



## The Efficacy Opportunity

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## The Efficacy Opportunity

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The opportunity resides in the benefits, for your students, for you, for the profession, and for society, that flow from moving a critical mass of your young people to academic proficiency and strong character.

What *are* the benefits?



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Efficacy is not a correction; we're not trying to “fix” you, or your students.

It's a *package of tools* to enable you to seize the opportunity. We want to empower you to drive a necessary transformation process.

## Efficacy: Our Definition

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Efficacy is the capacity to **mobilize** the effort of adults and children toward development.

## Definition of Development

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Development is the **process** of becoming better, stronger, and smarter at anything you do.

*In school,* it is the achievement of **proficiency** at targeted learning outcomes at each grade level.

## The Teacher in 206

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Do you know a 206?

What does it mean?

How does s/he do it? [Bullet point me. No essays]

So, What's Going On??!!



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We already have all the knowledge we need to educate all of our children to high standards of proficiency.

We just don't use it.

[Ron Edmonds]

## Question of the Day

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What will it take to get a critical mass of us to make an absolute commitment *to use what we know* to move our kids to proficiency (or higher)?



# Fundamental Assumptions

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- A large percentage of our **children are capable of high levels of proficiency**. The development required is *not* based on an endowment or a trait, fixed at birth. It is a lifelong process based on a technique—a *learnable, teachable process of development*.
- **An effective education process can achieve a high yield of children achieving proficiency (or higher).**
- **There are formidable obstacles to the transformation most schools need to achieve maximum yield.** Some obstacles are external to the classroom/school (inadequate resources; lack of family engagement; bureaucratic entanglements; etc.) and some are internal (lack of focus; lack skills; *lack of belief*, among faculty and students; resistance to change; etc.).
- **Effective Educators establish and execute a Mission in their classrooms/schools to move children to proficiency.** They neutralize the effects of the external obstacles, and eliminate the internal ones, including resistance. With proper commitment and dedication, the development of virtually all our children can be *managed*.



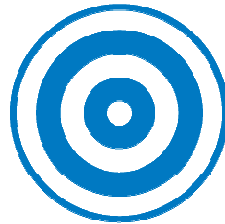
## The Mission

# The Mission

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The **Mission** is CCSS Proficiency for *all* students in each subject area, and development of strong character.



Define **Proficiency** at each grade level, and what constitutes strong character, then accelerate all students to those targets (and beyond).

# Quality Lives

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We want children to be in positions to lead quality lives, that is, lives filled with meaning as well as accomplishment.

We regard development of both **intellect (academic proficiency)** and **strength of character** as prime means to that end.

# Academic Proficiency

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Solid academic performance for each subject assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including:

## Knowledge

- Subject-matter knowledge (facts, concepts, and procedures)

## Application Skills

- Application of such knowledge to real-world or novel situations
- Reasoning skills: analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter; and/or demonstration of the capacity to synthesize and evaluate.

Adapted from National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)



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The academic proficiency question in simple terms:

**Do they know it, and can they use it?**

# Adult Proficiency

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Proficiency is a useful construct to think about the development of grown-ups, too.

## **A definition of Adult Proficiency:**

Demonstrated capacity to move students in a school/community to reading, writing, and math proficiency, and strong character.

Proficient adults use their **subject matter knowledge** and **application/instructional skills** to create learning environments that *motivate* the drive for learning, and *mobilize* young people's effort toward proficiency targets.

# Administrator Proficiency

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## **A definition of *School Administrator Proficiency*:**

Demonstrated capacity to advance the proficiency of other adults in a school/community.

Proficient administrators use their leadership skills and clarity about the Mission to create professional learning environments for the adults in their buildings, to empower *them* to mobilize young people's efforts toward CCSS proficiency targets.



## Discussion Question

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Why do you think this idea of adult proficiency would be frightening and anxiety-provoking for many people?



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**Adult Proficiency**  **Proficiency for All Children**

Adult proficiency is the absolute requirement for achieving widespread proficiency with children.



