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# *Frontloading Promising Practices*

## Symposium

Los Angeles County Office of Education

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## **Turning Schools Around: *A 30,000 Foot View***

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# The trouble with keynote speeches....



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# Anticipatory Set

- Think about what **new** strategies you are currently using in your school/district that you think are making a difference in your practice.
  - Choose 1 strategy and share it with the person next to you.
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# Overview

- I. Goals for Today
- II. School Change
- III. National Perspective
- IV. State Guidance and Strategies
- V. Local Practices
- VI. What the Research Says

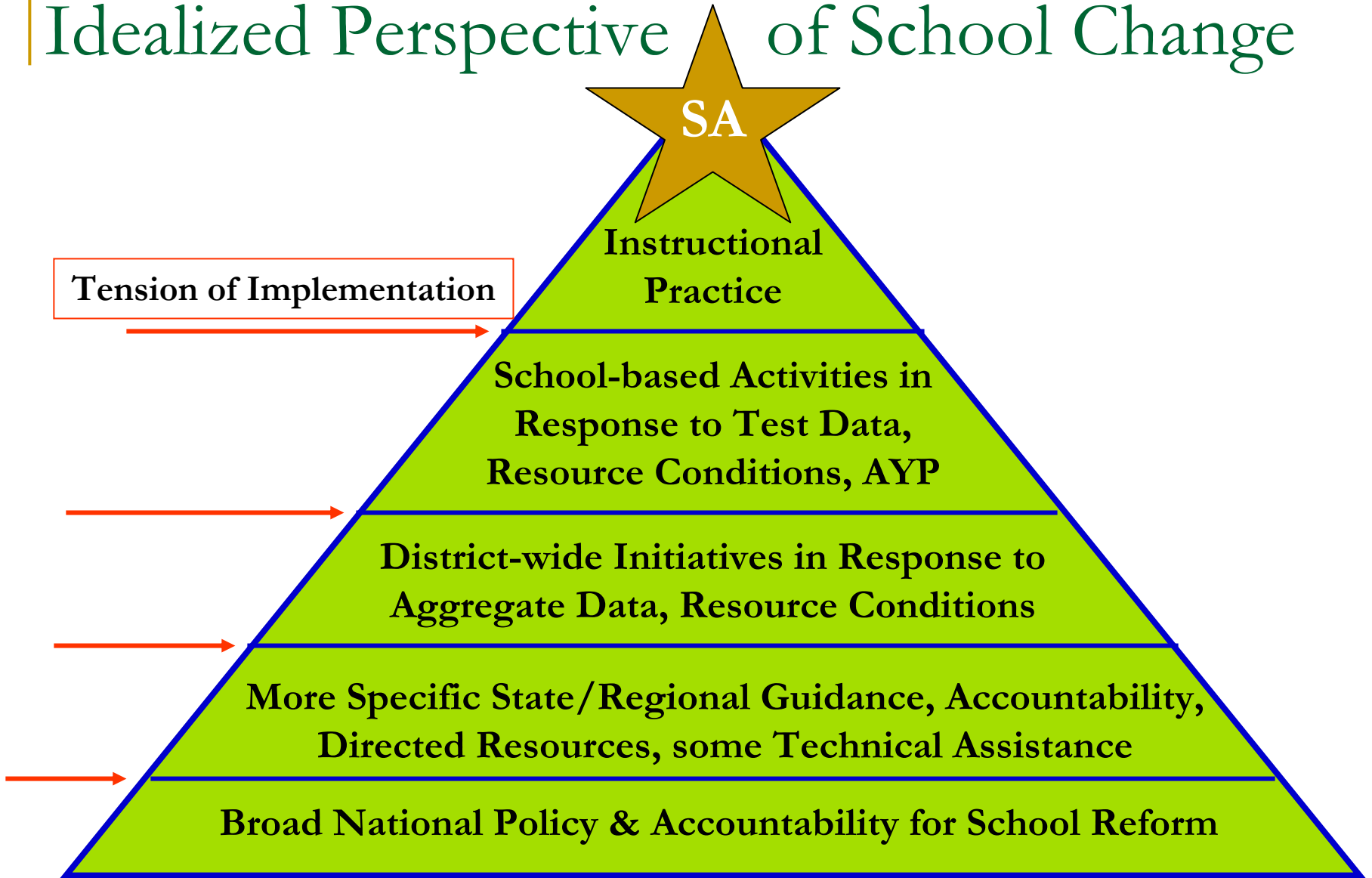


# Goals for Today

- Provide broad perspective on issues driving school “reform”
- Provide a synopsis of most prominent strategies at state and local levels
- Provide two specific research-based initiatives for school “reform”



