



CULTURALLY
NOURISHING
SCHOOLING

Research in First Nations Education

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Acknowledging Ancestors, Elders and First Nations

I would like to acknowledge the Elders and custodians of the Gweagal Clan of the Dharawal Nation as custodians of the unceded lands on which I live and work and my own people & Elders of the Gubbi Gubbi Nation. I acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and their communities as they have all suffered and resisted 2 centuries of oppression.

I also want to acknowledge all other people who have walked with us and who too want genuine recognition and who acknowledge Indigenous sovereign presence.



Overview - Contextualising discussions within Indigenous education

Three
provocations
about First
Nations
Education in
Australia

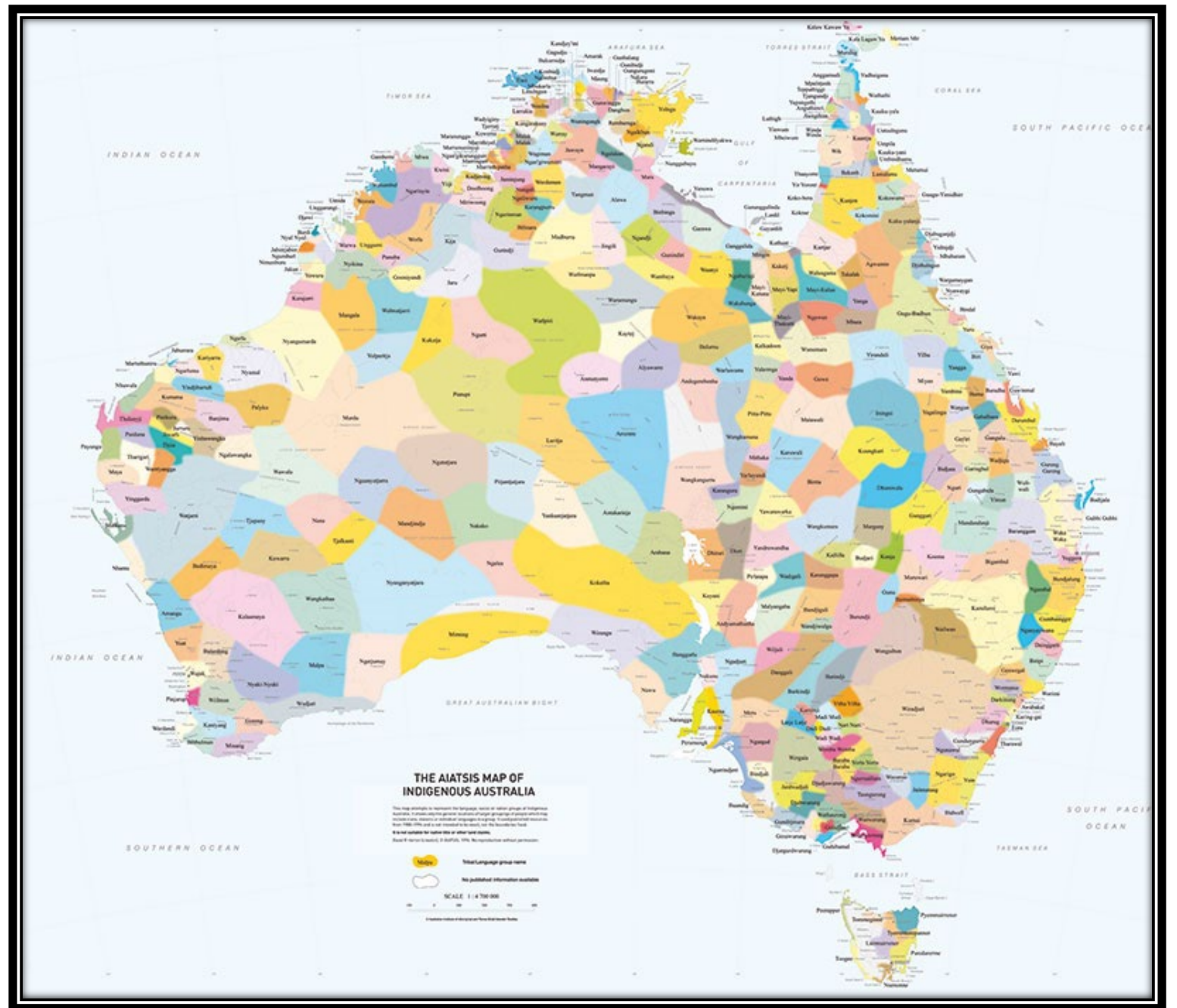
Why aren't school systems able to honour the promise of the '*Closing the Gap*' strategy, the claims set out in the *Alice Springs Declaration* and *Uluru Statement of the Heart*?

