

The THRIVE Project at Columbia College

*Tomorrow's Hope for Renewal,
Innovation, and Vision in
Education*

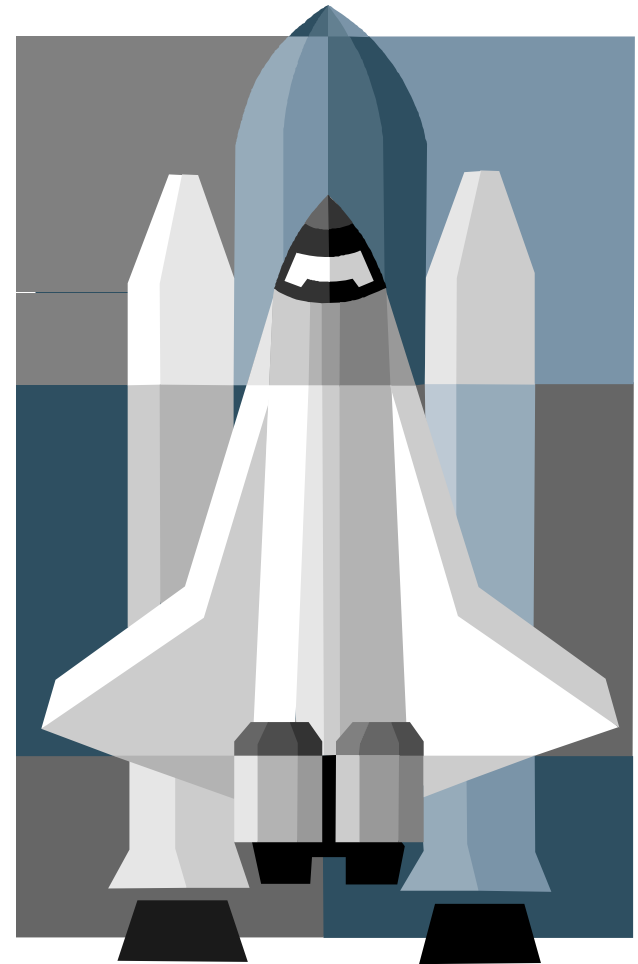


Dr. Karen Weston
Project Director

How do we get to the future?

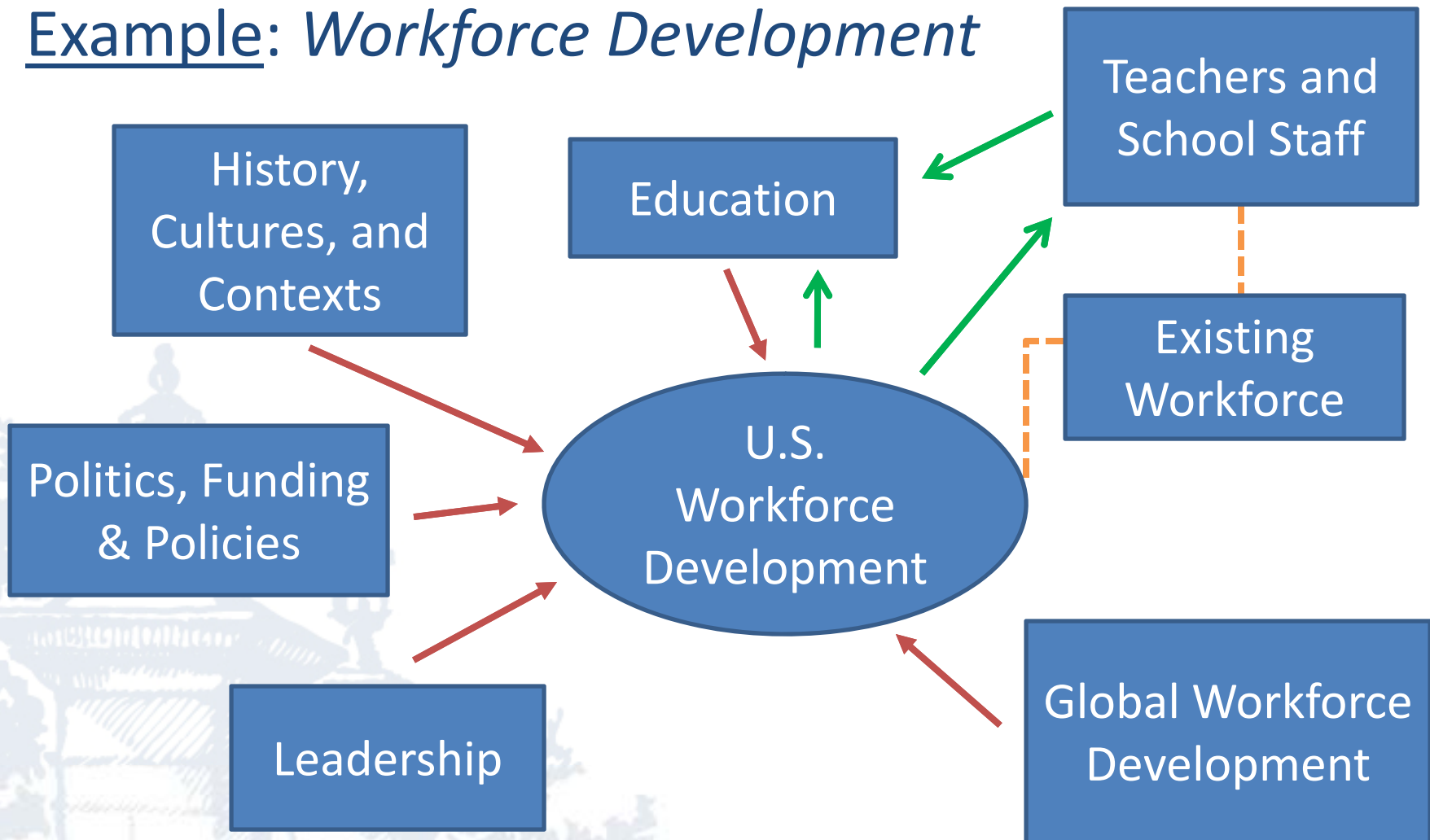
“In this global era, leaders recognize that the vitality of a people or nation depends on the integral confluence of education reform, economic renewal, and social capital improvements.”