# Idealized Perspective of School Change



# School Improvement: Inside the Process

- Identify the problem
  - Performance data – focus on target
- Quickest fix
  - low level changes – aligning content with assessment and focusing on “bubble students”
- Norming limbo
  - *Collective* commitment to change instructional practice
- Help is on the way
  - Organize and manage the change

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# School Improvement: Inside the Process

- **Did this work?**
  - Evaluating/retooling changes
- **We can't do this because....**
  - Requires high levels of support
- **We're getting better, but....**
  - Building capacity for school wide change – flat performance
- **Purposeful learning community**
  - Internalized values and monitoring

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# I. National Perspective

- 2005-06: 22,873 schools  $\emptyset$  AYP (25.8%)
  - Increase of 1,700 schools from '04 - '05
- Trends shifting sanction sequence
  - Choice not exercised as anticipated
  - Greater emphasis on SES
- **Curriculum Front and Center**
- **Global Market Focus**
- **NCLB 5-Years Later**



# Curriculum Standards

- Call for national content alignment
- Organizations/Institutions weighing in
  - College Board (SAT)
  - Achieve, Inc.
  - Fordham
  - NAEP
  - Content Area
  - National Center on Education and the Economy
- National assessment chatter



# Global Economy

- Attention to globally-oriented curriculum
  - Graduation requirements in world history, geography, languages other than English
- Technology focus, internet & instruction
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning “dispositions”
  - Five Minds for the Future - Gardner
  - Microsoft Education Competency Wheel
  - Cultural competencies
  - Expansion of work cycle



# NCLB 5-Years Later

National impact of NCLB on school practices:

- More time on reading and math instruction
- More attention to aligning curriculum with classroom instruction
- Makeovers instead of restructuring
- More assessment
- More focus on sub-group performance  
(Center on Education Policy)



## II. State Guidance and Strategies

- Steep 3-year start up
  - Authority, Data, Capacity
  - Specificity on learning expectations
- SEA Capacity to provide TA
- Statewide guidance & accountability:
  - **Curriculum Standards & Assessments (aligned)**
  - **Statewide Leadership Training**
  - **School Improvement Standards**
  - **Coaching Initiatives**
  - Exploring “restructuring” with gusto



# Statewide Guidance and Practices

## ❑ Curriculum Standards

- Pacing Guides: Transparency, Specificity, Pacing
- Aligned to assessment

## ❑ Leadership Training

### ■ Partnership Initiatives

- ❑ Foundations and Universities
  - Wallace/Harvard, Gates, Michigan State University
- ❑ Educational/Professional Organizations
- ❑ Corporations
  - Microsoft



# School Improvement Standards

- Accountability systems – more than test
- Self-assessments – need for coherence
- Research based elements
- Wide scale shared understanding
- Foundational to all other work



# Standards for School Improvement

	MI	WI	KY	WA	CA	GA	AZ
#Standards/ Elements	5	7	9	9	9	8	4
C, I, & A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Learning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Data (essential)	X	X	X		X		
Community	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Other		Vision Heart	Efficiency	Shared Focus	Pacing Fiscal	Planning/ Org	Climate

# Statewide... Coaching

- Coaching Initiatives
  - Wide variety of approaches
    - Individual principal mentors
      - Critical Friend
      - Expert/Turn-Around Specialist
      - Advisor
    - Assistance teams
      - School improvement planning
      - Governance structures
      - School climate/culture
    - Content specialists



