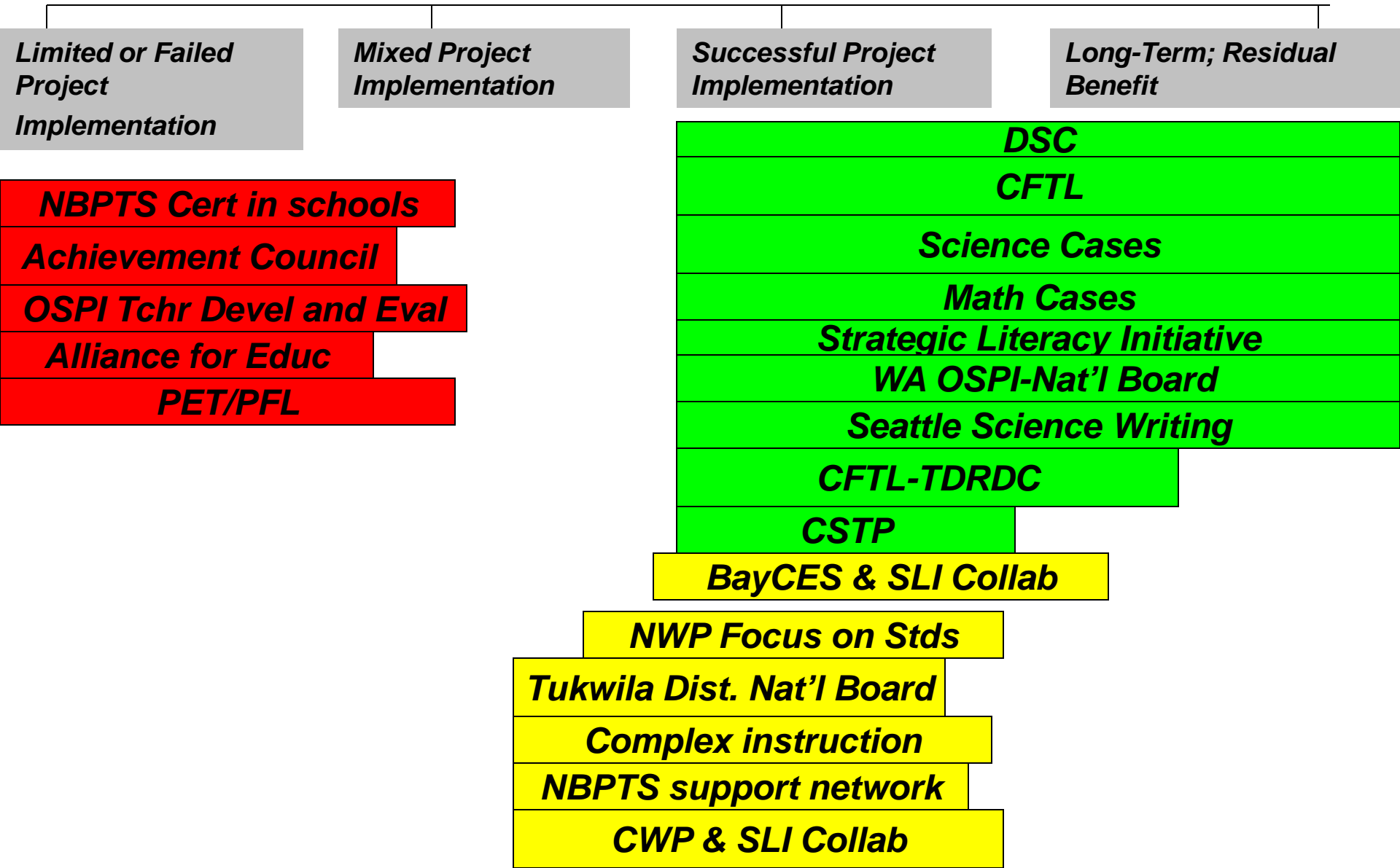
- Grantees see the cluster as a diverse portfolio all aimed at strengthening the teacher workforce
- The grants provide venture capital for entrepreneurs
  - Funding innovation – finding smart people with good ideas
  - Adding value to high-quality endeavors
  - Long-term perspective – “focused on the “long haul”
  - Responsive to needs and opportunities
- The grants promote high-quality professional development
  - Tight focus on student learning through teacher learning
  - Focus on core academic areas with depth and rigor
  - Grounded in practice, informed by theory and latest research
  - Build capacity to keep doing the work, evolving the work
  - Generate knowledge that contributes to the broader field
- A rigorous but supportive relationship with program officer

