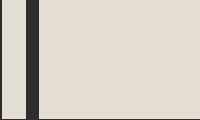


Positive School Leadership: Into Action

Karen Seashore
Regents Professor Emerita

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



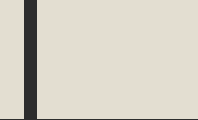


WHAT IS THE STORY?

A Research-Based Saga of Positive School
Leadership in Four Chapters



HOW IS A STRONG,
FLOURISHING SCHOOL
LIKE THIS TREE?



Beginning the Story: Part 1

**This is a time
of leadership transformation**

Transactional,
Goal Focused,
Traditional
Leadership Models



**LEADER
GUIDED**

Visible organizational culture



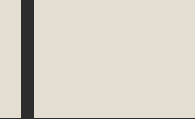
**LEADER-
CENTERED**

Invisible organizational culture

Relationship, Value
and Culture Focused
Positive Leadership
Models

BUT THERE IS A CHALLENGE...

...The accumulation of new tasks and expectations imposed from outside makes finding the time to prioritize the development of dense and meaningful relationships in the school much more difficult.

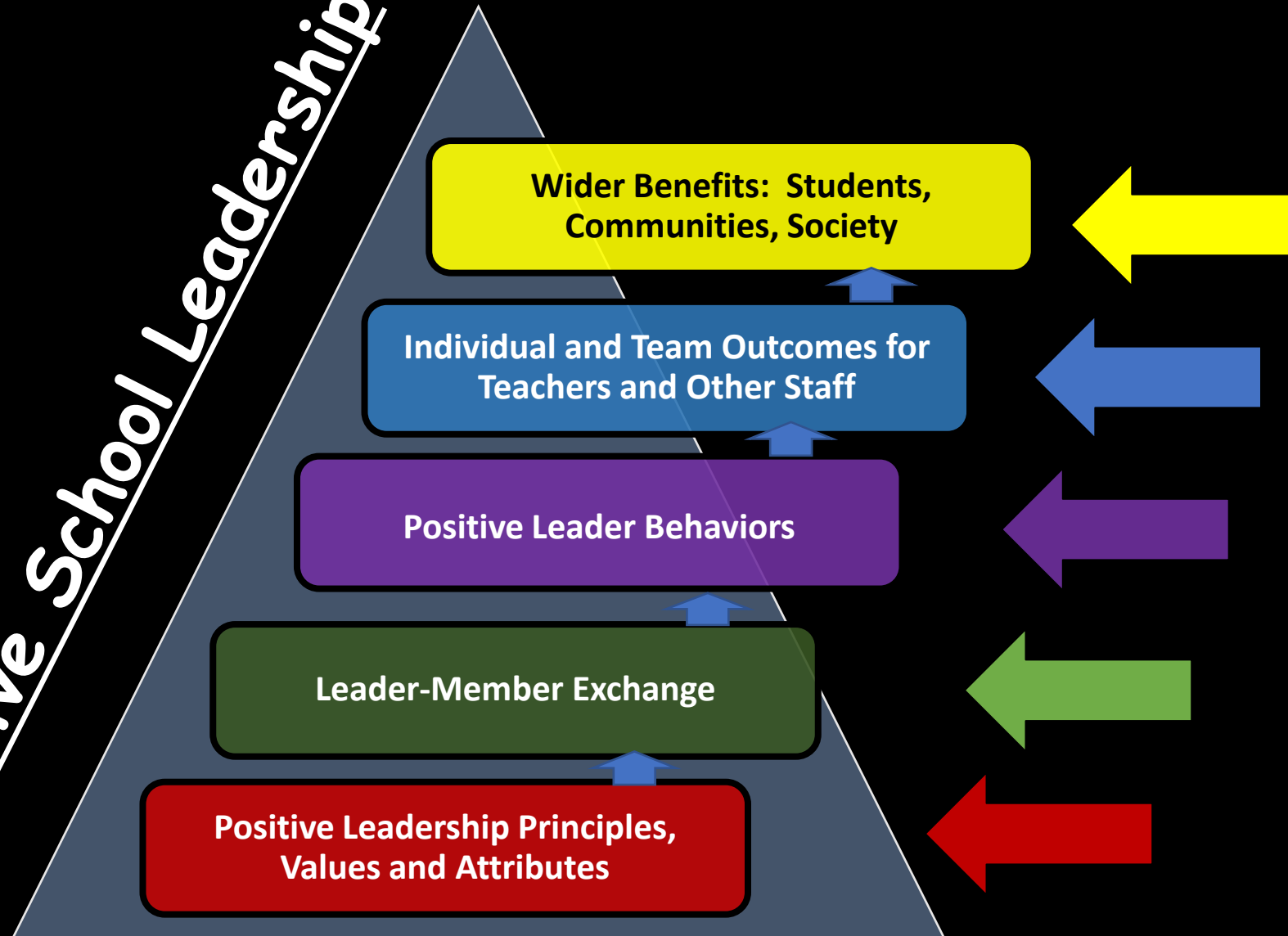


The Story – Part 2

BRINGING PEOPLE BACK IN....

It Is All In The Details

Positive School Leadership



The Foundation of Positive Leadership

- **Positive Orientation:** Asset-based
- **Moral Orientation:** Value-based, transcendent
- **Relationship Orientation:** Care and growth-based
- **Stewardship Orientation:** Service-anchored

[For more, read our blog: <https://www.tcpress.com/blog/principles-positive-school-leadership/>]

