



**FourPoint**  
Education Partners

Colorado Legislative  
Interim Committee on  
School Finance

**Transitioning to Design of an Improved System**

**Meeting #2, Year 2**

July 31, 2018

# AGENDA

- Year 1 Report feedback: principles and evidence.
- Parameters of a school finance and funding simulation tool.
  - Rationale of a Base funding level.
- Creating a learning system to inform improvement, innovation, and return on investment.
- Innovative ideas from the field: Brett Ridgway, Chief Business Officer, El Paso County School District 49.
- Member discussion: values inherent in a school finance and funding system.
- Debrief.
- School visits discussion.

# Yr 1 Report Feedback: Principles & Evidence

- What do you know, or know more confidently, about the design and operations of the current school finance and funding system?
  - How does the system perform in meeting each principle?
- What evidence was compelling?
- What more would you like to learn? What additional evidence would you like to have?
  - Data and analysis; research and evaluation; leading practices and policy

# Parameters of a School Finance & Funding Simulation Tool

- Identify those variables used to generate revenues & to determine funding levels across the state.
- Provides opportunities to see impacts of different decisions at the school, district, and state levels.

# Examples of School Finance Parameters

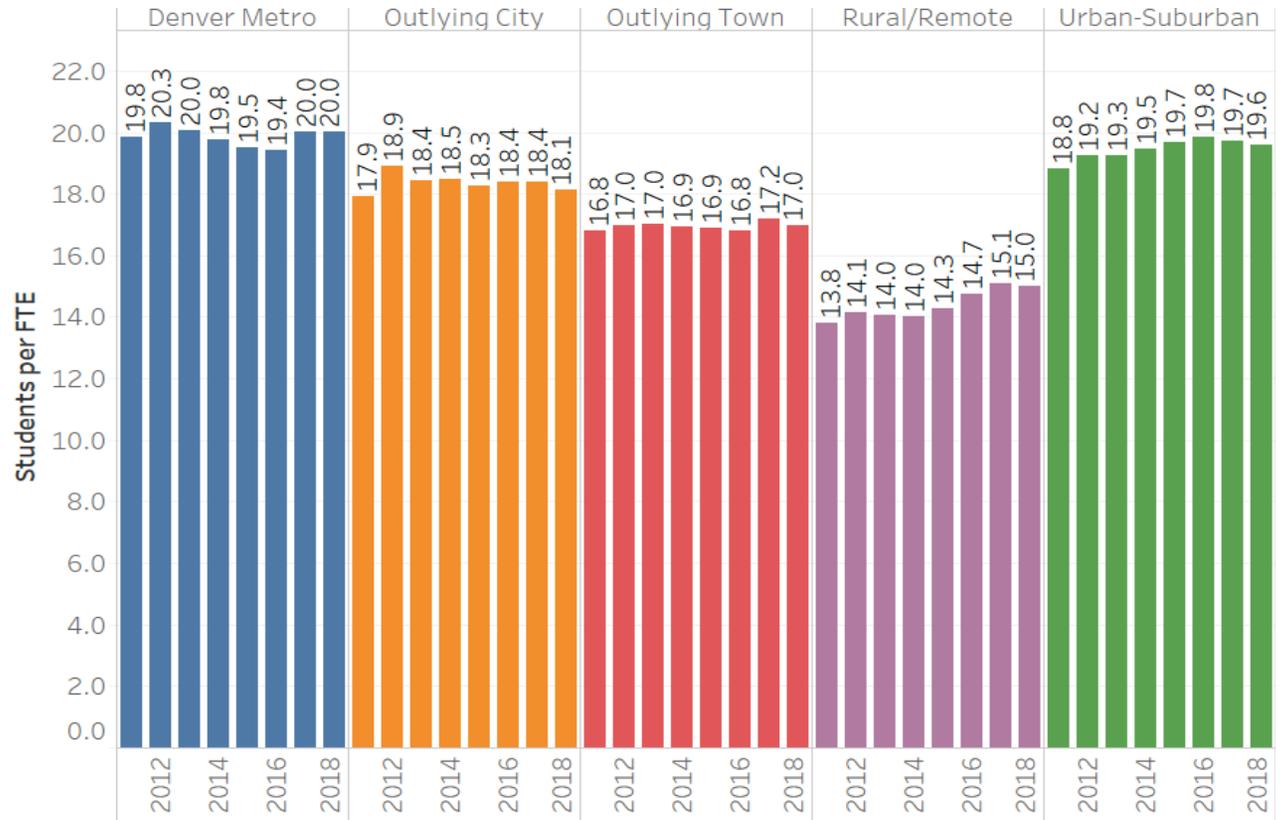
- Valuation rates of property – currently constitutionally driven.
  - Residential property
  - Commercial property
- Total Program Funding mill rate – currently different for every district.
- Statewide income taxes – e.g., Initiative 93.