# Characterizing the Portfolio

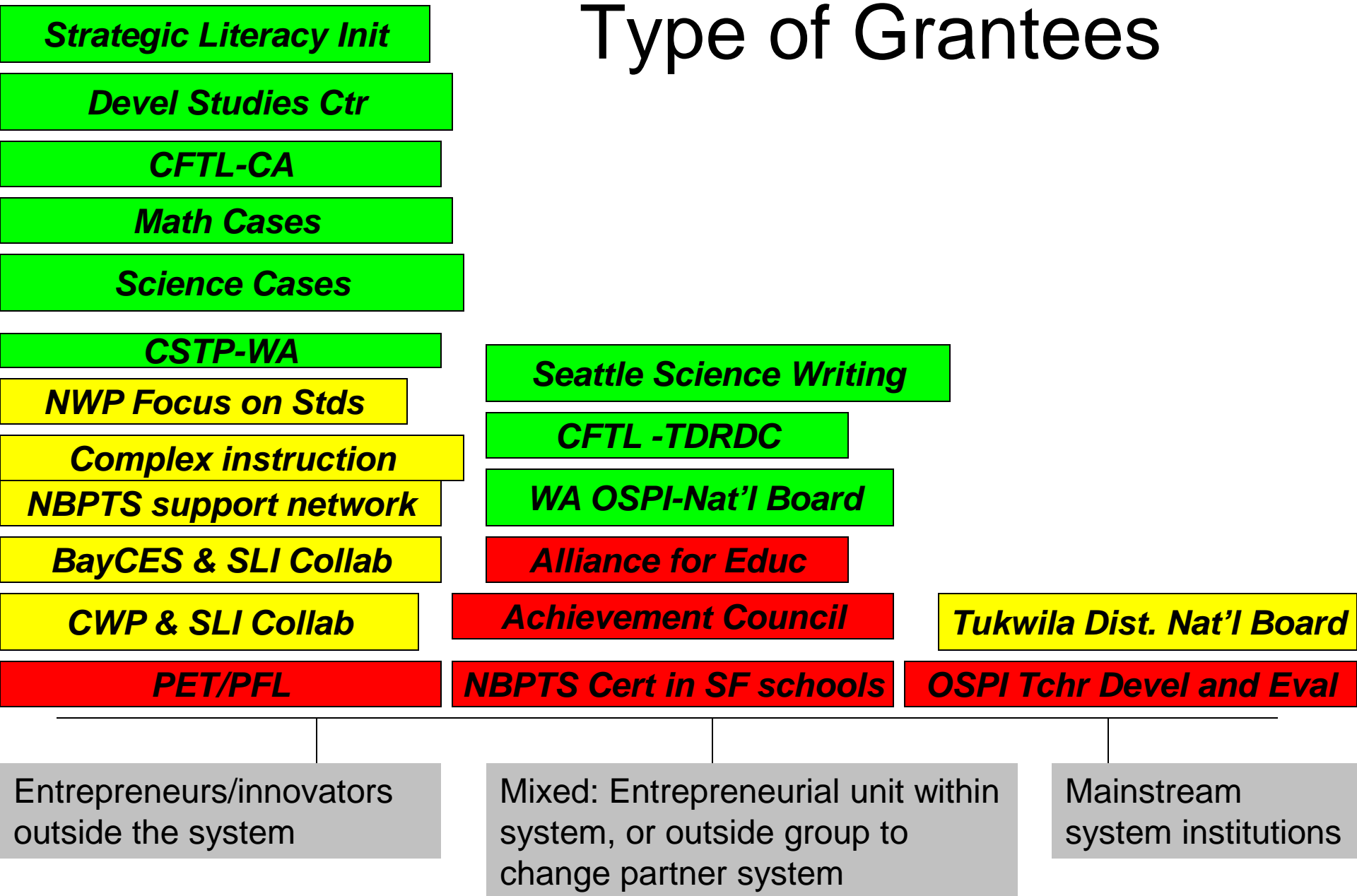
- Success of implementation
- Success and
  - Type of grantees
  - Number of years of funding
  - Focus of work at levels of the system

# Degree of Successful Implementation

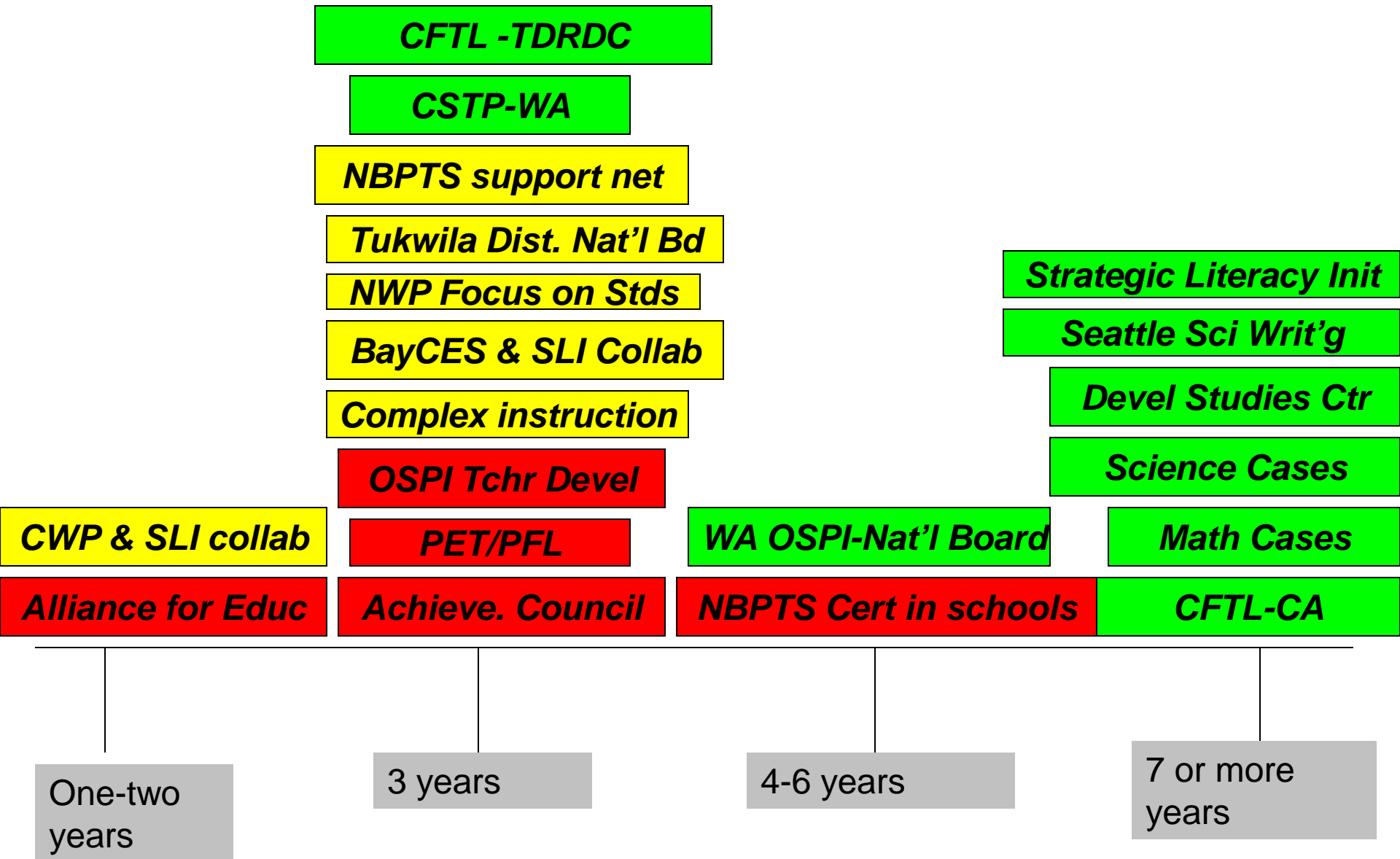
(Based on foundation and evaluator assessments)