Leader Behaviors: *An Essential Foundation*

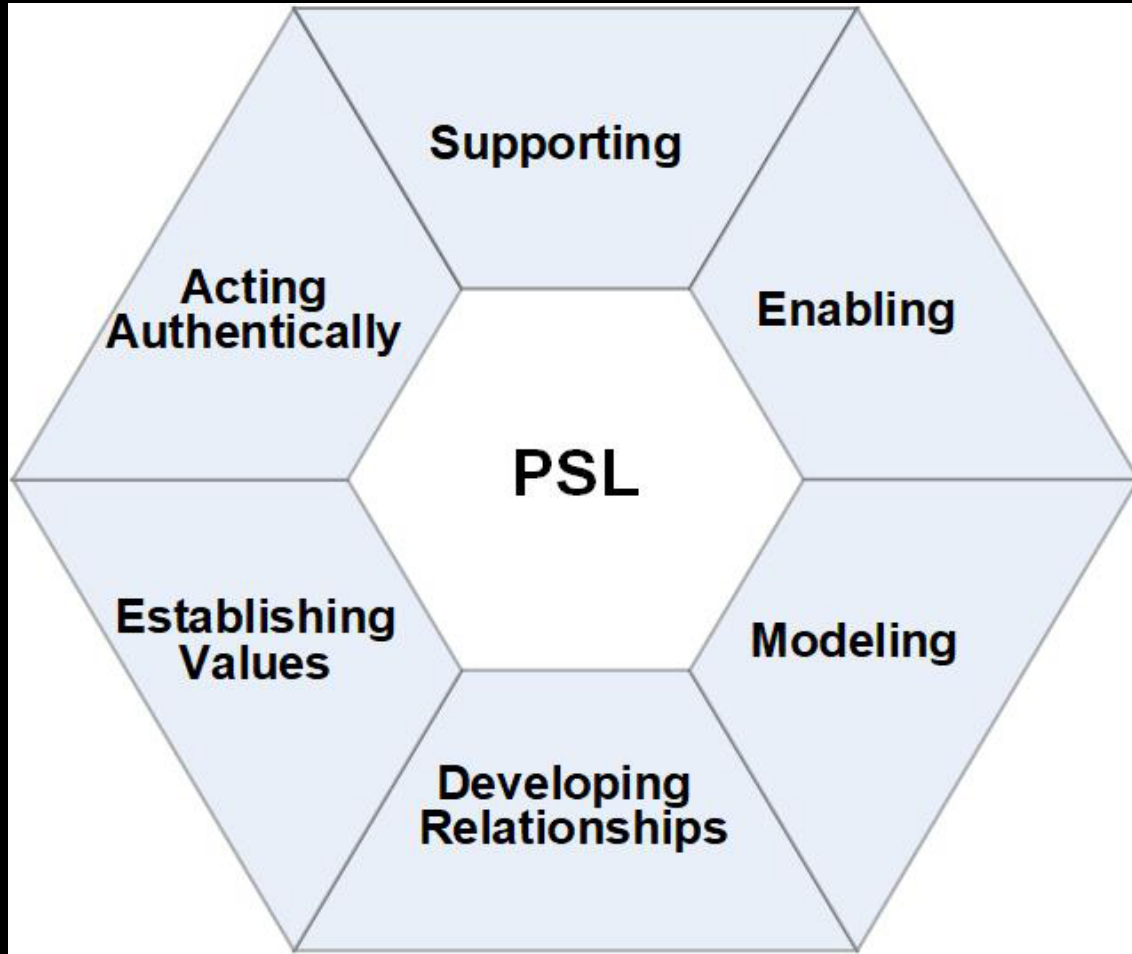


Figure 1: Positive School Leadership Behaviors



Positive School Leadership

Leader-Member Exchange



Leader-Member Exchange: Daily Actions



- **Know teachers individually and personally** (Molenaar, Daly & Slegers, 2011)
- **Minimize control & emphasize trust** (Quinn et al., 2000, p. 153; Louis, Murphy & Smylie, 2021)
- **Read opportunities for people to connect** (Harter et al., 2003, p. 219)
- **Develop a ‘web of inclusion’** (Kaczmariski & Cooperrider, 1997, p. 255), **& reach out to disenfranchised or discontented staff.** (Bass, 2012, p. 84)

Turn to someone...



- Briefly discuss a small interaction that you experienced in the last few days that *increased*
 - Personal knowledge of another
 - Personal or professional trust
 - Connected two or more people
 - Promoted inclusion and engagement

Establishing Values: Action Required

“Principals bring values to life through daily action rather than mission statements. Routine behaviors (such as how students are greeted at the beginning of the day) allow all members to experience values as the blueprints or foundations for action” (Murphy & Louis, 2018)



Modeling: Visible Behavior

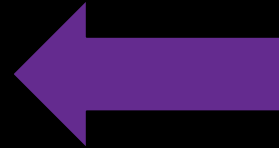


- (1) Leaders become examples of someone who can be relied upon and admired
- (2) Leaders project positive emotions—optimism and resiliency
- (3) Leaders influence culture by showing desirable behavior.