# Statewide... Coaching

- Coaching Initiatives – lessons learned
  - Understand the work
  - Relationship of trust
  - High frequency of involvement
  - Capacity to build resource networks
  - Understand and use skillful discussion
  - Knowledge of both pedagogy and politics

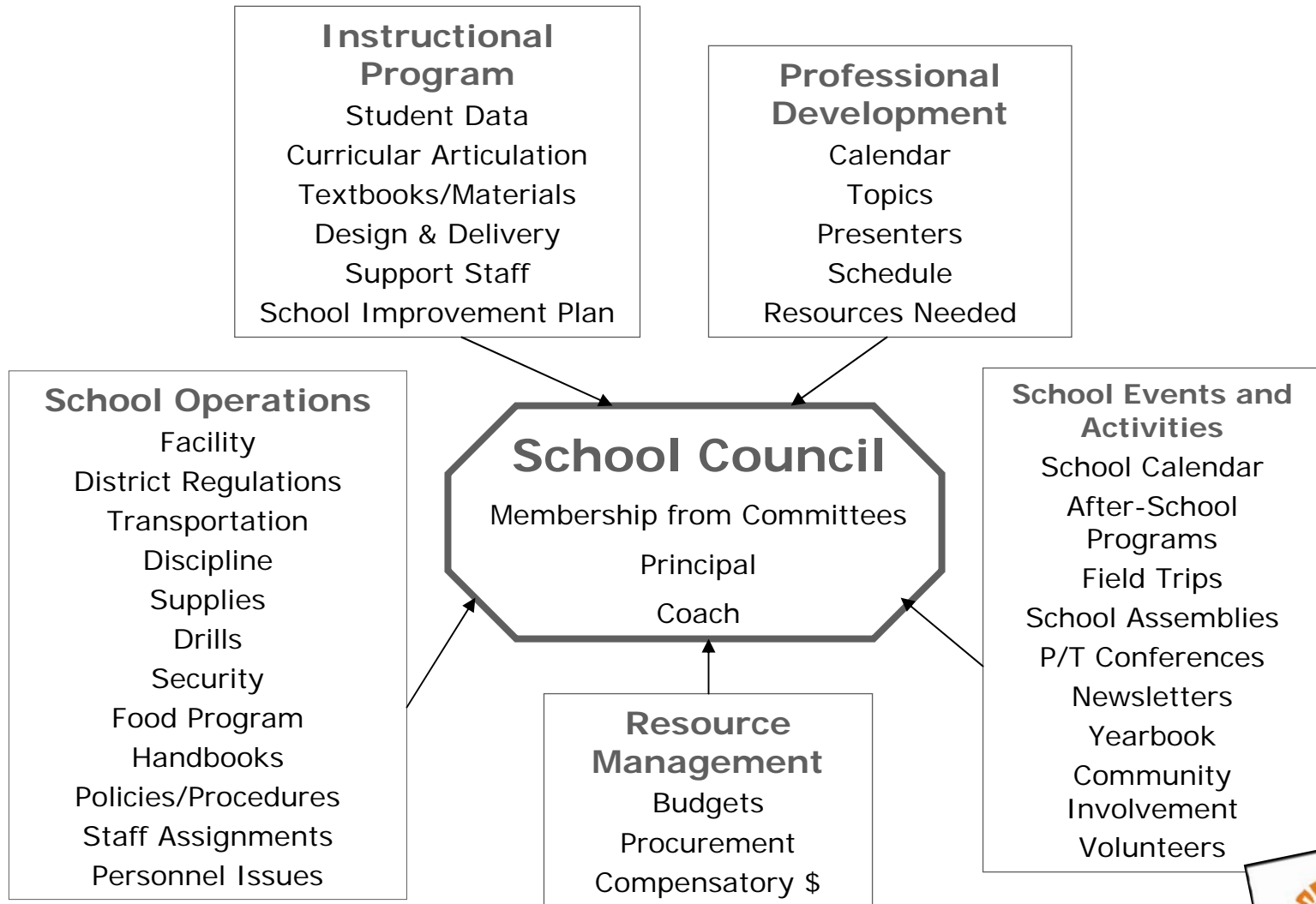


# III. Local Practices

- District wide Initiatives
  - Pacing Guides/School-wide mapping
  - Shared Formative Assessment
    - Schedule, report, analysis, action
  - Meaningful data systems
    - District, school, classroom levels
  - Shared decision-making
    - Honest self-assessment
  - **Governance changes**