Administrator Proficiency, as we have defined it, is the absolute requirement for achieving proficiency among the adults who develop children's proficiency.

## Demand for Proficiency

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Americans already know that getting all children to **Proficiency** is essential for the success of the country in the 21st century. So society is demanding **Adult Proficiency** from its educators.

Achieving widespread **Adult Proficiency** requires a clear operational approach—a *package* of belief and action.



The Efficacy Package for  
*Systemic* Education Reform

# What Is a “Package?”

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The dictionary definition of a package is:

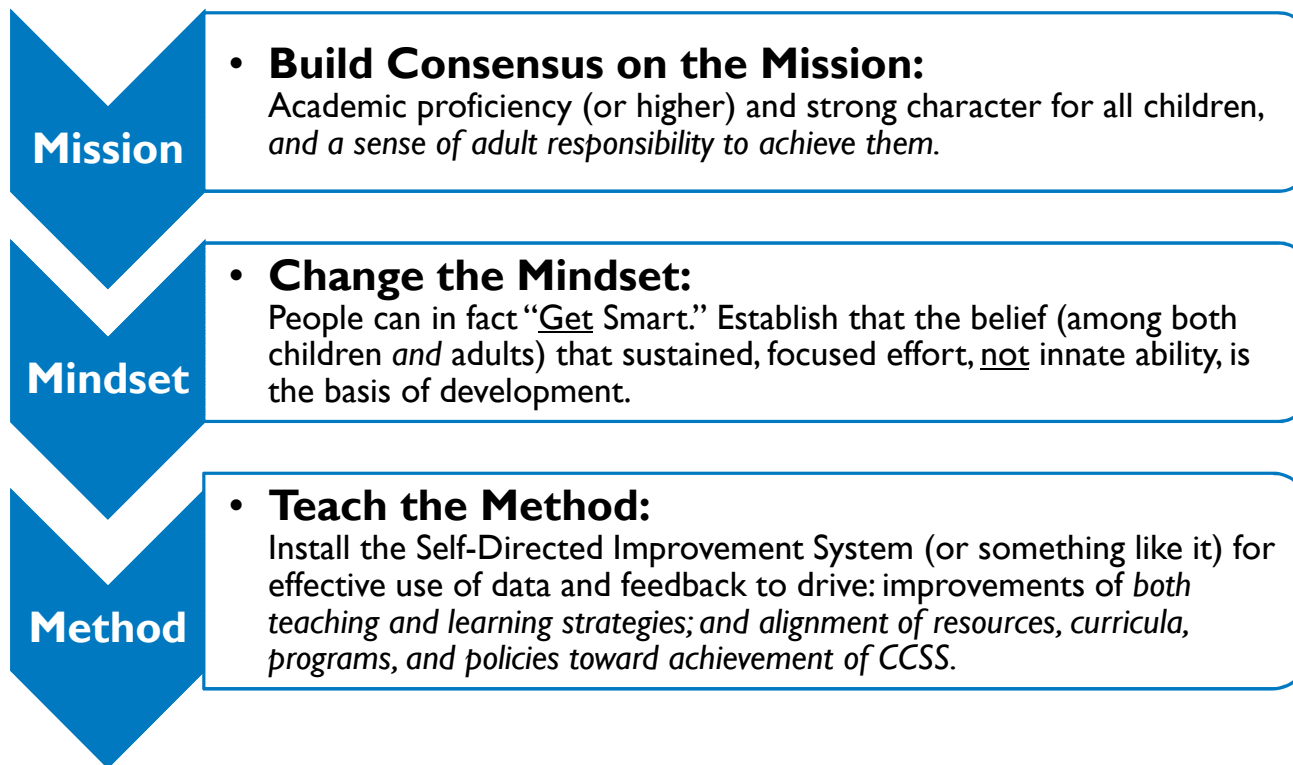
*A finished product contained in a unit that is suitable for immediate installation and operation.*

**Efficacy is a package:** Mission, Mindset, and Method.

# The Efficacy Package for Systemic Education Reform



What will you need to achieve proficiency? What's the package?