Why do policies that make the promise of supporting First Nations people so often fail? Analyzing the Australian Curriculum as a failing policy

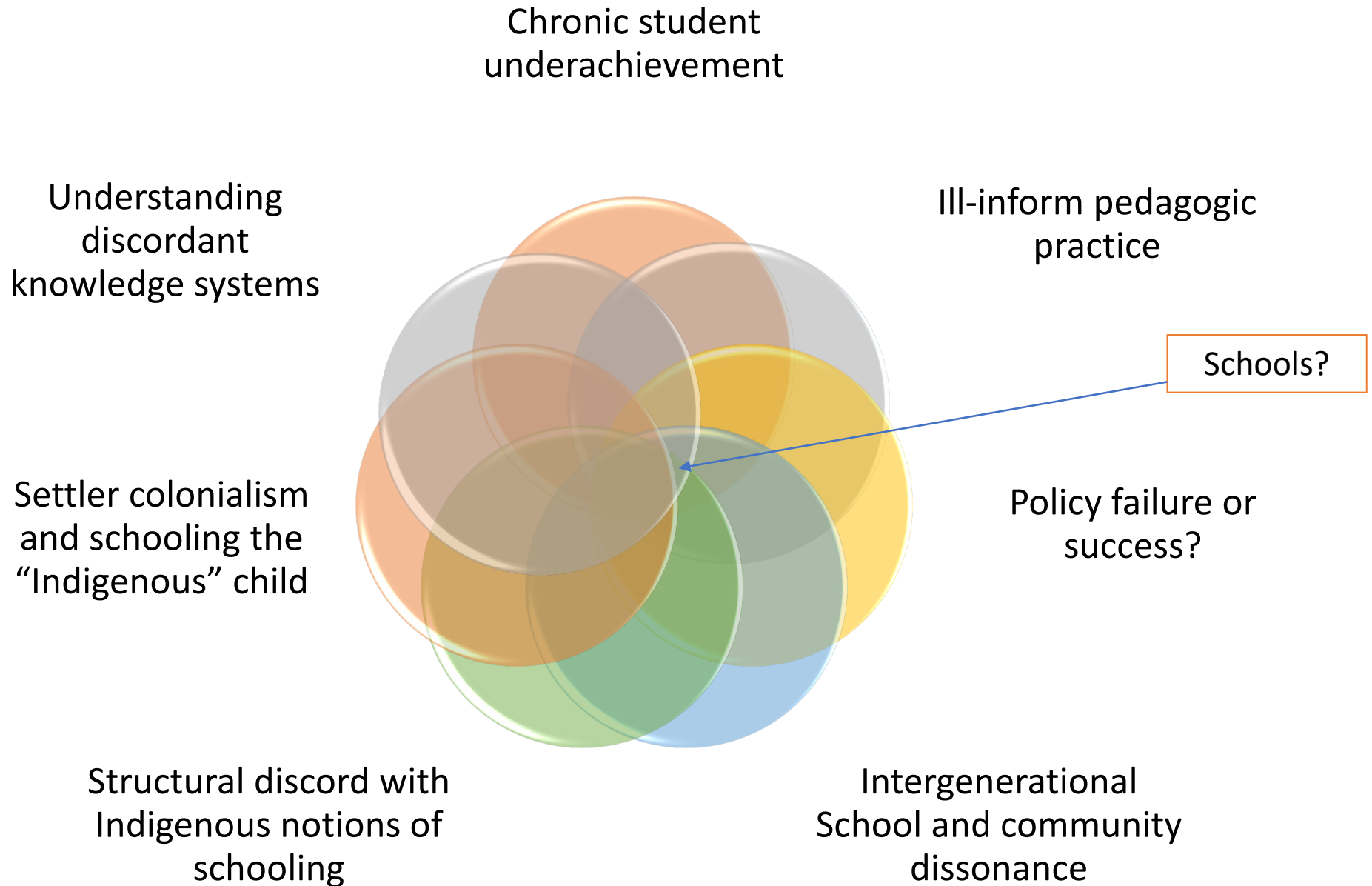
What stops teachers from developing pedagogies that consistently fail to understand the broader intent and promise of teaching all students about the history and cultures of First Nations people?

Questions that help to position ourselves

- What are teachers expecting, fearing and feeling challenged by?
- Who are these people?
- What does being 'Aboriginal mean?
- Aboriginal/Indigenous/First Nations – what is to be and why does it matter??
- 500 language nations?
- Who's their leader?
- Country and Identity?