# Examples of School Funding Parameters

- Base funding per pupil – what is the funding level (or resources) associated with the core educational and educational support program?
  - If thought about in a multi-tier system of supports, what is the funding level (or resources) associated with a Tier 1 educational and educational support program?
- Vulnerable students – what is the funding level (or resources) associated with vulnerable students?
  - Special education – high-incidence, lower-cost; low-incidence, higher-cost
  - At-risk and English learners – separate counts or unduplicated counts?
- School and district administration.

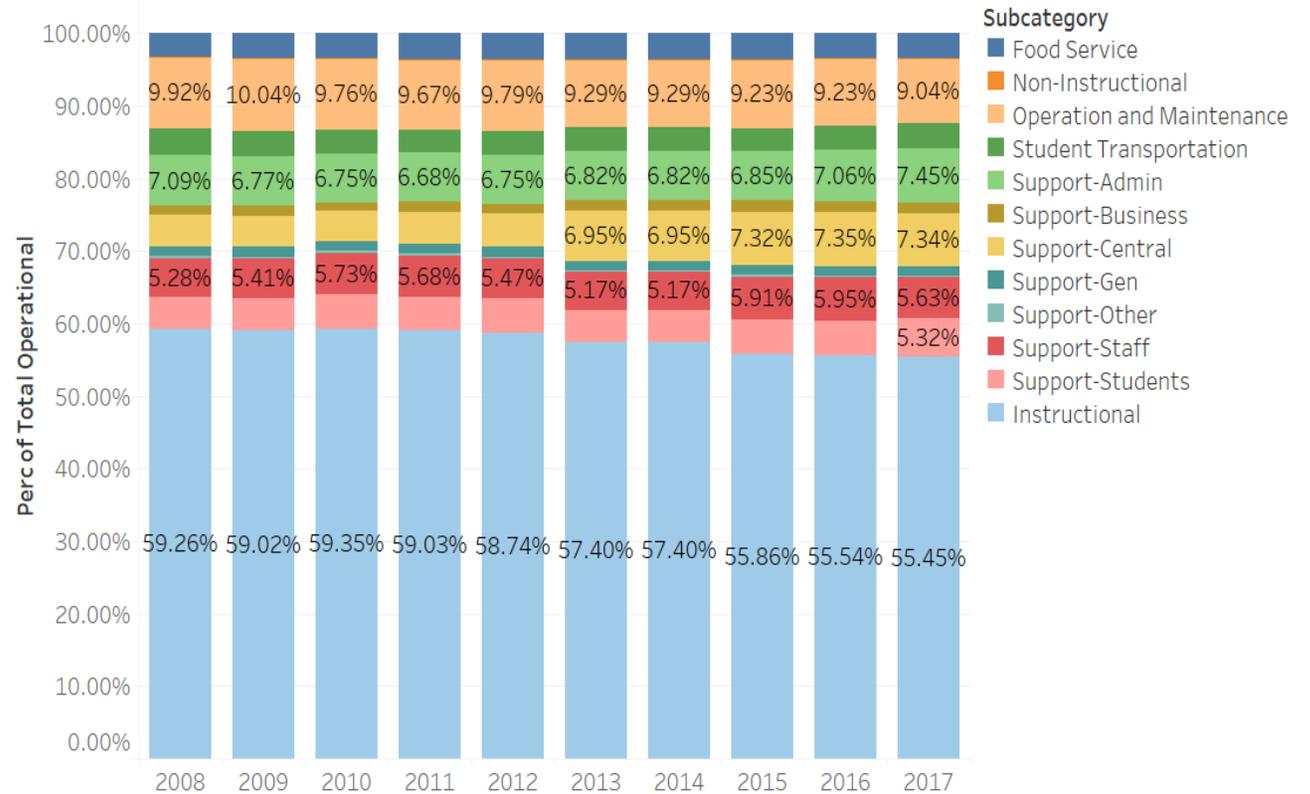
# Examples of School Funding Parameters

- Informed by staffing ratios, e.g., pupil-teacher ratios; pupil-instructional support ratios; pupil-student support ratios.
- Informed by current practice & data
- Informed by high-quality research & evaluation
- Informed by professional associations