## The Mission

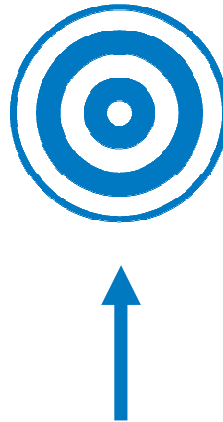


## The Mission (as we've said...)

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The **Mission** is CCSS Proficiency for *all* students in each subject area, and development of strong character.

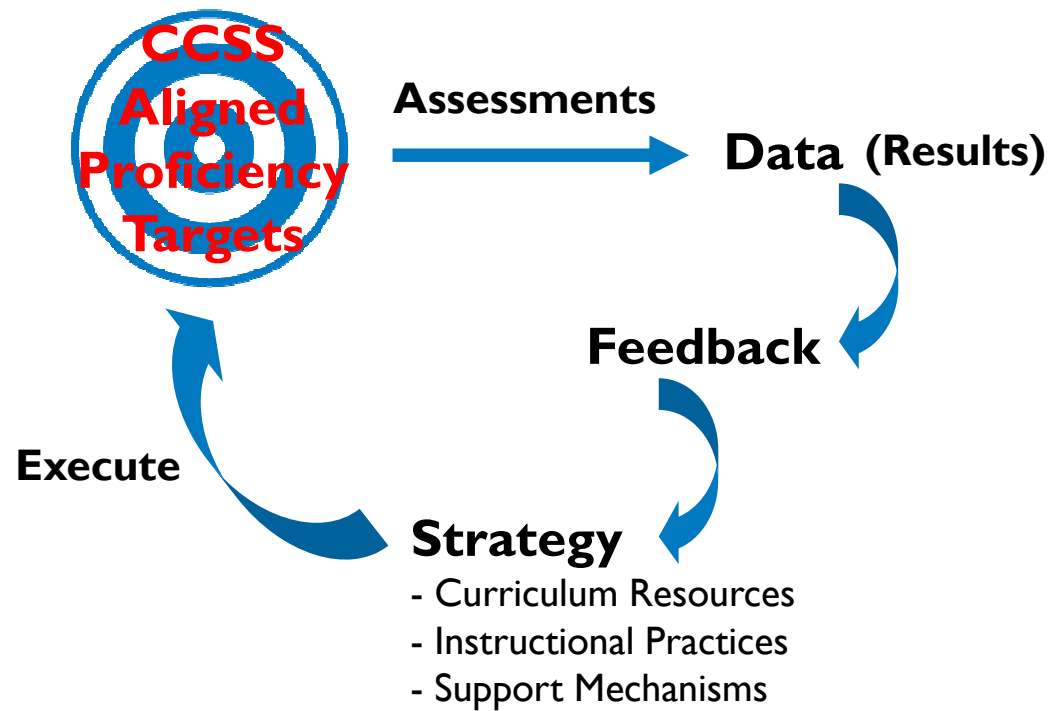


Define **Proficiency** at each grade level, and what constitutes strong character, then accelerate all students to those targets.



# The Method: The Self-Directed Improvement System

# The Self-Directed Improvement System



# The Self-Directed Improvement System



## Establish and Clearly Articulate—for Yourself and Your Students—the **Proficiency Targets**

- What knowledge and skills, that is application and reasoning capabilities, constitute proficiency for each subject and grade level you teach?

## Create a **Data Stream** in Your District/School/Classroom

- Use aligned **quarterly assessments** to measure progress toward the year-end proficiency targets; and **in-class assessments** (monthly/weekly/daily) to monitor students' acquisition of what has been recently taught. All assessments are criterion-referenced, of course.