- (4) Leader focus on connections stimulates denser connections among the staff

Positive School Leadership

Positive Leader Behaviors in Larger Contexts

Leader-Member Exchange



SUPPORTING THROUGH MEETINGS



- Privilege important and/or difficult issues
- Allow disagreements to emerge
- Guide discussions
- “Manage” individual behavior: (Silent members, dominant members, chronic complainers, etc.)

(<http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/group-discussions-personas/>)

ENABLING THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

ADULTS LEARN BEST IN GROUPS!

- **Teams** (Self-Directed Professional Learning Communities)
- **Group and School-Wide** (on-line shared on-line innovation platform, book groups, thematic improvement initiatives, etc.)

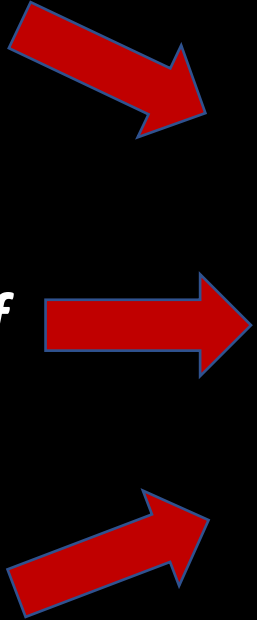


Acting Authentically: Being Consistent and True

Behavioral integrity...is the perceived degree of congruence between the values expressed by words and those expressed through action. It is the perceived level of match or mismatch between the espoused and the enacted. (Simons, 1999, p. 91)



Underlying Research

- Positive leaders act based on *knowledge and understanding* of staff members;
 - Understanding develops from *attentiveness to well-being of staff and students*;
 - PSL action/behavior is motivated by *supporting and developing others*
- 
- PSL behavior toward individuals has a *broad impact on the work environment* of schools;
 - Which subsequently increases **outcomes** of collective work

WITH A PARTNER...