# Examples of School Funding Parameters

- Informed by average spending levels, e.g., instruction, support, transportation, operations and maintenance

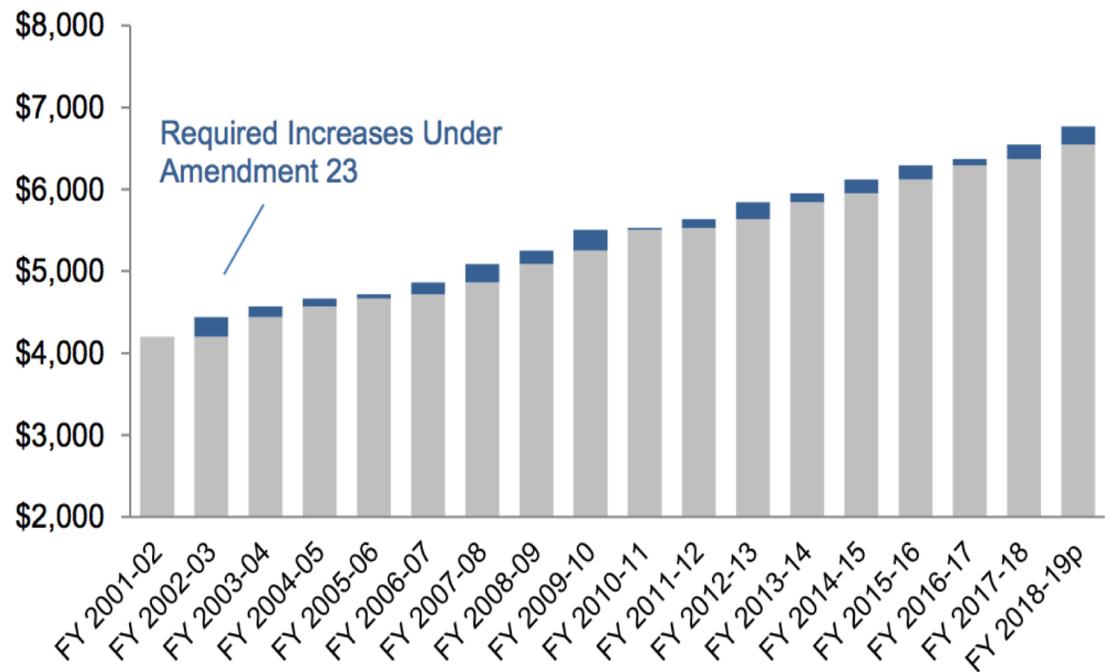


# Rationale of a Base Funding Level

Base Per-Pupil Funding =  
\$6,768.77 for 2018-19

- Adjusted by annual rate of inflation as required by Article IX, Section 17 (Amendment 23) beginning in 2010-11
- 3.4% for 2018-19
- \$6,546.90 in 2017-18 (Appendix 3.0)
- Senator Zenzinger asked what this number represents.
  - Can use different costing methods to try and understand.

Statewide Base Per-Pupil Funding, 2001-2002 to 2018-19 (projected)