## Implement the **Data/Feedback/Strategy Method**

- Transform **data** about how students are presently doing into **feedback** that sharpens focus on what to work on for improvement. Use this feedback to continually reformulate or refine **strategies** (curriculum resources, instructional practices and other supports) accordingly, with a singular focus on moving students toward proficiency.

# The SDIS: Using Data to Drive Change

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The SDIS is a system for using feedback, derived from clear targets and sharp assessments, to shape **adult proficiency**.

Proficient administrators teach the method to their teachers, who then teach it to their children, so that at every level people can take control of their own drives to achieve proficiency.

## The Three Ms

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The **Mission** is Proficiency,  
the **Mindset** is “Get Smart,”

and the **Method** must be a *data-based system of self-directed improvement*, executed with equal force at all levels of the learning community.

## What's Wrong?

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The health of a community, including your school building and classrooms, can be **measured by its success** in developing *all* of its children.

Schools that use the **SDIS** can move their children to **proficiency**.

Problems with the achievement of proficiency in large numbers of children are an indication of **ineffective practices among adults**, and the **inability to remove obstacles to self-directed improvement**.

Why?

**What's wrong?**



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We have **Mindset** issues.

The way we think about the learning capacity of our children in American culture defeats our ability to “get it right”—to establish that **Proficiency for All Children** is the target, and to pursue self-directed improvement—in our schools, homes, and communities.

**Beliefs matter.**





The Mindset:  
Two Models of Development  
and How They Control Our Practices

*a set of ideas presented in 3 chapters*



## The Two Models of Development in 3 Chapters

- 1 Two Models
- 2 How to Think About Failure & Difficulty
- 3 The Research on the Relationship  
Between Effort & Development

# The Two Models of Development



## **Chapter I:** Two Models

# What Leads to Development?

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# The Innate Ability Model

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**Innate Ability**  **Development**

VS  
SS  
KD

# The Innate Ability Paradigm

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In the Innate Ability Paradigm, important human characteristics are believed to be innate endowments, fixed at birth, distributed unequally among the population and among different *population groups*.

The Innate Ability Paradigm applies to:

- ▶ **Intelligence** – the unequal distribution of mental ability is understood to be the cause of the wide variation we see in human intellectual performance and development.
- ▶ **Character** – “goodness” and “badness” are thought to be permanent, fixed characteristics that control the degree to which an individual can behave with decency and integrity.

These assumptions result in a tendency to judge people. We measure their intelligence, assess their character as good or bad, and *then determine their possibilities based on those judgments*.