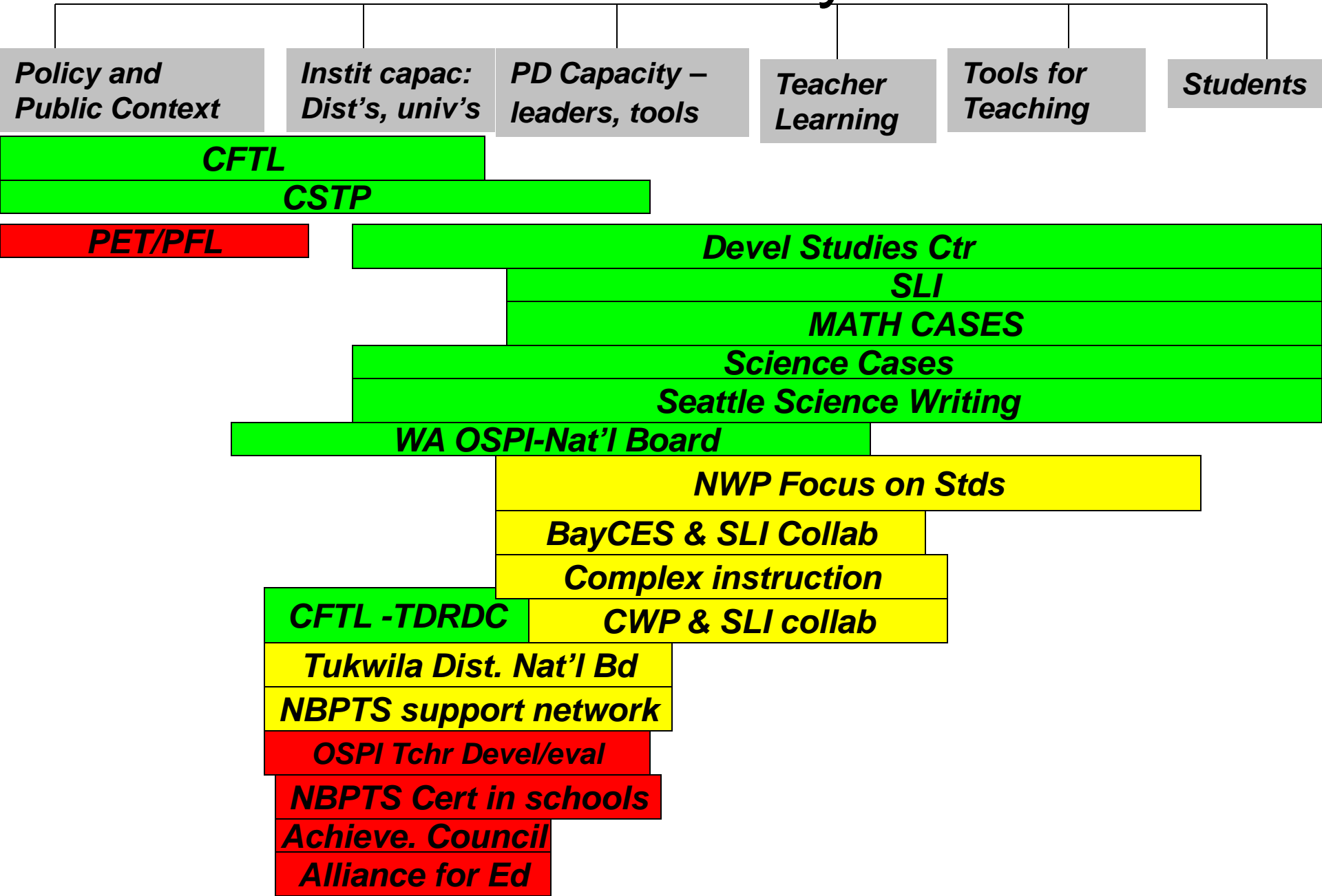
# Type of Grantees



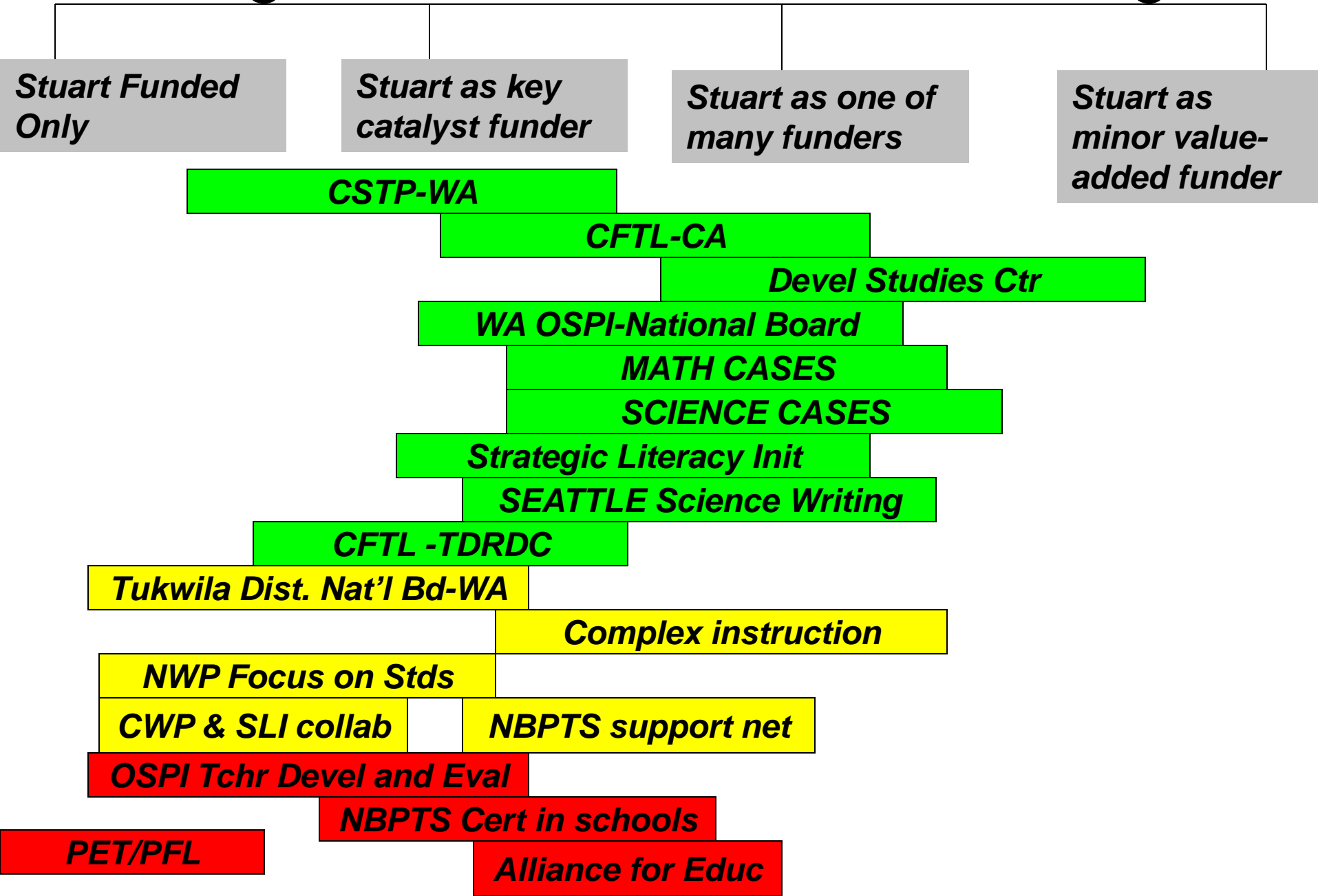
# Number of years



# Focus of work by level



# Degree of Shared Grantmaking



# Overall Assessment Of The Stuart Cluster

## Four Major Criteria

- Need
- Niche
- Quality
- Contributions

# 1) Need

- Teacher quality is the largest factor in improving student achievement.
- Most school systems lack an improvement infrastructure; they do not have the capacity (knowledge, expertise, tools and resources) to improve their professional development offerings.
- The policy system provides mixed signals, wavering attention and uneven support to strengthening professional supports for teachers.
- Therefore there is a great ongoing need to invest in a strong teaching profession and more supportive policy climate.