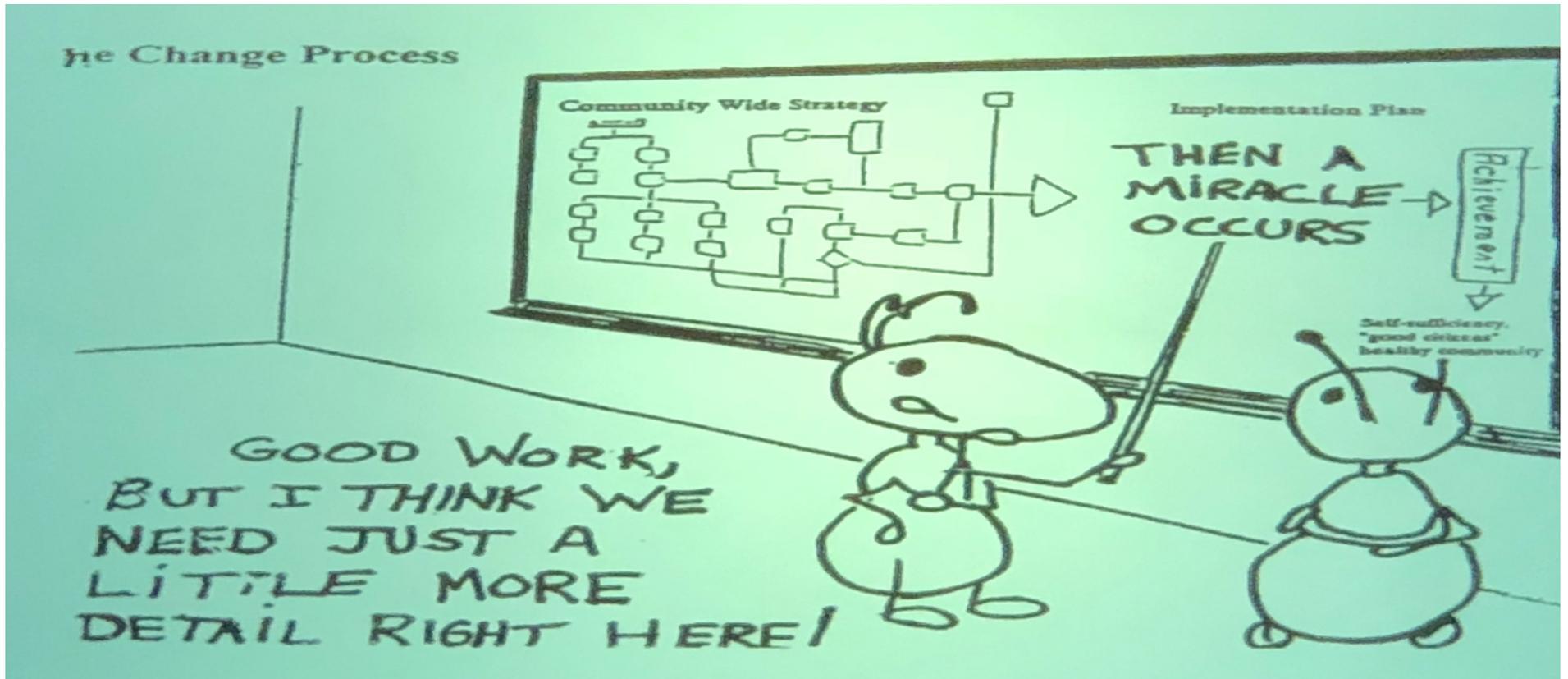


Source: Legislative Council Staff.

# Creating a Learning System to Inform Improvement, Innovation, & ROI

- Intersection of school finance and funding with monitoring, evaluation, and accountability as well as governance.
- Need to move beyond making data and information available to achieve systemic improvement.
- Improvement and innovation are systematic behaviors; learning does not occur simply through activities and reporting.