--Hal Lawson

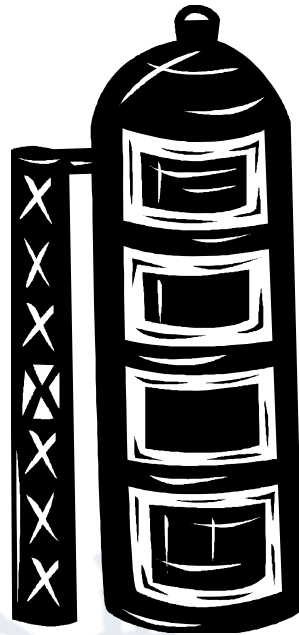


....By solving “wicked problems.”

Example: Workforce Development



Solution: The end of silos



....And the scaling up (down, across) of innovations

For example:

- P-16 (or B-20) initiatives
- STEM initiatives
- “Green” initiatives
- Systems Integration
 - e.g., education and mental health



What does this mean for education?

- Increasing demands for seamless education “pipelines” from birth to work and beyond
- Increasing demands for preparing students for jobs in the math, science, and technology fields
- Increasing demands for **partnerships** with government, industry, social and health systems, etc.
- Increasing demands for **innovation**

And enormous,
gargantuan, really, really,
big demands on teacher
preparation programs!

The THRIVE Project (Pilot)

- Funding Agency: The Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE)
- Funding Stream: Title II, Part A, of the *Improving Teacher Quality Grant*
- 65% MDHE funding and 35% CC funding

A Unique Partnership



- A partnership among:
 - Columbia College education, psychology, math, and science faculty
 - 5 local elementary schools
 - The Big Muddy National Fish & Wildlife Refuge
 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Content Focus: *Environmental Science*
- Content Integration (Primary): Math and Technology
- Content Integration (Secondary): Literacy, Social Studies

A Unique Professional Development Experience

- 120 hours of PD between June 2011 and June 2012—continuous PD is essential for **change**.
- Teachers and teacher candidates learn alongside one another, alongside CC faculty, and alongside environmental experts.
- Authentic, immersive experiences in the field promote understanding of learning through **inquiry**.
- Practice with seamless assessments and reflections help teachers to develop strategies for “uncovering” students’ thinking and challenging misconceptions.

Project Goal #1

- **Create a THRIVE Professional Learning Community (THRIVE PLC)** for elementary school educators (preservice and inservice) devoted to the use of inquiry in environmental science as a conceptual anchor for integrative and innovative practices in science and mathematics education.