## 2) Niche

The niche is appropriate for Stuart in terms of:

- Expertise of staff
- The scale of investment
- The history and development of long-term relationships
- System is unlikely to do what Stuart is doing.
- There are high-quality improvement organizations that can do the work but they need funding from private sources.
- Stuart investments complement other improvement efforts but are not redundant.
- Investing in the teaching profession is an appropriate role for private philanthropy.

### 3) Quality

Overall we found very high ratings of the quality of work

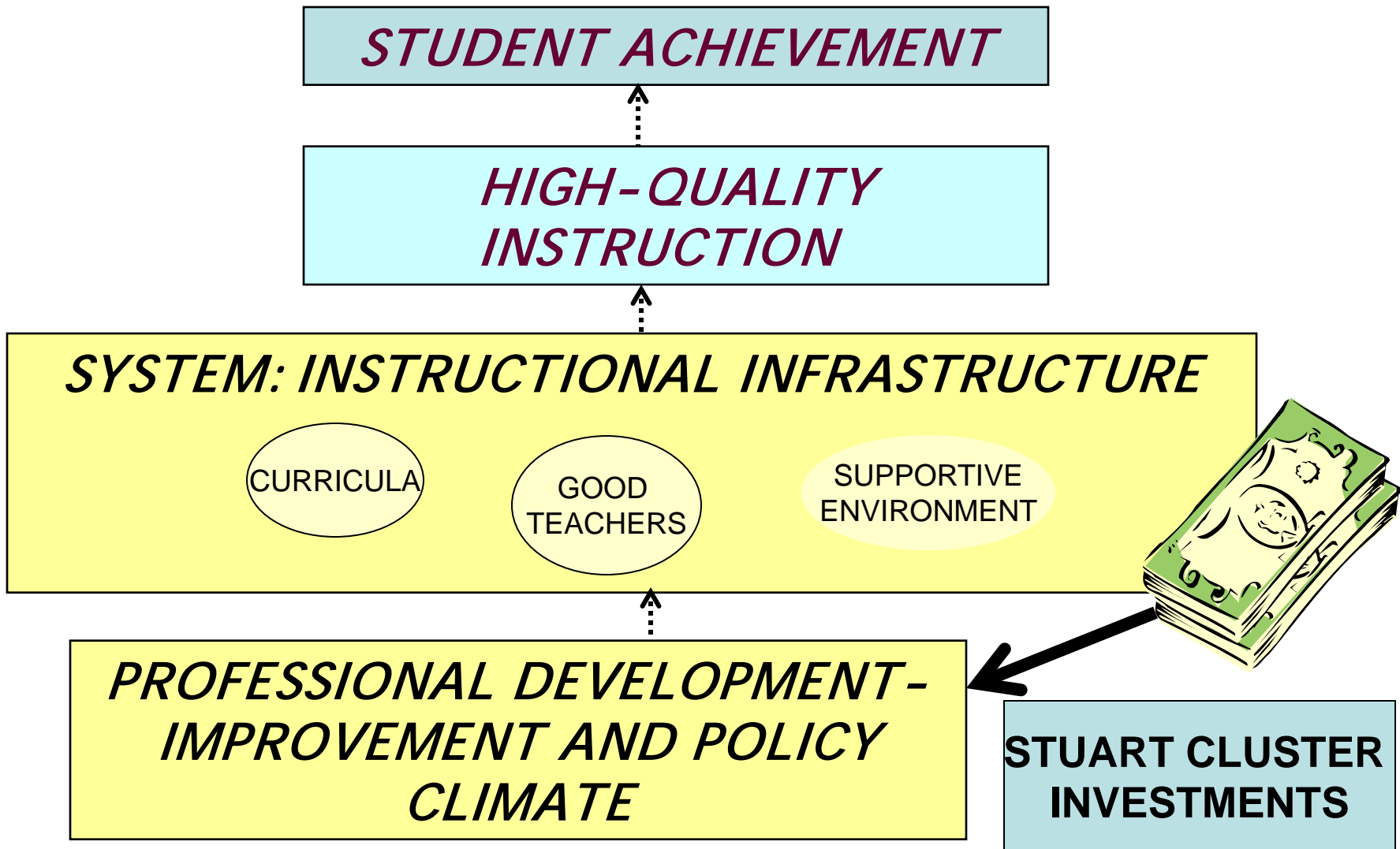
- evaluator reports
- grantee perspective and reports
- outside perspectives
- firsthand knowledge