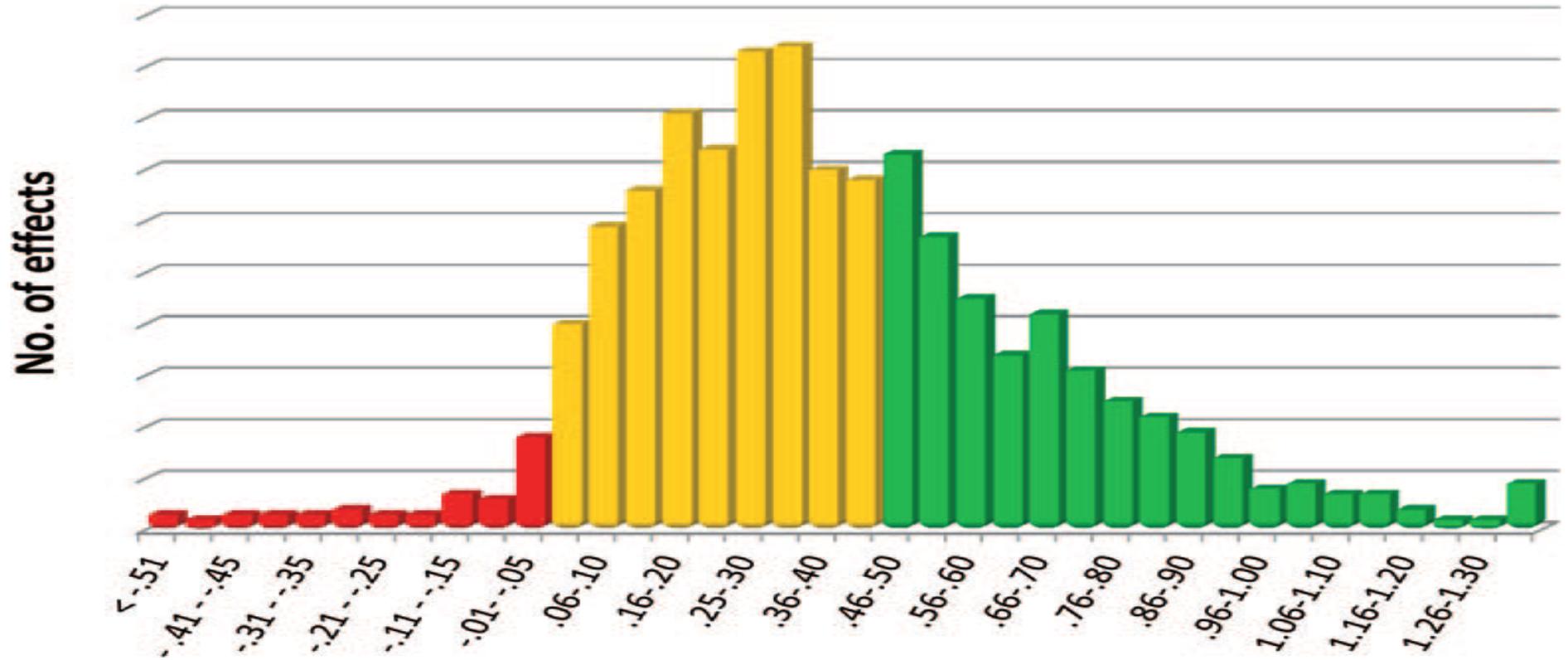
# Traditional Change Process



# Challenges

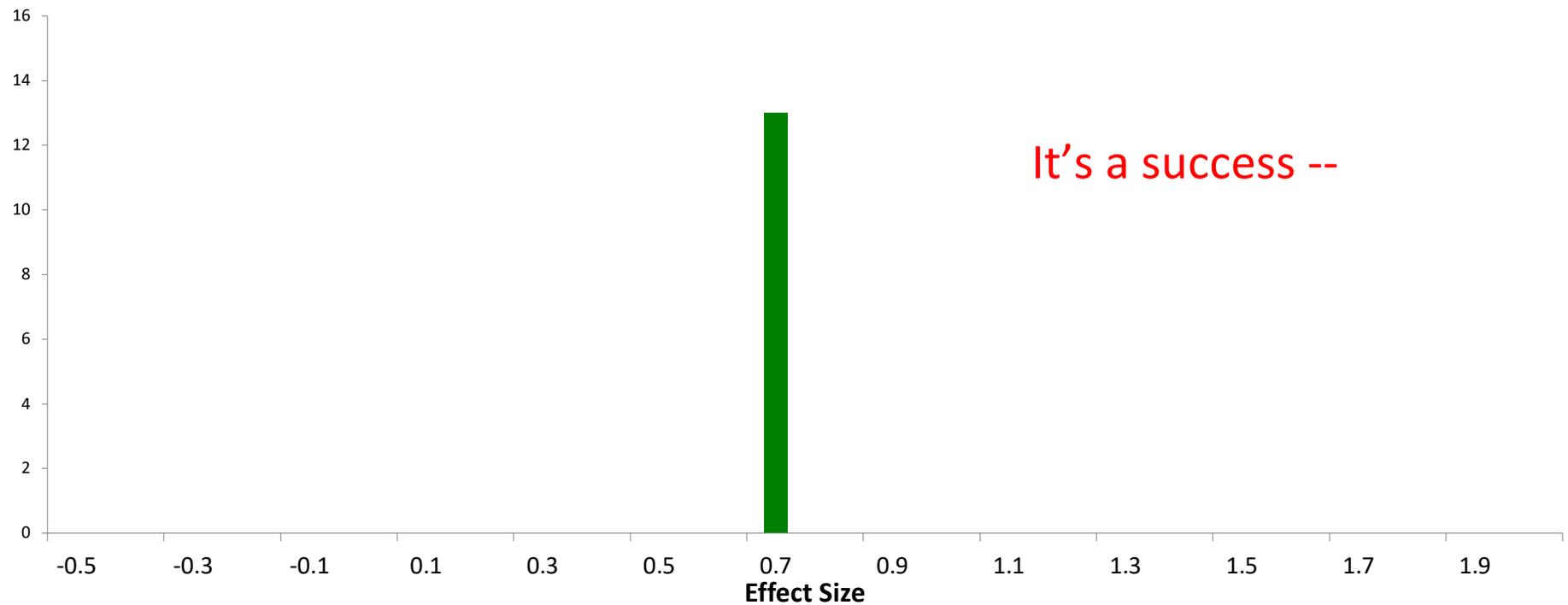
- Research-based and evidence-based practice and policy...
- Fidelity of implementation and scaling through replication...
- Understanding and use of averages...
  