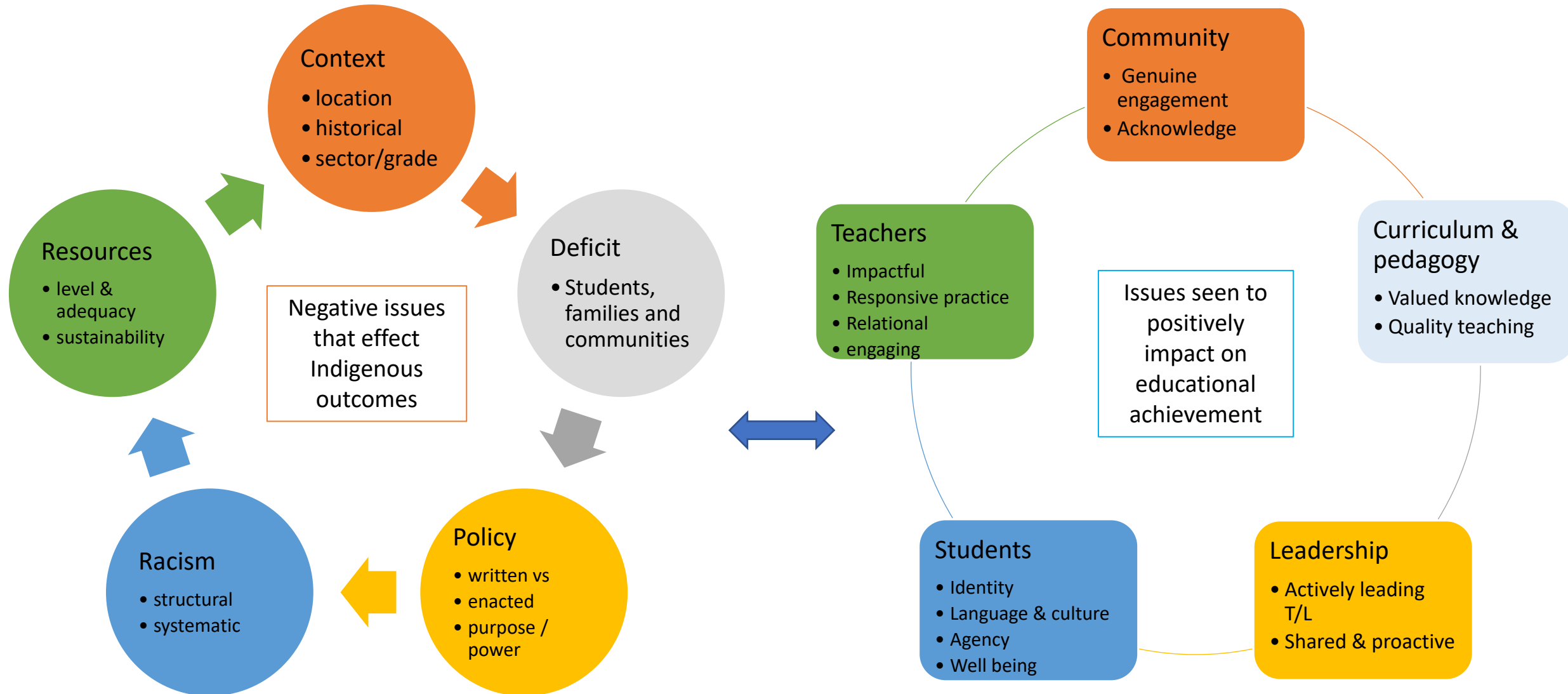
So, what's the problem and how we do we seek to understand it?



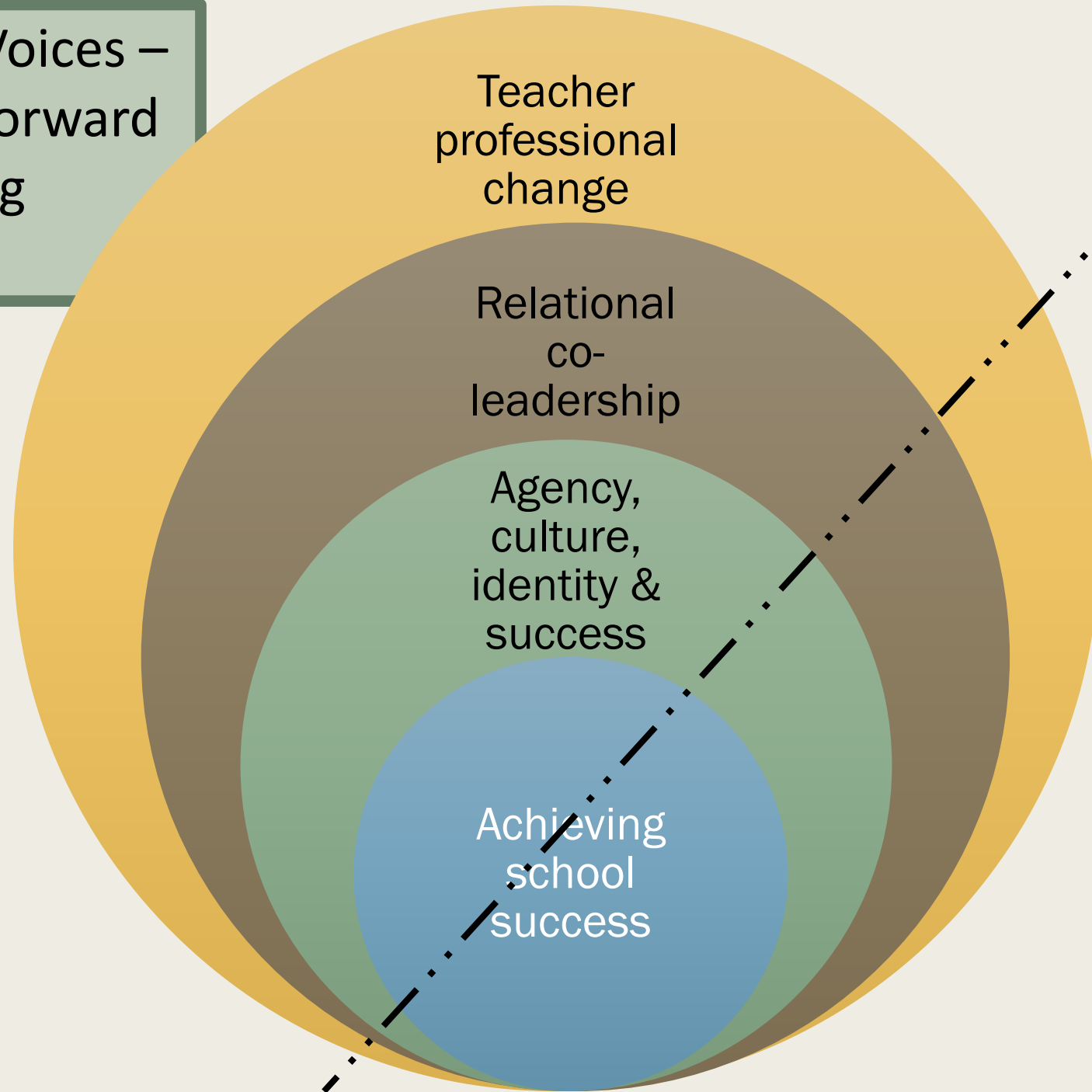
Towards an encompassing understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