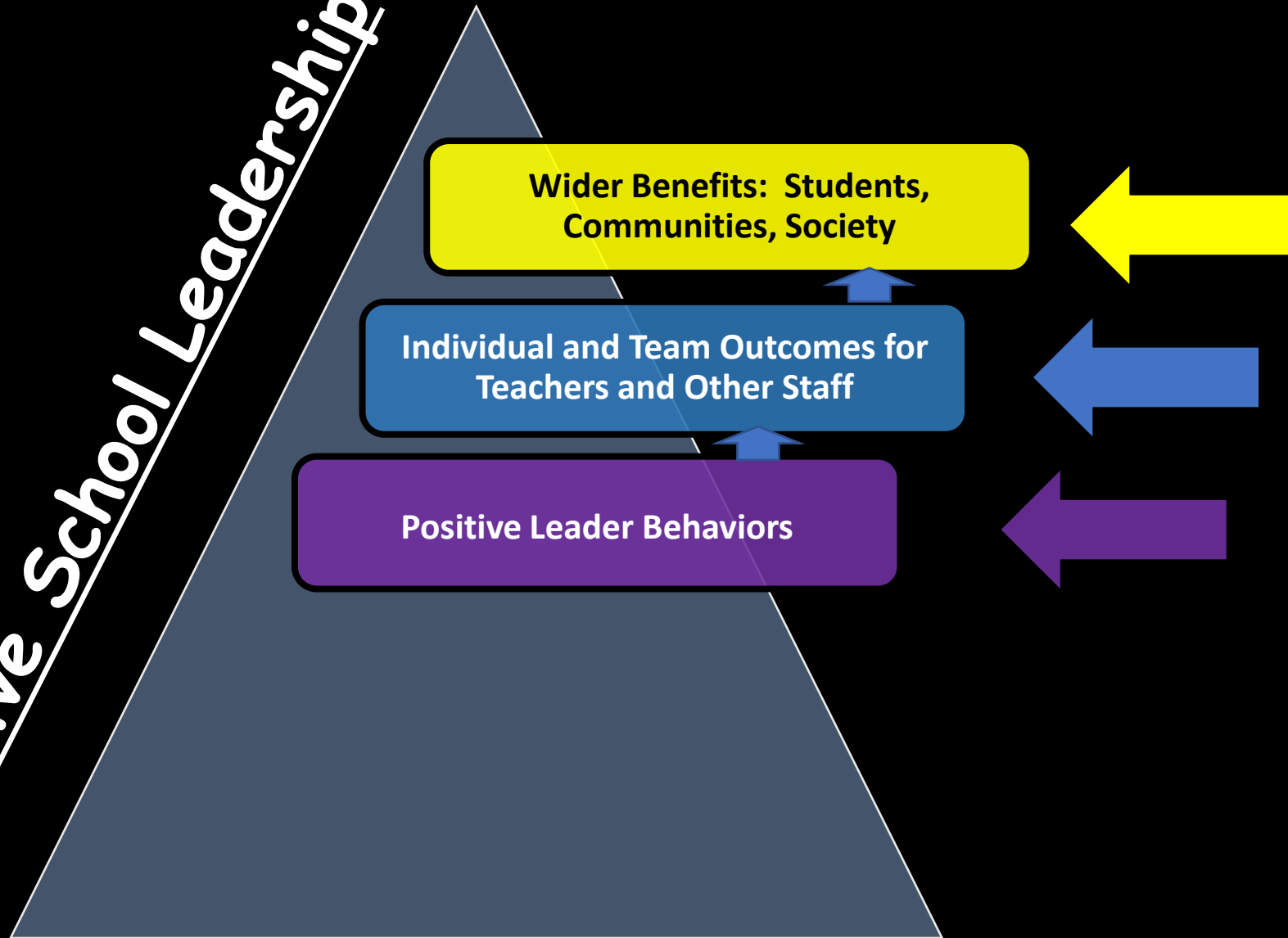
What is an example of how Positive School Leadership within your school contributes (or can contribute) to a strong school culture?