- Improvement is a challenge of learning, not of implementation. (*The Internal Coherence Framework: Creating the conditions for continuous improvement in schools*).
  
- “Successful problem solving requires finding the right solution to the right problem. We fail more often because we solve the wrong problem than because we get the wrong solution to the right problem.” – Russ Ackoff
  
- Compliance activities vs. behavior and culture change
- Little understanding of impact of investments, improvement and innovation efforts...

# What “Can” Work



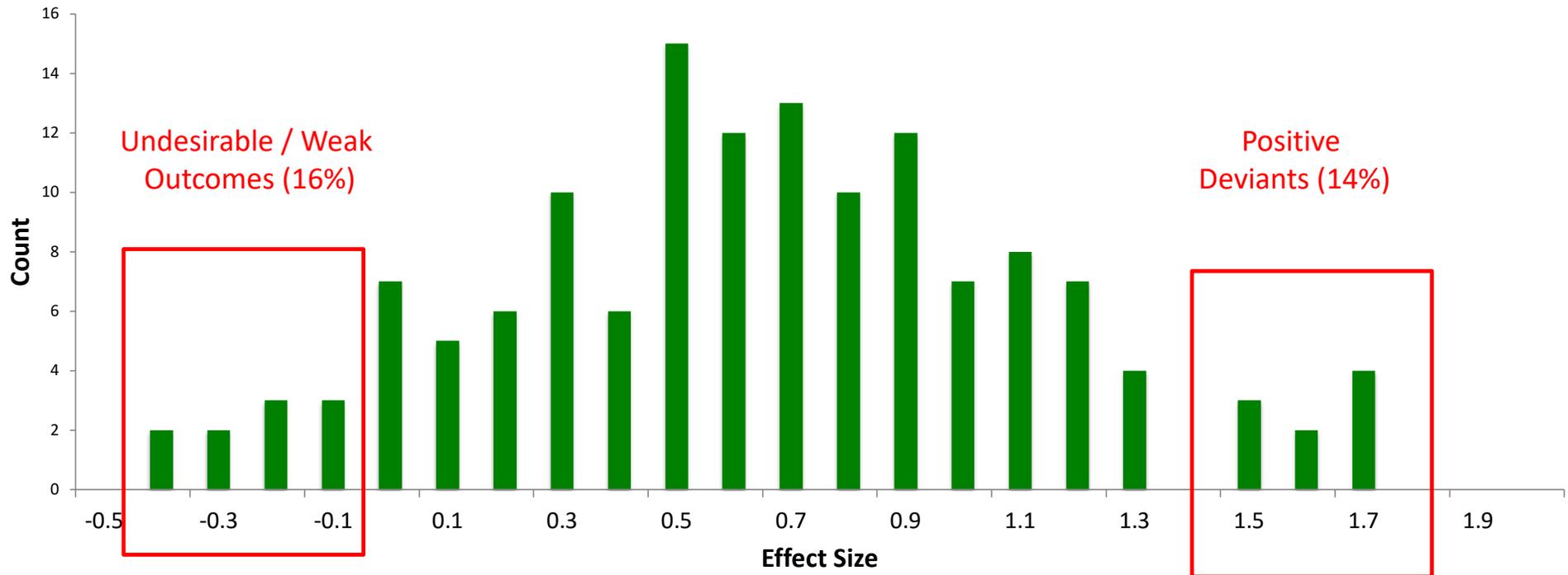
# What “Can” Work: Reading Recovery

RCT (average) Treatment Effect: Reading Recovery  
N=141 schools



# What “Can” Work: Reading Recovery

Distribution of RCT Treatment Effects: Reading Recovery  
N=141 schools



# What “Can” Work: Instructional Coaching

- “Although these findings affirm the potential of coaching as a development tool, further analyses illustrate the challenges of taking coaching programs to scale while maintaining effectiveness. Average effects from effectiveness trials of larger programs are only a fraction of the effects found in efficacy trials of smaller programs.” - **The Effect of Teacher Coaching on Instruction and Achievement: A Meta-Analysis of the Causal Evidence (2018)**  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0034654318759268>

# Change Process Built on Learning

Current Situation		Resistant	Indifferent	Ready
<b>LOW</b> Confidence that current change idea will lead to Improvement	Cost of failure <b>large</b>	<u>Very Small Scale Test</u>	<u>Very Small Scale Test</u>	<u>Very Small Scale Test</u>