# Areas for Governance Decisions



# IV. What the Research Says

- CEP – remodel, not restructure
  - Multiple approaches: coach +
  - Clear focus on instruction
  - School wide practices
- **MCREL Meta-analysis of Leadership**
  - Instructional Leadership Matters
- **Elmore – Internal Accountability**
  - Alignment within the system
  - Focus on Instructional Capacity



# Instructional Leadership Matters

## ■ MCREL Meta-analysis

### □ Magnitude of change

#### ■ First Order

- Consistent with current values, beliefs, practices
- Can be implemented with existing knowledge/skills
- Can be implemented by others, including outside experts

#### ■ Second Order

- Break with the past
- Conflicts with prevailing norms, beliefs, practices
- Implemented by stakeholders
- Complex
- Requires new skills/knowledge



# Instructional Leadership Matters

- **Leader responsibilities that matter in 2<sup>nd</sup> Order**
  - ❑ Provides intellectual stimulation
  - ❑ Knowledge of curriculum, assessment, instruction
  - ❑ Adaptive, flexible
  - ❑ Optimizer
  - ❑ Change agent
  - ❑ Holds ideals and beliefs, consistency
  - ❑ Monitors and evaluates



# Instructional Leadership Matters

In one school year for a student who attends:

- Exceptional School w/ Poor Teaching:
  - **.44 net gain** (reading grade level)
- Exceptional School w/ Exceptional Teaching:
  - **1.58 net gain**
- Poor School w/ Exceptional Teaching:
  - **.44 net gain**
- Poor School w/ Poor Teaching:
  - **-1.58 net loss**



# Internal Accountability

- Schools addressed accountability using their own internal standards – BEFORE policy or legislation created accountability standards.
- Internal accountability precedes and determines the district's/school's response to external accountability.
- Highly aligned and coherent accountability systems have shared protocols for guiding accountability discussions.
- Highly aligned and coherent accountability systems don't "need" external accountability standards in order to improve.

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# Elements of Internal Accountability Systems

## Responsibility

How individuals view their own participation in the organization – role, function, practices, responsibility, work.

## Expectations

How the organization (the collective) describes the work, practices, and participation of the individual in the organization.

## Accountability

The routines, practices, processes, protocols that organize and monitor the work.

*R. Elmore*



# Coherence in Accountability

- **Coherence** is the degree to which an individual describes the system as others do and in accordance with how the organization accounts for the work. All are on the same page and describe and use “protocols of practice” in similar ways.
- Demonstrated “protocols of practice” can help determine the extent to which coherence is possible.
- The culture of teaching is not based on “protocols of practice”, but rather *craft* and *context*.

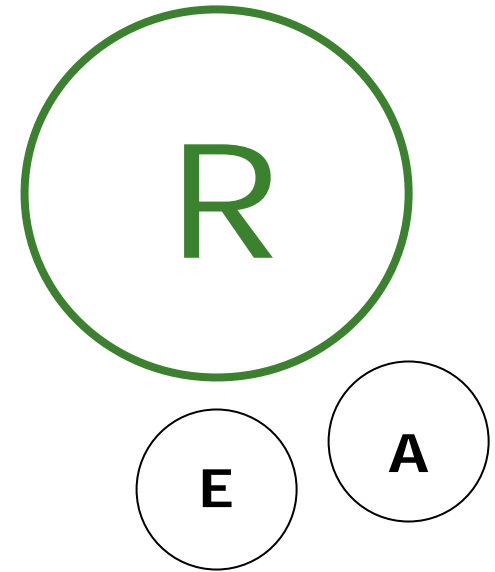
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# Low Internal Accountability

## ■ Default Culture of Accountability

- ❑ Individual responsibility trumps expectations
- ❑ Individual level, wide variability
- ❑ Low transparency
- ❑ Weak norms of practice
- ❑ Low agency – not responsible for results, assignment of causality with other forces
- ❑ Atomized organizations when pushed by external accountability become more atomized