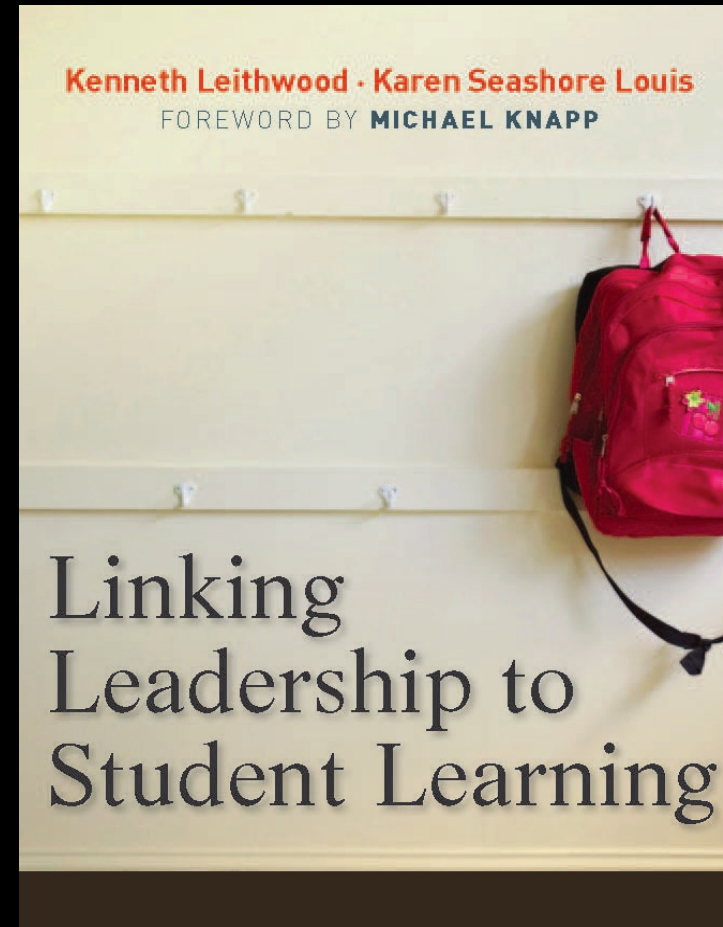
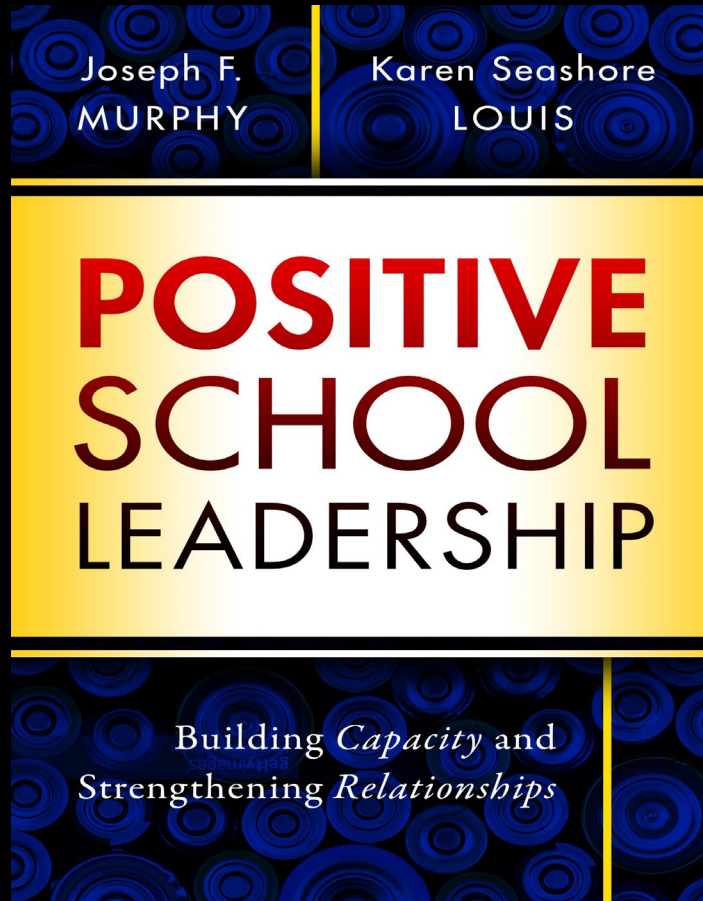
The Story: Part 3