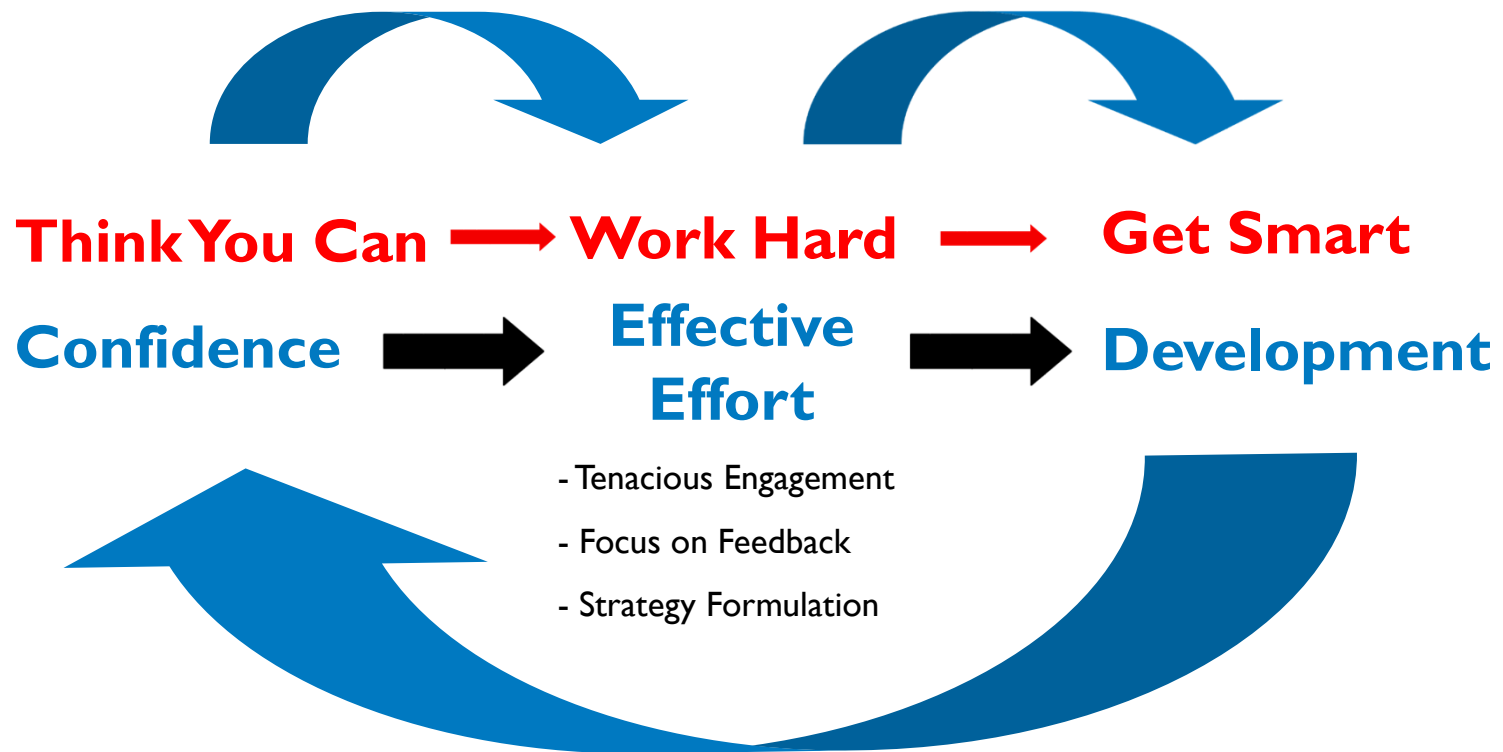
# Implications of the Innate Ability Paradigm

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- Ability is fixed—not subject to further development after early childhood. Either “you have it or you don't,” or “some groups have it, others don't.”
- People have no sense of control. There is little that one can do to change outcomes that are based on a fixed, innate trait.
- Failure and difficulty are very important data—they indicate limits in ability and the futility of continued effort.

# Efficacy's Get Smart Model of Development





# Definition of Effective Effort

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Effective Effort is effort directed toward targeted learning outcomes and/or improvement toward those outcomes. It always involves:

- ▶ **Tenacious Engagement**  
Working hard and being really into it. Really sticking with it.  
Not giving up after failure or difficulty.
- ▶ **An Intense Focus on Feedback**  
Paying close attention to the data, and using it to make feedback about how well you are doing and what it will take to get better.
- ▶ **Ongoing Strategy Formulation Based on Feedback**  
Listening to what the feedback is telling you about how to get better, and changing your approach accordingly. Always trying new ways to improve.

# The Efficacy Paradigm

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Confidence → Effective Effort → Development

In the Efficacy Paradigm, it is understood that virtually everyone is capable of brilliance. Important human characteristics are neither fixed nor given; capabilities are built over a lifetime, through the action of Effective Effort.

This is a constructive framework for thinking about people and their possibilities. It applies to:

- ▶ **Intellectual Development** — virtually everyone is born with *enough* mental capacity to meet 21st century standards. All those who work can learn.
- ▶ **Character Development** — the capacity to behave with decency and ethics can be learned; it is shaped by instruction, positive regard, and positive reinforcement.

These assumptions are the basis of effective institutions and healthy communities.