Foundation maintains strong monitoring and quality controls

## 4) Contributions

1. Making classrooms better
2. Making professional development better
3. Making the policy context more supportive

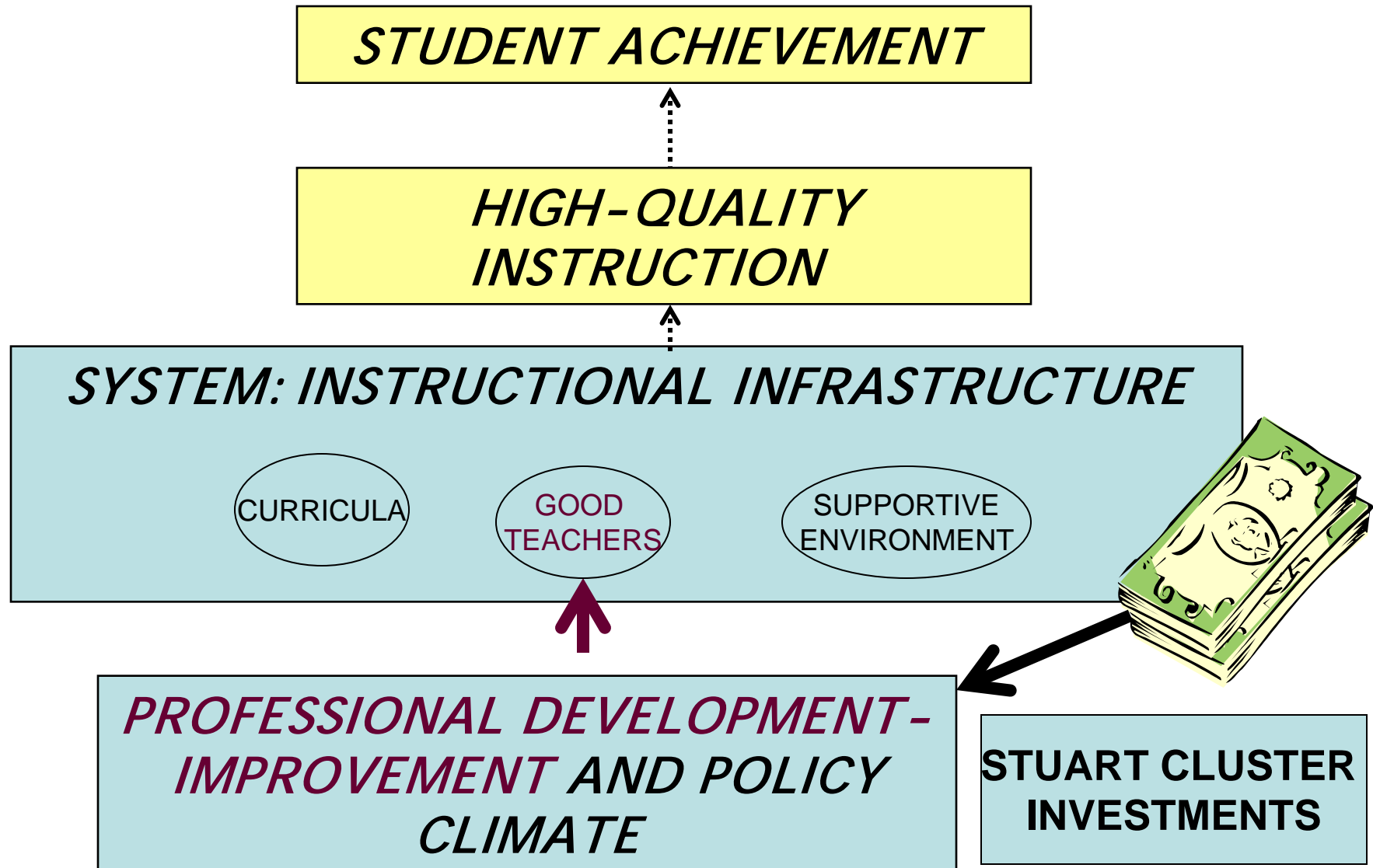
# Making Classrooms Better



# Making classrooms better

- Within the cluster there is a wide range of depth and breadth and directness of services to teachers
- Long-term programmatic investments reach many teachers and students
  - DSC ~ 76,000 classrooms
  - SLI ~ 2500 teachers
  - Seattle Writing ~ 1200 teachers