**Positive Adult Relationships
Support Flourishing**

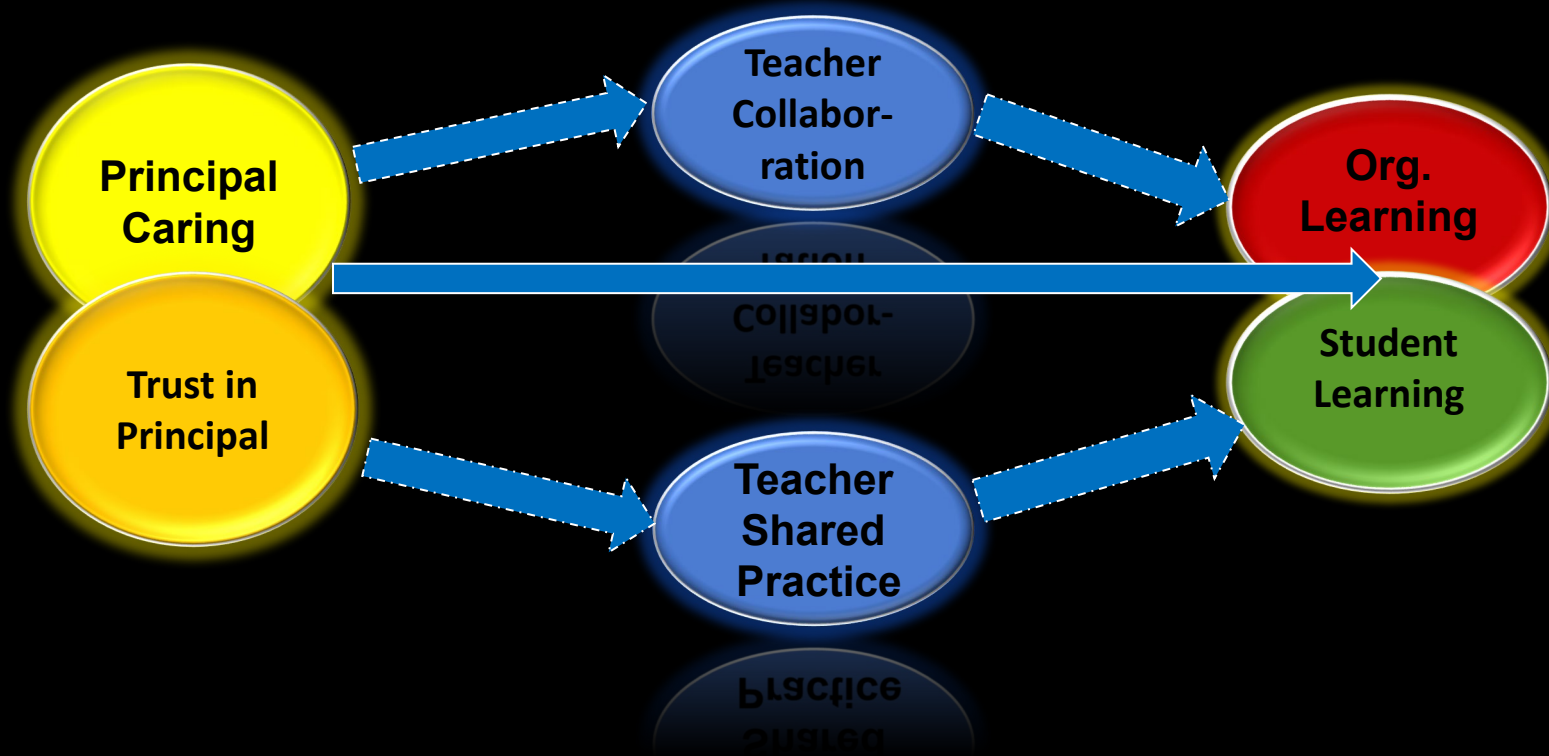
Positive School Leadership



The Links to Improved Schools and Student Learning



DOES PSL MAKE A DIFFERENCE? STRONG RESULTS...