- Questions that drove an inquiry
 - How can we develop a deeper understanding of school's intergenerational failure to sustainably shift the education outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students?
 - Can recent educational research assist in shedding light on what schooling practices have seen to lift the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students?

What the research told us: about what works

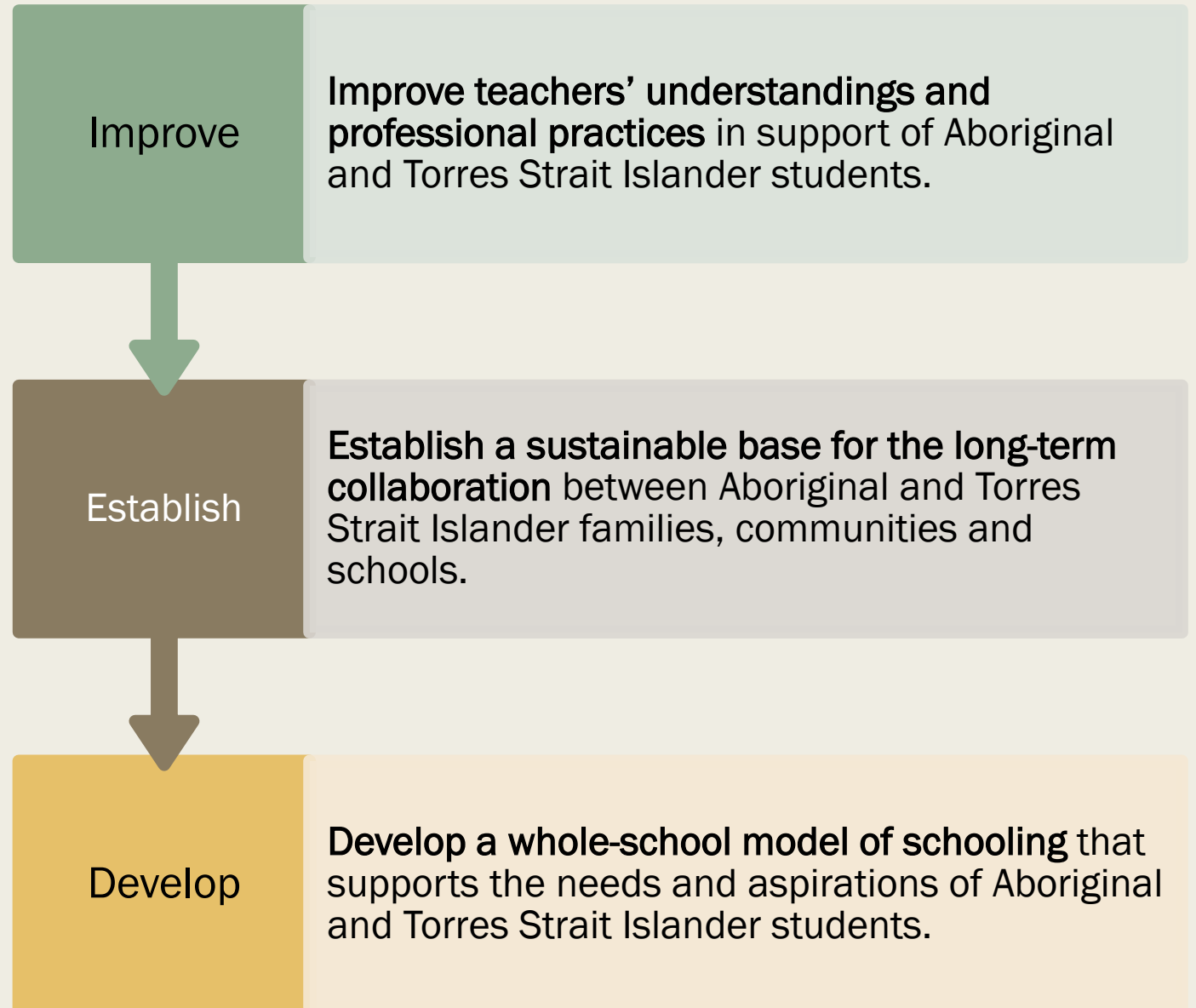


Aboriginal Voices –
projecting forward
for schooling
success

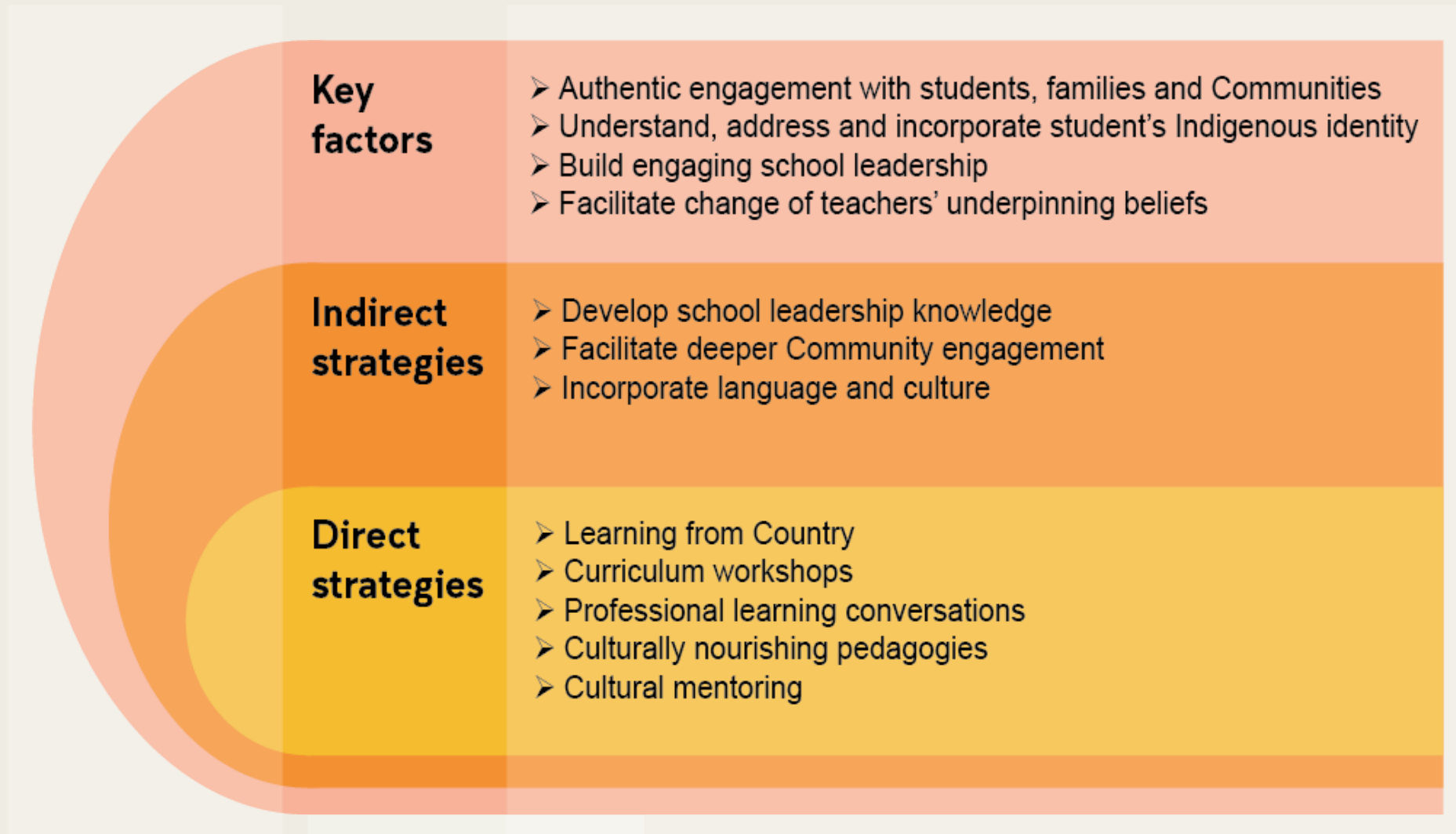


Intersections
and co-
constructed
relationships.
Coherent,
ongoing and
holistic program
focusing on
building success
through being
Aboriginal