	Cost of failure <b>small</b>	Very Small Scale Test	Very Small Scale Test	Small Scale Test
<b>HIGH</b> Confidence that current change idea will lead to Improvement	Cost of failure <b>large</b>	Very Small Scale Test	Small Scale Test	Large Scale Test
	Cost of failure <b>small</b>	Small Scale Test	Large Scale Test	<b>Implement</b>

# Need for Learning System: Continuous Improvement

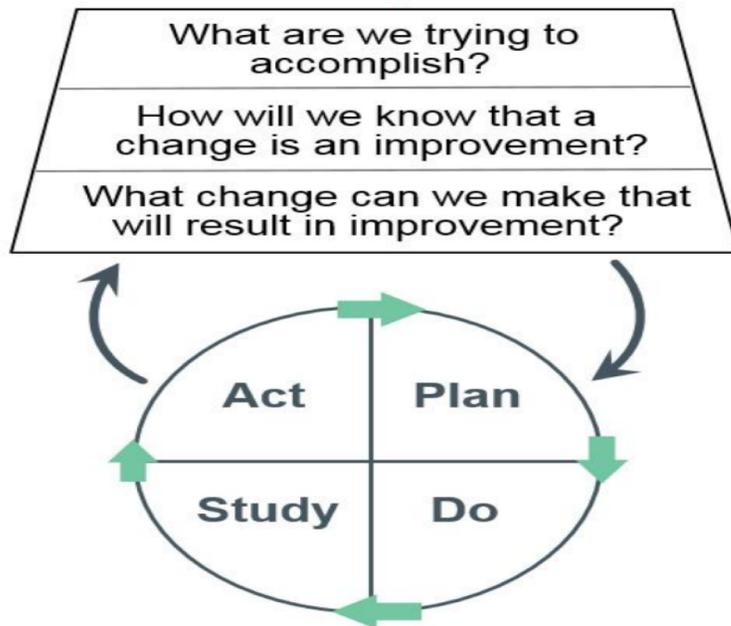
- Continuous improvement involves systematic processes; more than just activities (going through the motions).
  - Improvement science, Lean, Six Sigma, adaptive implementation
    - Networked Improvement Communities seek to accelerate learning
  - Colorado’s Unified Improvement Plans for schools and districts.
    - Built on processes of continuous improvement
- IHI states “the goal of improvement is to preserve the existing system and make it better – to streamline processes; improve performance and efficiency; and eliminate error, harm, and waste produced by those processes.”

# Need for Learning System: Innovation

- **Innovation** requires systematic learning processes, too.
- IHI states that “the goal of an innovation system is to create a new or different system – to generate new ideas that fundamentally change the existing system, which may lead to a new way of meeting user-defined needs. The effectiveness of the innovation system within an organization depends on how innovation fits into the organization’s operations and overall strategy.”
- Innovation exists everywhere across the education system...yet so little is learned to bring about systemic improvement and transformation.