# Implications of the Efficacy Paradigm

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- Capabilities can be developed throughout life. People can “get smart”—actually become more intelligent—through the application of Effective Effort.
- When effort is mobilized instead of debilitated, people can control the pace and direction of their own development.
- Failure and difficulty can stimulate mobilized effort when understood as feedback about what people must do to improve. Failure debilitates only when used as the basis for judgments about the innate limitations of an individual.

## Reflection, Followed by Triad Discussion

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Confidence → Effective Effort → Development

Identify an area of your life in which the Efficacy Model has worked for you—where it accurately describes *how* you got really good at something.

# The Two Models of Development



## **Chapter 2:** How to Think About Failure & Difficulty



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Almost all of our young people (and adults) have *enough* intellectual capacity to master challenging, complex material.

But to deliver, they must **believe** they do.

And they must respond adaptively to failure and difficulty.



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Children, and the adults who work with them, need to be immunized against the negative psychological consequences of failure and difficulty.

Teach them **FADAF**:

**F**ailure

**A**nd

**D**ifficulty

**A**re

**F**eedback



To a significant degree, differences in learning and skills reflect differences in response to difficulty.

When children are taught to view difficulty as feedback, they sustain and refocus their effort.

**Short Discussion:**

Consider the implications of this for teaching and learning.



# The Two Models of Development



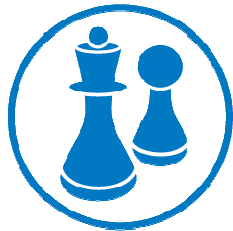
## **Chapter 3:** **The Research** *on the relationship between effort & development*

# The Research

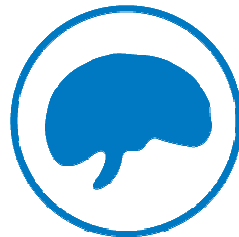
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Extensive evidence supports the idea that effort is the basis of increasing mental capability:



**Expert Performance** – Research has shown that there is a clear relationship between the level of expertise someone achieves, and the amount and nature of practice at the activity (Effective Effort).



**Neuroscience** – Research in neuroscience shows that when people respond to challenges with sustained effort they actually “rewire” their brains in a way that increases their capability.

# Expert Performance

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Expert performance research has shown that the highest levels of expertise in the most complex activities are based on at least ten years of extraordinary practice, not on initial differences in innate ability.

People who achieve at the highest levels:

- Put in more hours of deliberate practice each day, compared to people who achieve at lower levels;
- and they don't do it alone. Their deliberate practice is facilitated by skilled teachers or coaches, and is highly organized and focused on one component at a time.



Recent neuroscience findings show that the brain responds to sustained effort at new challenges (practice) by rewiring existing neurons into new neural networks.

We have also recently learned that the brain can in fact create *new* neurons throughout life, especially in response to new challenges, and these supplement neural network development.

***The key:*** *sustained commitment of effort triggers neural network development.*



Once formed, new mental circuits become stronger and more efficient through repeated use, so that the same mental work can be done with far less energy.

This increasing efficiency underlies the experience of complex tasks becoming “easier” over time.

This efficiency is also the basis for development of high-level expertise, because it frees up energy to build deeper, more subtle, expansive neural networks.



When we work at something, we strengthen our capacity to do it. The neural networks that underlie our skills and capacities are extremely responsive to the powerful combination of challenge and sustained effort.

When we are not challenged, when we are discouraged, or simply decide not to work hard at something, learning ceases.



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Are we saying that many of the kids who are currently failing algebra could become biochemists or engineers? **Yes we are.**

But when kids get scared off by initial difficulty, it halts their neural network development. And that shuts the door.