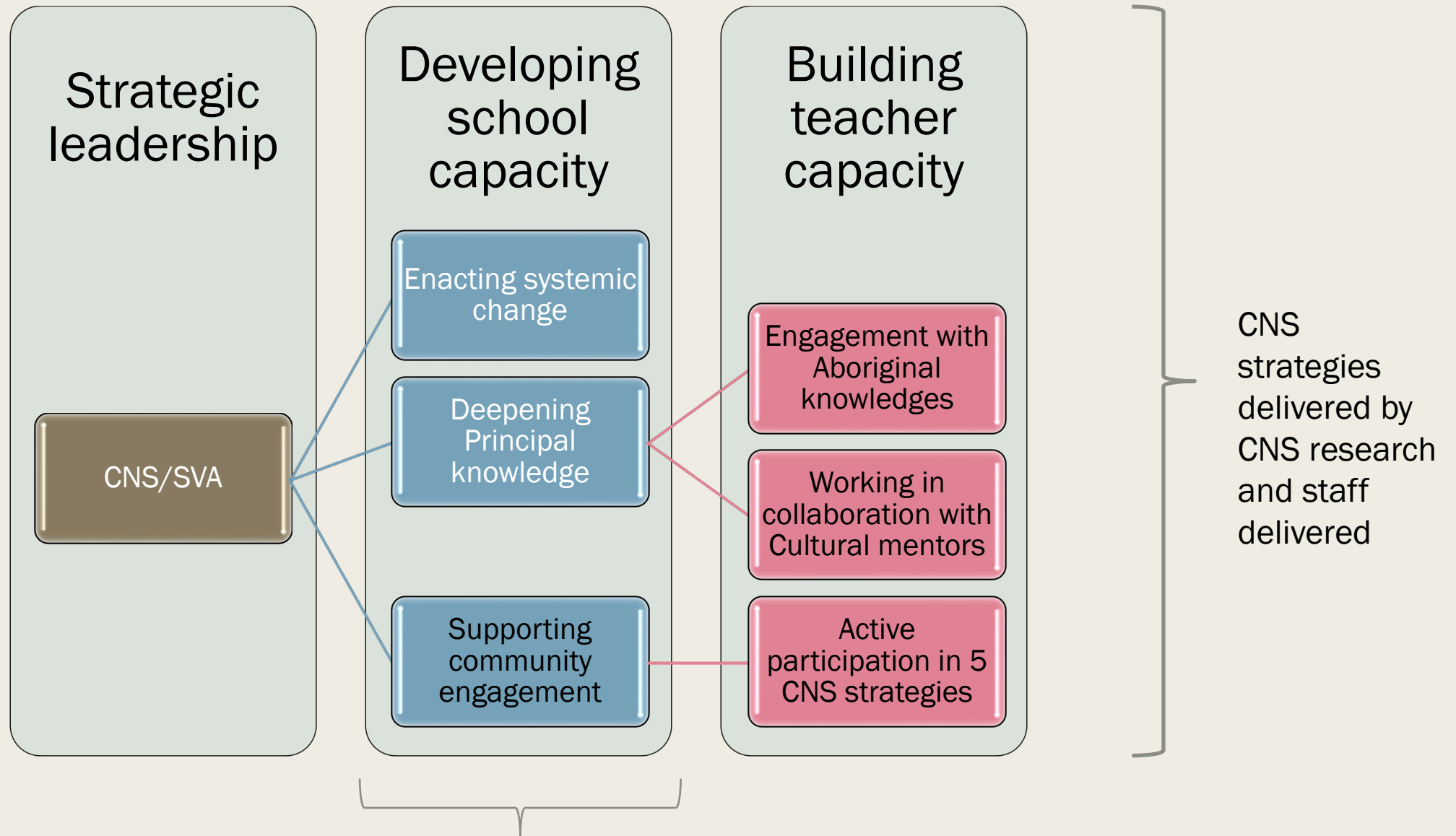
CNS project aims



The Culturally Nourishing Schooling Project



CNS / SVA Thought Leadership program



CNS and Community established initiative



Curriculum as incoherent Policy

Challenges for teachers



Research says that teachers have difficulties / challenges in teaching Indigenous content.