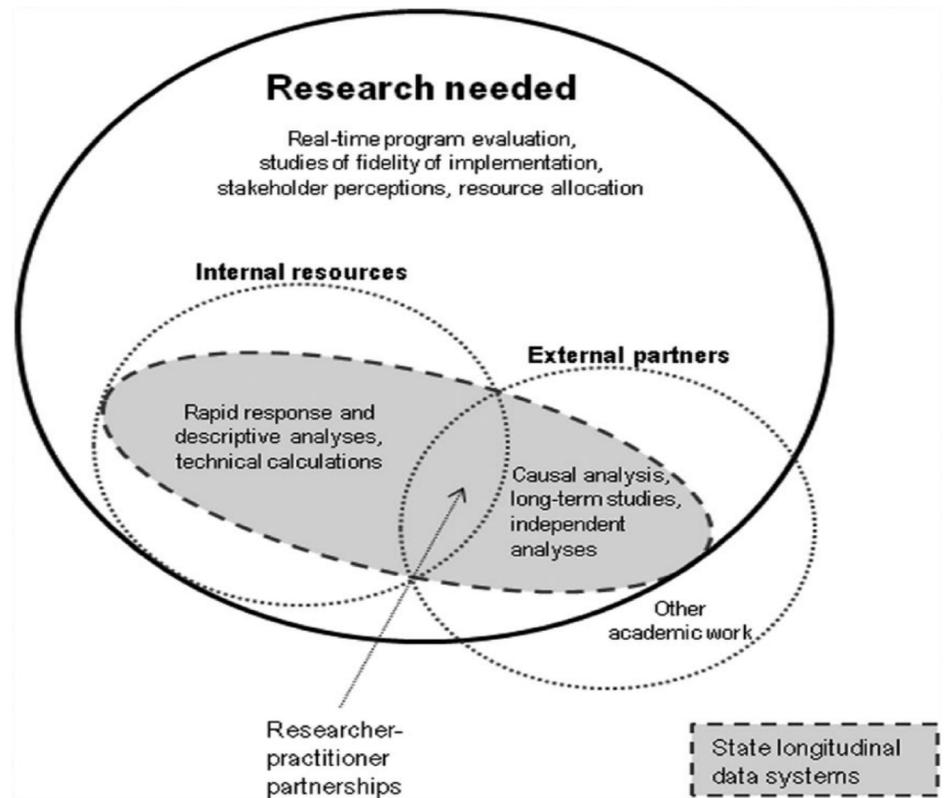
# Need for Learning System: Systematic Processes

## Model for Improvement



# Need for Learning System: Research & Evaluation

- State education agencies with dedicated resources to pursue research and evaluation agendas to inform policy and practice.
- Internal capacity and through external partnerships with researchers (e.g., research-practice partnerships) who answer questions from the field



# Need for Learning System: Research & Evaluation

- Research agendas tied directly to strategic policy priorities with an ability to be expanded and refined as the need for information changes.
  - What works? For whom? And under what conditions?
- Massachusetts and Tennessee among leading state agencies.
  - MA – educator evaluation, curriculum frameworks, turnaround programming and supports, placement patterns, CTE programs, scholarship programs, cost analyses of expanded learning time, and more
  - TN – using networked improvement communities as an improvement strategy; pursuing evaluation of quality of NICs and support needs

# Need for Learning System: Improvement and Research & Evaluation Together

- California CORE Districts is a consortium of large school districts in California born out of NCLB waiver.
  - Pursuing networked improvement community approach and research and evaluation to take on critical problems of practice and innovation.
    - Math achievement of African-American and Latino youth
    - Social-emotional learning
- NW RISE is a learning community of 33 rural and remote school districts across 5 states (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington).
  - Beyond a community of practice; dedicated to improving shared problems of practice

# Need for Learning System: Getting the Right Data to Answer RoI Questions

- Resource data generally collected and reported in broad categories and not to specific change initiatives making it difficult to ascertain cost-benefit, cost-effectiveness, and return on investment at large scale.
- Ideally identify resources to strategic improvement choices included in Unified Improvement Plans or other articulations of theory of change.
- Define desired outcome measures at time of policy formulation rather than trying to figure it out after the fact.
  - Improvement AIM statements are extremely specific: what is to be improved, by how much, for whom, and by when?
    - Some is not a number and soon is not a time.



**FourPoint**  
Education Partners

Innovative Ideas from  
the Field

Brett Ridgway  
Chief Business Officer  
El Paso County School District 49



**FourPoint**  
Education Partners



Member Discussion

**Values Inherent in a School Finance &  
Funding System**



**FourPoint**  
Education Partners



Debrief



**FourPoint**  
Education Partners



# School Visits Discussion