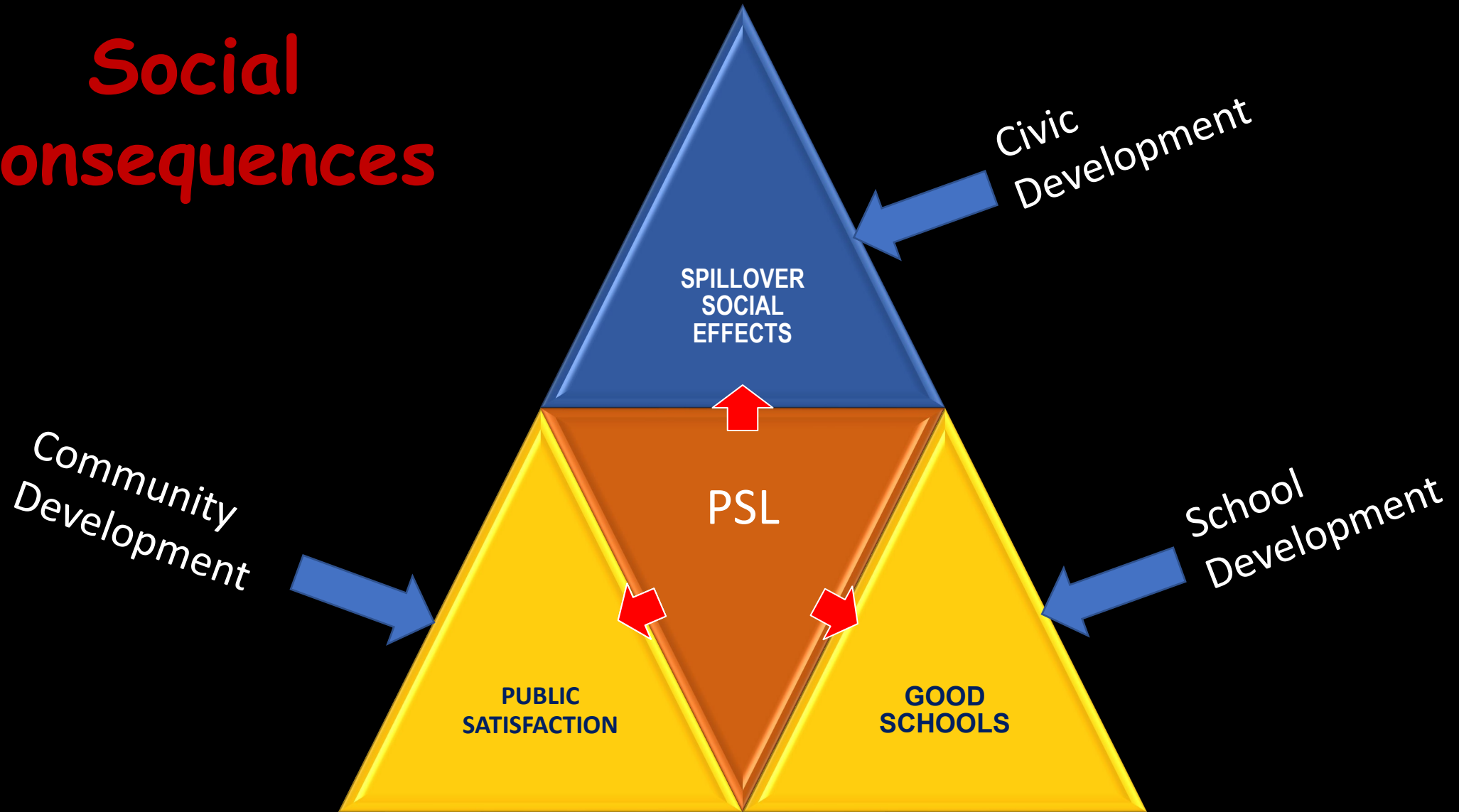
Positive Leadership → Shared Leadership

SHARED LEADERSHIP IS A
WEB OF INFLUENCE AMONG
THE SCHOOL'S ADULTS (Spillane, et
al., 2004)

PSL CONTRIBUTES MORE TO
TEACHERS' WORK LIFE THAN
OTHER LEADER BEHAVIORS

- 
- (1) **Working Together:** Teacher Professional Community
 - (2) **Collective Responsibility:** Teachers' sense of collective responsibility for students and the school
 - (3) **Initiative:** Taking risks to improve

Social Consequences



REFLECTION...PSL and PERSISTENCE

Principal “To Do” List



MUCH/MANY

WHAT COULD YOU
AND OTHER LEADERS
IN YOUR SCHOOL DO:

- **TOMORROW?**
- **IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS?**
- **OVER THE SUMMER?**
- **NEXT YEAR?**

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Contact me at klouis@umn.edu



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