- **Lack of knowledge** of Indigenous content
- Teachers **not wanting** to offend Indigenous families / communities
- **No Indigenous** students in the classroom – no responsibility
- Difficulty in seeing curriculum **relevance**
- **Lack of Curriculum coherence**
- **Unsure overall purpose**
- **Lack of a sequence of learning**

Curriculum as social Policy – translating national policy into classrooms

Students learn about Australia's rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. This cross-curriculum priority provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with the ability **to see themselves, their identities and cultures reflected in the curriculum and allows all students to engage in reconciliation**, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures. (Mparntwe Declaration, 2019)

The cross-curriculum priorities support the Australian Curriculum to be a relevant, contemporary and engaging curriculum. These three priorities **are not separate learning areas or subjects**; they **provide opportunities to enrich the curriculum content of the learning areas, where appropriate**, allowing students to engage with and better understand their world. (Australian Curriculum Shape Paper V5, 2020 p.18)



Curriculum project

Theorising the inclusion / exclusion dilemma of discordant knowledge in curriculum

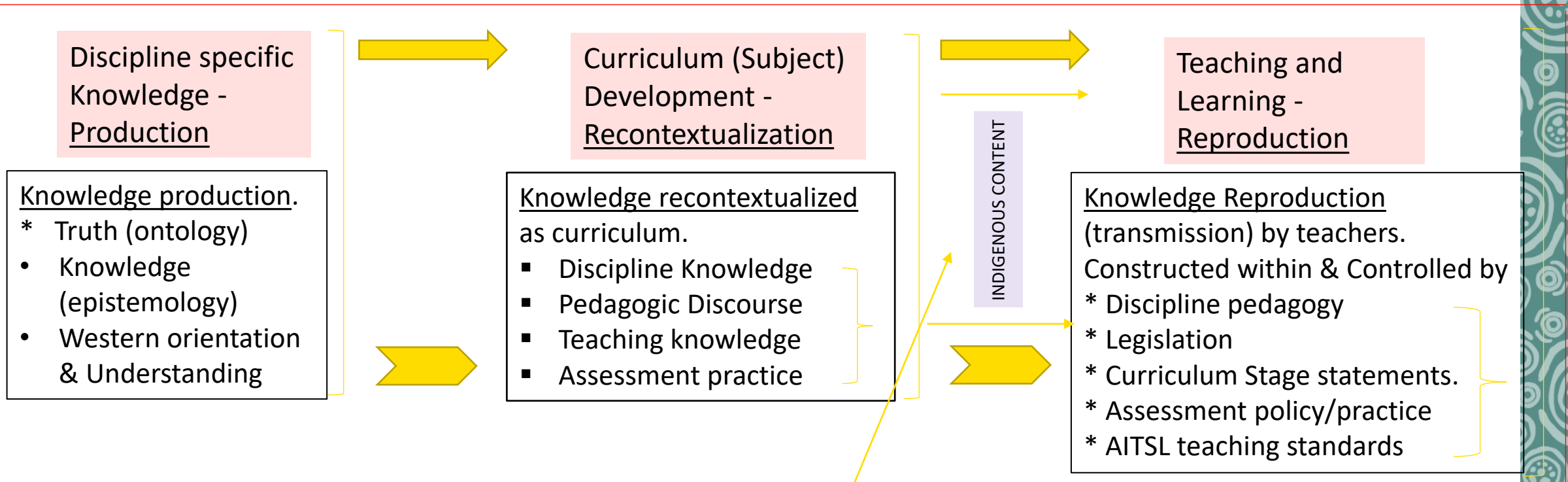
- What are the inherent barriers to the meaningful inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education
- The purpose of schooling and curriculum
 - Embedding knowledge, values and moral narratives into curriculum
- Can teachers see the possibilities of inclusion that is authentic to First Nations experiences”



Towards a Theory of Knowledge, Discipline, Curriculum & Teaching and Learning

- Challenges in achieving a counter narrative for Indigenous content.

Discipline knowledge recontextualized into curriculum subjects – bringing the discipline ‘truth’ beliefs and its consequence knowledge. These are recontextualized as Curriculum and impacts on teachers’ pedagogic identities. (Bernstein, 1990; Schiro, 2013)



Q: How do teachers understand the task of teaching this content? What is given priority?



Developing a Narrative to effect quality understanding

Teachers' actualization of First Nations content



HASS F-6

1. (80) 'mentions' of First Nations content (K-6)
2. 12 Content Descriptions
3. 4 - Year 6

Explore this organising idea

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures > Country/Place > A_TSICP1

English

Humanities and Social Sciences

Health and Physical Education

Languages

Mathematics

Science

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures - Country/Place

A_TSICP1

First Nations communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country/Place and have holistic values and belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.