## 2) Making Professional Development Better

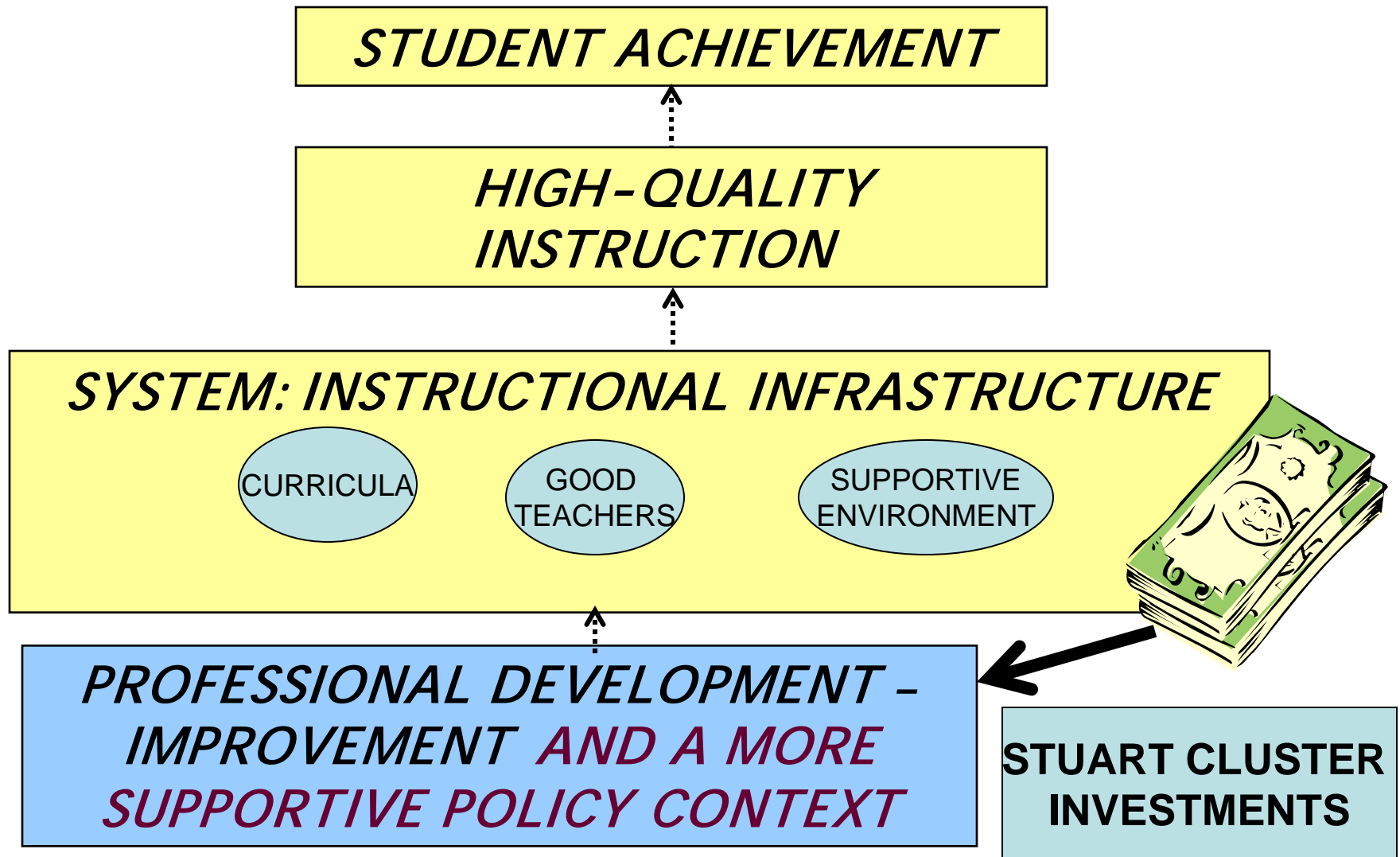


# Making Professional Development Better

- Developing new strategies, tools, and curriculum (10 out of 16 projects)
- Developing professional development leaders (9 out of 15 projects)
- Strengthening PD capacity of improvement organizations and communities (9 out of 15 projects)
- Strengthening PD capacity of schools, districts, universities, etc. (9 out of 15)

*(evaluator ratings)*

### 3) Making the policy context more supportive



# Making the Policy Context More Supportive

- The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (CFTL)
- The Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (CSTP)

# Shaping the Policy Context – Foundation Intentions

- ***“holding a steady beam of light on the issues relating to the condition of the teaching corps in the state and its impact on children and youth”***
- ***“holding the public policy sector accountable... “***
- ***“providing an alternative context for making policy...”***
- ***“creating an improvement infrastructure for the public policy-making domain...”***

# CFTL AND CSTP – Range of Functions

- Gather data on teachers, teaching, and professional development
- Identify critical issues
- Develop and disseminate reports
- Respond to requests for information
- Communicate to wide range of audiences
- Convene stakeholders for input; educate key leaders
- Create recommendations for policy
- Promote policies and provide technical assistance to policymakers
- Support the development of policy leadership

# Cornerstone Claims of the Centers' Work

1. ☒ Center establishes credibility with key policy-relevant stakeholders; seen as a non-partisan source of sound information and policy recommendations (they pay attention to the Center's work; attend the Center's meetings; take action that draws on the Center's findings and recommendations);
2. ☒ Policy communications and discussions about teaching and the teaching profession are supported by data generated by the Center (not merely driven by ideology);
3. ☒ The Center employs an effective communications strategy that gets issues relating to teachers and the condition of the teaching profession in California into the public eye and onto the public policy agenda;
4. ☒ Public policy gets made and funded in line with Center recommendations.

# Investments in a Center are different from Investments in a Project

- Centers shepherd the growth and health of a particular field or domain
- Centers are seen as ongoing sources of knowledge and expertise in the domain
- Centers collect, generate, and disseminate important knowledge about the domain
- The work of Centers is responsive to emerging needs and opportunities and evolves over time
- Centers are by nature long-term, cumulative investments

# A SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

- Has this cluster been a good investment?
- What are the downsides to this investment?
- Does this line of investment remain promising for Stuart for the future?
- If so, how could future investment in the cluster be strengthened?

# Has this cluster been a good investment for the Stuart Foundation?

- Strong evidence of contributions at multiple levels
- Substantial return on the investment of relatively small amounts of money
- Leverages Stuart expertise and long-term perspective
- Contributes in significant ways to a depleted and under-funded part of the broader system
- Supports the involvement of very good people and institutions in the improvement of education

# **What are the challenges and downsides to this line of investment?**

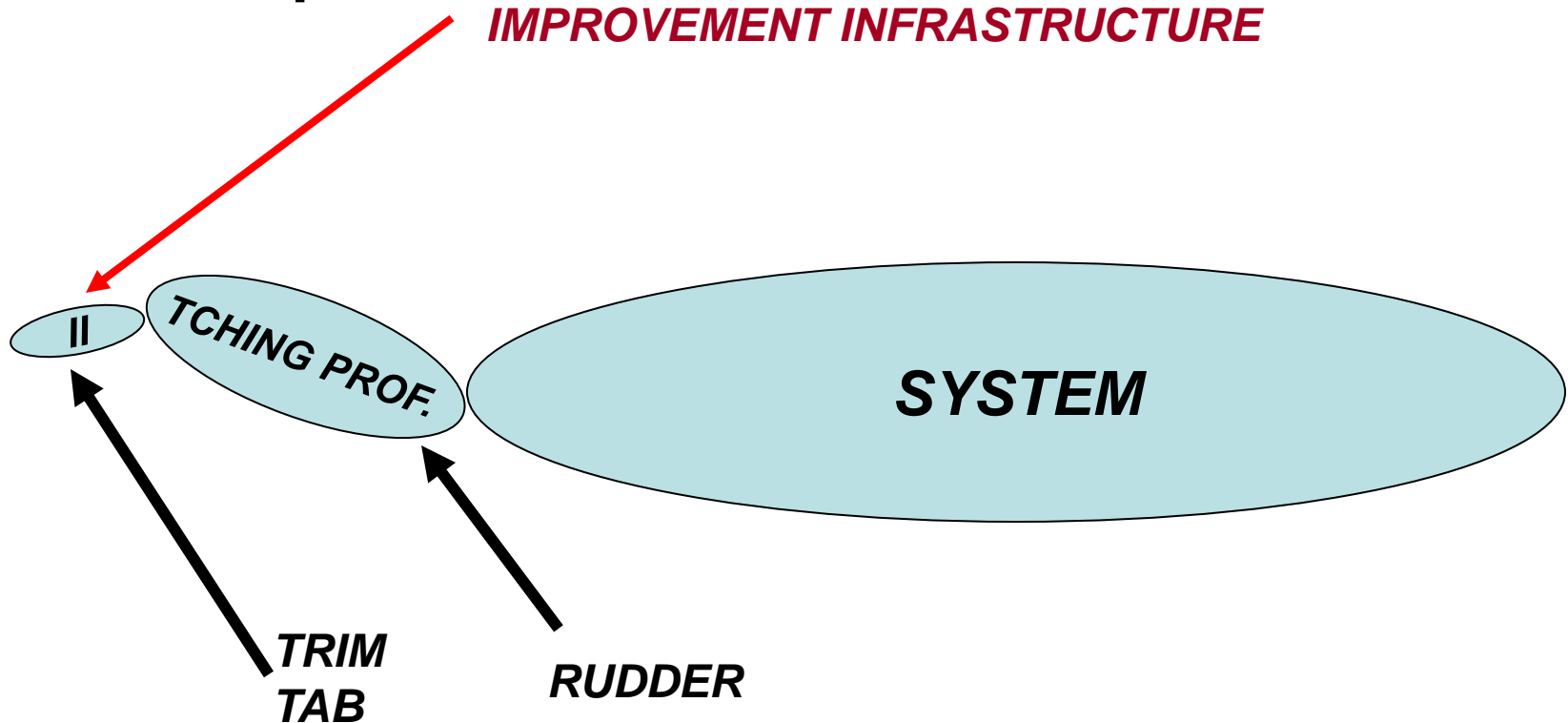
- The investments are long-term in nature and upstream; outcomes are not always immediate, concrete or even visible
- Not easy to predict capacity of grantees
- This cluster requires a high degree of sophistication and expertise
- This cluster requires a heavy investment in oversight, monitoring and interacting with grantees
- The return on investment is not completely predictable; system and political landscape are highly volatile
- Scale of investment is close to threshold