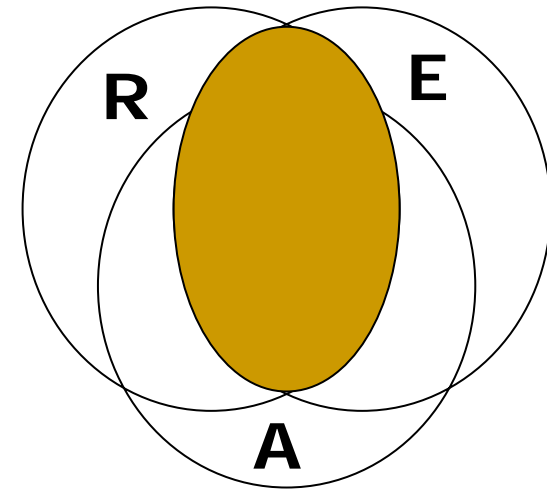
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# High Internal Accountability

## ■ Professional Accountability

- ❑ Large intersection
- ❑ High alignment between individuals and the collective (expectations)
- ❑ High level of coherence
- ❑ High transparency
- ❑ Explicit norms, processes, structures of accountability and *protocols of practice*
- ❑ High support, focused
- ❑ High agency – if **I** can't **WE** can

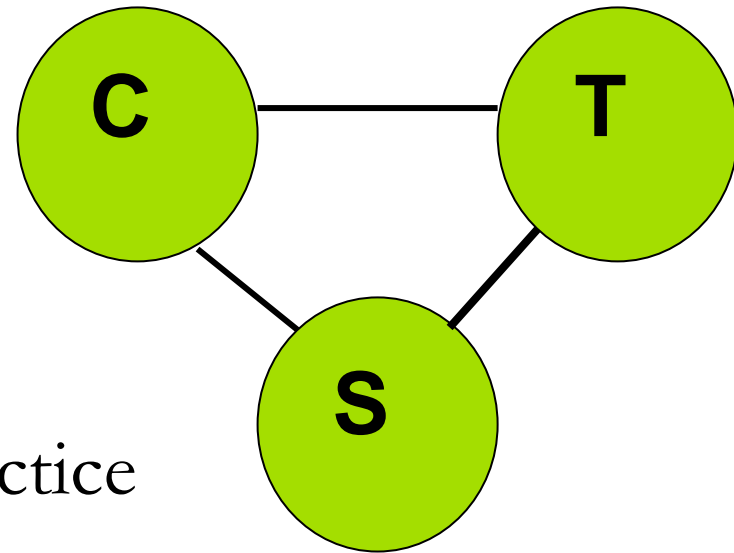


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# Effective Internal Accountability Systems

- Identify their core technology
  - Content/Curriculum
  - Teacher/Instruction
  - Student/Learning
- Focus discourse on evidence
- Depersonalize/deprivatize practice
- Develop *protocols of practice*
- Distribute voice and leadership
- Create continuity and depth over time



*R. Elmore*



# Effective Internal Accountability Systems

- *Have a language to describe what they do.*
- *Have a capacity to discuss and improve the core technology of the organization.*
- *Have processes that guide practice.*
- Have norms that encourage everyone to speak *once* before anyone speaks *twice*.
- Have norms that encourage rotating leadership.
- Can remove “history” from deep dialogue.

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# Endticipatory Set

- Did any of the new strategies you identified earlier match ideas you heard about today?
- Are any of the new ideas you heard about today ones you might consider implementing in your school/district?



# Web Resources You Might Find Useful

- [www.mcrel.org](http://www.mcrel.org)
- [www.cep-dc.org](http://www.cep-dc.org)
- [www.epc.msu.edu](http://www.epc.msu.edu)
- [www.wallacefoundation.org](http://www.wallacefoundation.org)
- [www.michigan.gov/osi](http://www.michigan.gov/osi)
- [www.mi-life.org](http://www.mi-life.org)



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# Thank You!

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