Foundation Year

Students have opportunities to develop the organising idea in the following content description and elaborations:

AC9EFLY05

use comprehension strategies such as visualising, predicting, connecting, summarising and questioning to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently

Elaborations

- ✓ retelling events from First Nations Australians' stories and cultural accounts in sequence

AC9EFLE01

- ✓ share ideas about stories, poems and images in literature, reflecting on experiences that are similar or different to their own by engaging with texts by First Nations Australian, and wide-ranging Australian and world authors and illustrators

Elaborations

- ✓ viewing stories by First Nations Australian storytellers from print, visual, digital and multimodal sources

Year 1

Students have opportunities to develop the organising idea in the following content description and elaborations:

Explore this organising idea

Foundation Year

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6


Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

From incoherence to
quality pedagogy

- Curriculum incoherence
 - Addressing atomised Indigenous curriculum content across the K – 10 learning continuum
 - Establish a 'vision' to program and teaching micro elements of Indigenous content
 - Separating Indigenous content from the discipline curriculum
- 
- Effective quality teaching
 - Organising content to build deep learning of Indigenous histories and cultural knowledge
 - Establishing an AIM and PURPOSE in teaching this content
 - Teaching for authentic, high-quality learning

Mapping content for curriculum meaning

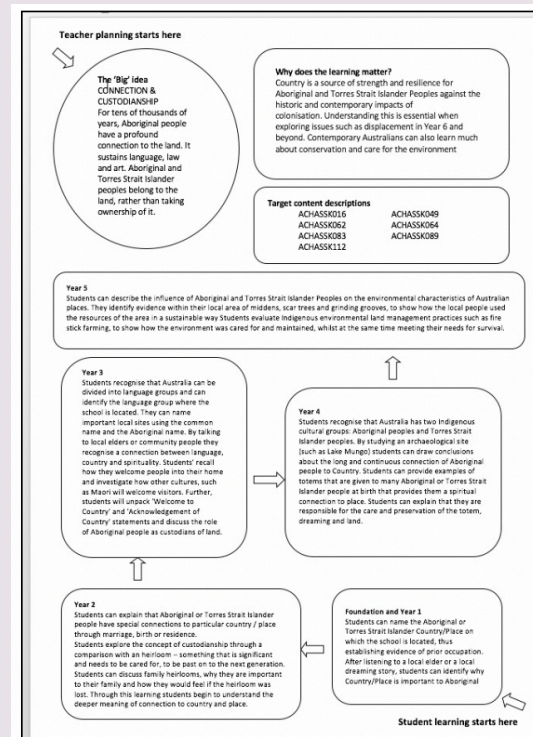
ACARA mapping of Country and Place			
Hass K - 6			
	K - 2	Yr. 3 - 4	Yr. 5 - 6
Descriptions Country and Place			
1. First Nations communities of Australia maintain a deep connection to, and responsibility for, Country/Place and have holistic values and belief systems that are connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways.	KINDERGARTEN: the importance of Country/Place to First Nations Australians and the Country/Place on which the school is located Australian and world authors and illustrators	YEAR 3: the ways First Nations Australians in different parts of Australia are interconnected with Country/Place	
	YEAR 1: how places change and how they can be cared for by different groups including First Nations Australians	YEAR 4: the diversity of First Nations Australians, their social organisation and their continuous connection to Country/Place	
	YEAR 2: the interconnections of Australian First Nations Peoples to a local Country/Place		
2. The occupation and colonisation of Australia by the British, under the now overturned doctrine of terra nullius, were experienced by First Nations Australians as an invasion that denied their occupation of, and connection to, Country/Place.			YEAR 4: the effects of contact with other people on First Nations Australians and their Countries/Places following the arrival of the First Fleet and how this was viewed by First Nations Australians as an invasion
3. The First Peoples of Australia are the traditional owners of Country/Place, protected in Australian Law by the Native Title Act 1993 which recognises pre-existing sovereignty, continuing systems of law and customs, and connection to Country/Place. This recognised legal right provides for economic sustainability and a voice into the development and management of Country/Place.			

Establishing a genuine Narrative to teach incoherent Curriculum

The 'Big' idea CONNECTION & CUSTODIANSHIP

For tens of thousands of years, Aboriginal people have a profound connection to the land. It sustains language, law and art. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples belong to the land, rather than taking ownership of it.

1. Unique connection to Country
2. That connection and meaning forged over 60,000+ years
3. That 'Country' constructs and sustains each communities – Culture and spiritual presence through Dreaming translated by language and culture
4. People belong to Country
5. People are custodians of country through law, responsibilities and culture



The background features a series of overlapping, wavy lines in shades of green, blue, and purple, creating a sense of depth and movement. A bright, circular light source is visible in the upper center, casting a soft glow across the scene. The overall aesthetic is ethereal and futuristic.

So, what have
we learnt?

Summary:
That research
from the last 20
years has
identified the
following -

- The high levels of 2-way resistance between families and schools
 - No one pedagogical approach was shown to sustainably impact Aboriginal student outcomes.
 - No Literacy or Numeracy programs was shown to convincingly shift student learning
 - That teachers constantly struggle to authentically teach Indigenous curriculum content.
 - That school have largely failed to establish holistic and wrap around programs to support student success
- ❖ BUT – research did identify
- The importance of authentic community/family engagement
 - That ‘good’ teaching is relational and is necessarily critical and reflexive.
 - That effective teaching needs to engage students, be based on high expectations
 - That programs supported positive sense of Indigenous identity, especially through language and cultural programs, are highly valued by students and community
 - That teachers need sustained support to affect a change in pedagogic practice?