# Strengthening the teaching profession:

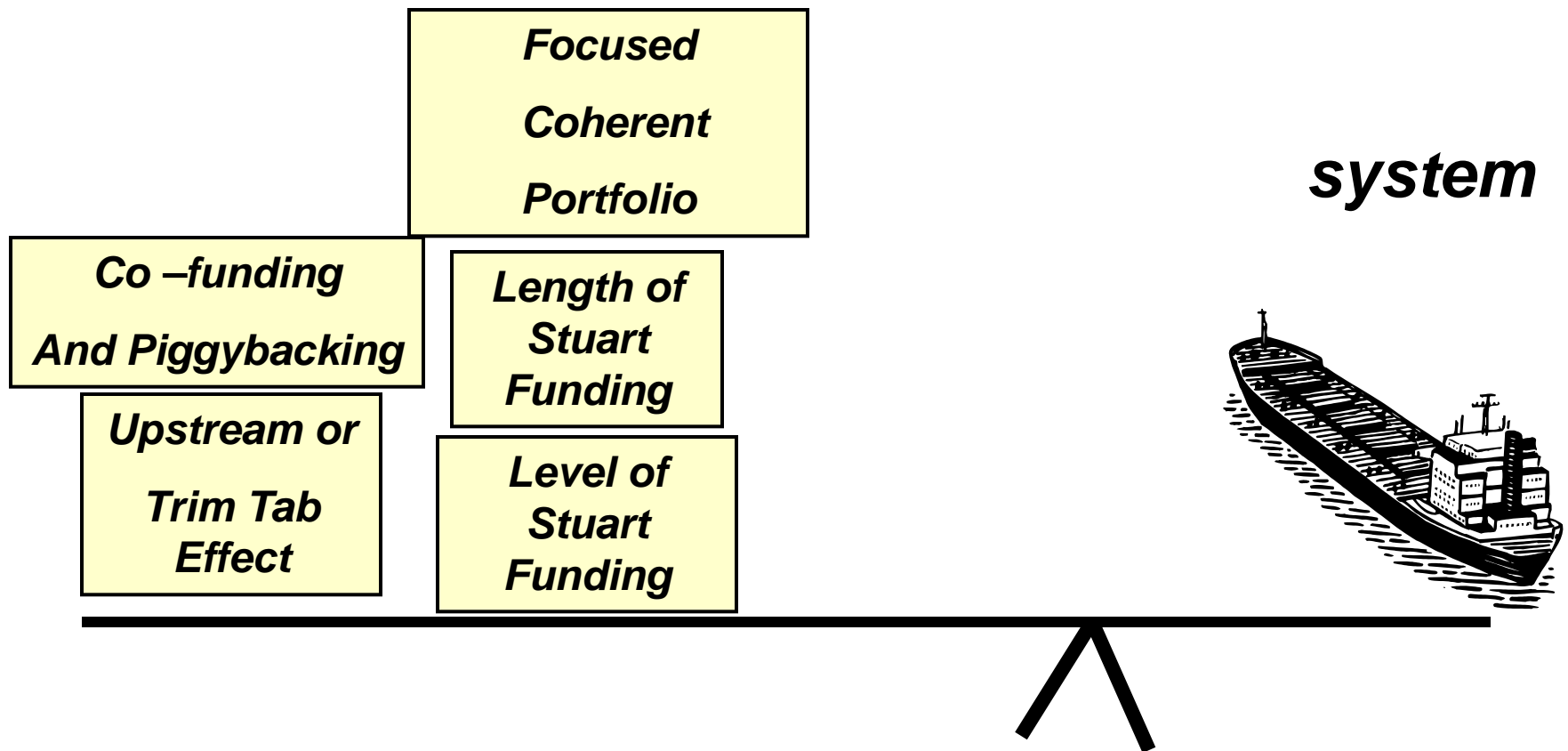
Does the cluster remain a good investment for Stuart for the future?