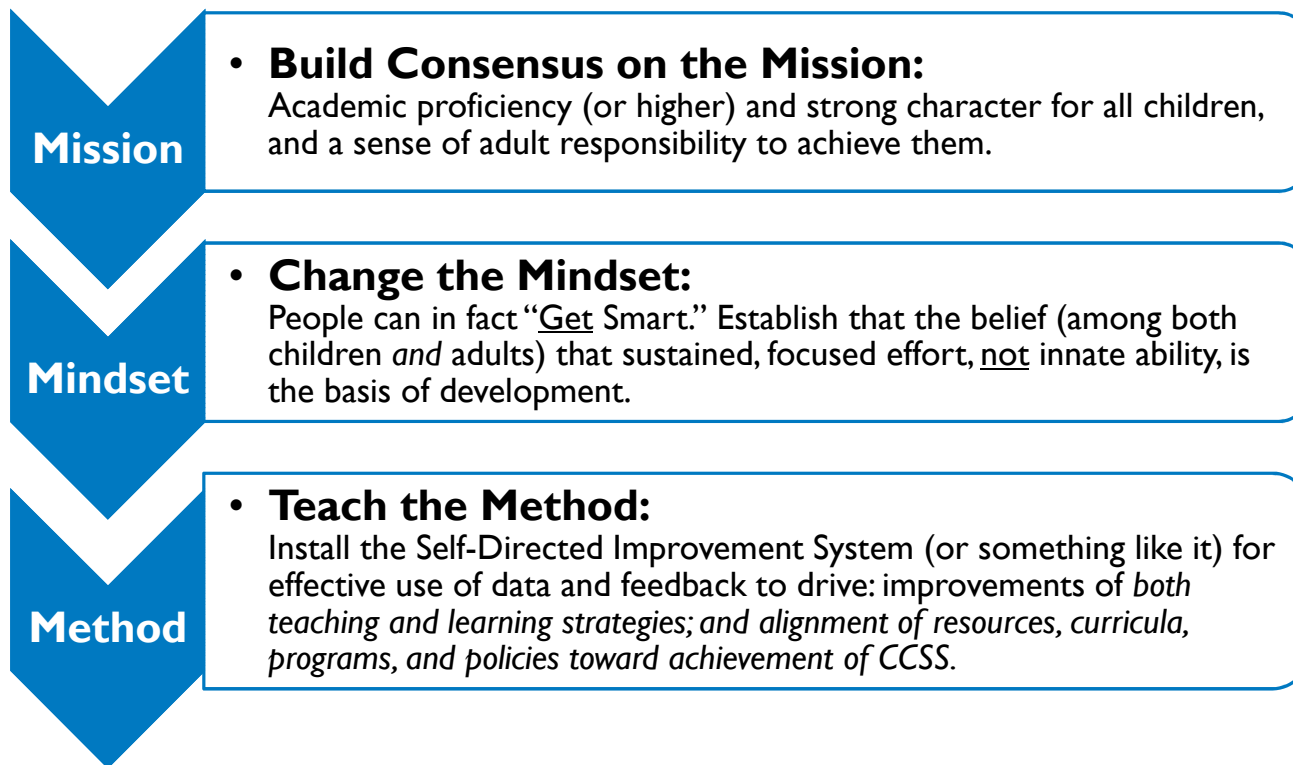
**Discuss the implications for teaching and learning.**

Almost everyone has the capacity for expertise. They can go broad and deep if they build the neural networks, and they can build the neural networks if they are encouraged to commit their effort and supported to sustain it.

# The Efficacy Package for Systemic Education Reform



What will you need to achieve proficiency? What's the package?





## Connect the Dots

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In groups, identify the relationships between the core ideas of this presentation, and the other principles/points of emphasis from this conference

## The Bottom Line

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- The people in underperforming, or less than optimally performing buildings are smart enough to figure out how to turn their schools around.
- But their intelligence is immobilized by the present culture (incl. negative beliefs and resistance). Best practices alone will not get them moving. Mobilization based on a psychological and cultural transformation is required.
- Use Mission, Mindset, and Method as a framework to set the terms for the mobilization. FADAF all difficulties (adults and children; teaching and learning). These two steps will *liberate the learning capacities and operational capabilities of professional educators to solve our problems.*



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