- The need to strengthen the teaching profession is ongoing; special role for private philanthropy
- Past investments provide a good foundation to build upon
- Stuart needs to leverage its investments over time and be cumulative in effect

# The dynamics and leverage of the “upstream” investment in the improvement infrastructure



# Sources of leverage



# How could future investment in the cluster be strengthened?

- Be deliberate, explicit and highly focused on the singular purpose of strengthening the teaching profession
- Continue to support the growth and evolution of successful projects; continue to find and support new promising people
- Provide long-term collaborative support of state centers
- Tap the potential to develop “improvement communities”
  - Develop more connections within the portfolio
  - Continue to develop connections with other profession-focused improvement efforts
  - Greater usage of and learning from both grantees and evaluators
- Foundation needs to invest in its own learning, capturing of knowledge, and dissemination of knowledge

END

# APPENDIX

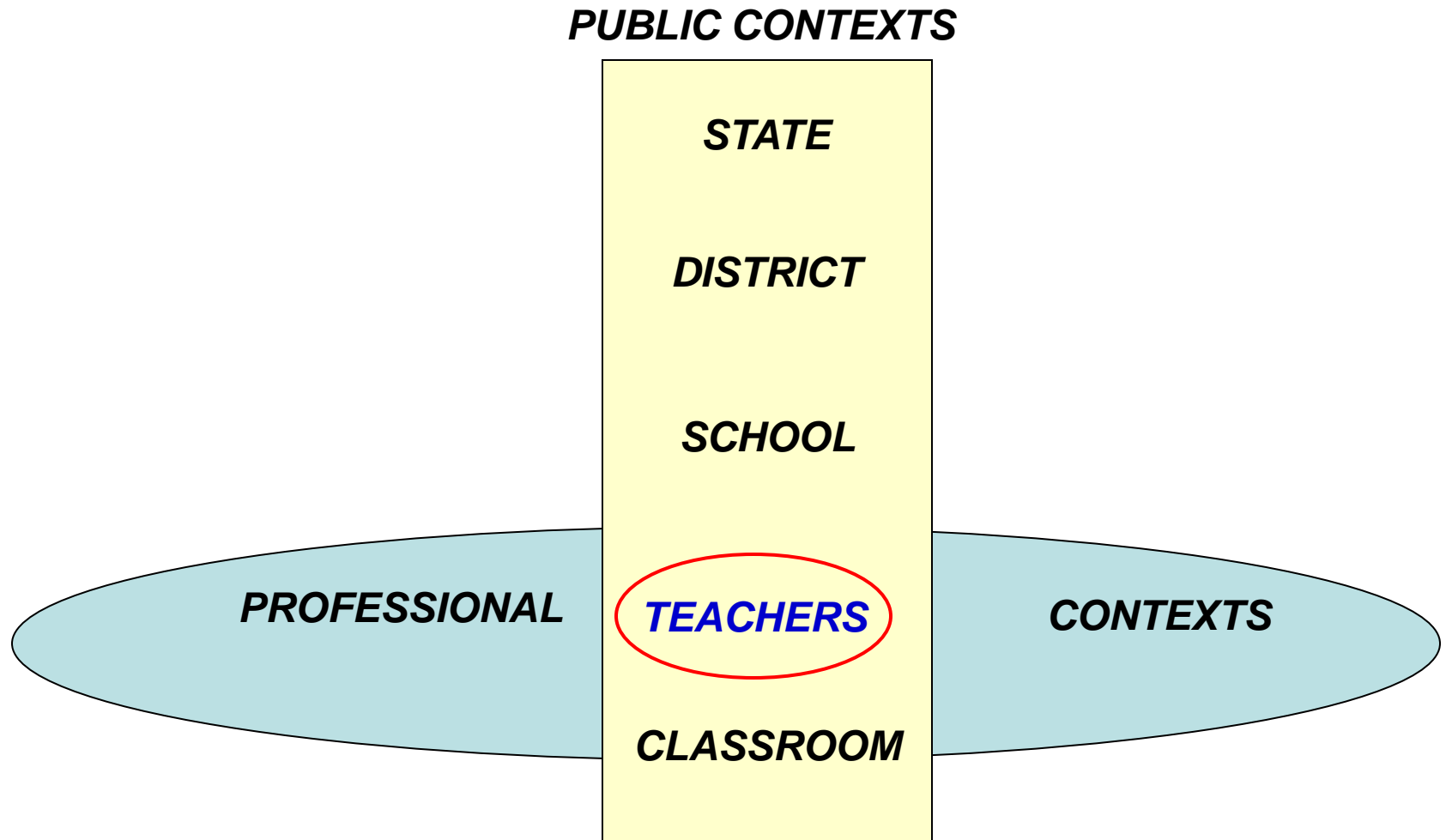
# Professions

(Oxford English Dictionary)

From the Latin *Profiteri* – to publicly profess one's allegiance to a religious order

- The occupation which one professes to be skilled in and to follow
- A learned or skilled calling considered socially superior to a trade or handicraft
- The body of persons engaged in a calling
- The collective setting of a standard and the maintenance of the quality expected of professionals

# Professional and Public Contexts



# CFTL

## FEATURED PRODUCT

THE STATUS OF THE  
TEACHING PROFESSION

**THE CENTER**  
FOR THE FUTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

WHAT'S NEW

PUBLICATIONS

ABOUT US

INITIATIVES

PRESSROOM

LEGISLATION



*“Working to **improve education** for all students by strengthening the teaching profession.”*

# Strengthening the Teaching Profession

- Help members of profession get better in their craft
- Develop stronger professional leadership
- Help profession itself get stronger in supporting its members
  - New approaches, tools, curricula, programs, etc.
- Help the profession get better at contributing to the improvement of education
- Leverage the power of the profession in the policymaking discussions
- Help the profession make a stronger contribution to improving education
- Deepen the expertise and knowledge-base of the profession
- Overall, to help make the profession a stronger part of the educational improvement infrastructure

# Matching Investment to Domain

Time scales and stability of investments should be appropriate to the complexity and scale of the task of developing and implementing the improvement infrastructure relevant to the domain.

# Doug Engelbart and the Improvement Infrastructure

Englebart argues that “we... are still focused around projects and task forces with short-term expectations and short-term lifecycles...The most important activity we can do is to develop the ***improvement infrastructure***... and to encourage and fund cross-functional ***"improvement communities"*** whose members work on common challenges to explicitly improve improvement... the human network... is the way to get better at getting better.”

– From the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Intranet, Jennifer Stone Gonzalez

# The Logic of the Cluster

- If improved student achievement is important, then higher quality teaching is the critical need.
  - If improved teaching is key, then a strong supportive teaching profession is an essential underpinning to wide scale improvement.
  - If strengthening the profession is important, one needs both capacities and policies that are able to contribute in an ongoing way to that stronger profession.
- ➔ This cluster has already and can continue to contribute to the development of those supportive capacities and policies.

# Simultaneously funding the building of capacity and the service work of the project