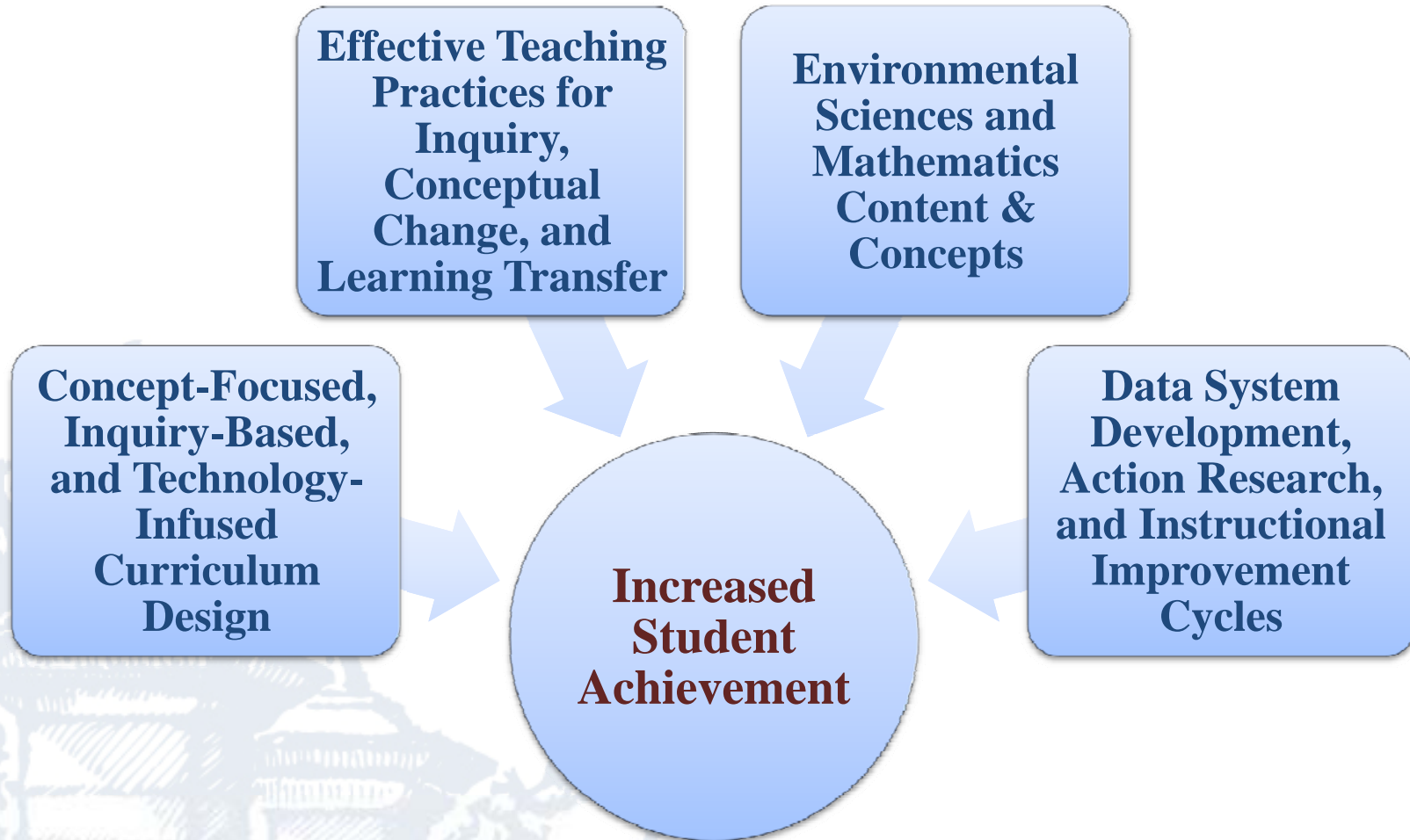
Project Goal #2

- **Develop formal and informal assessment mechanisms for ongoing collection and reporting of student data** that are driven by teacher-directed action research and meet district data needs for accountability and school improvement.

Project Goal #3

- **Explore the acceptability and efficacy of an online PLC to enhance the face-to-face PLC** and: connect with project participants at greater frequency, increase the sharing of ideas among participants, sustain PLC participation beyond the 120 hours of project contact, serve as a repository for project materials, and deliver brief follow-up PD segments that are “just-in-time” and specific to implementation challenges.

Ultimate Outcome: Increased Student Achievement



Other Important Outcomes

- Forging new and important collaborative partnerships
- Creating cross-disciplinary professional development and teacher-preparation models that are replicable and cost-efficient
- Increasing interest among students to pursue occupations in the sciences, in particular environmental science and green industries

QUESTIONS?



COLUMBIA COLLEGE

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Funds for this project were provided by a grant from the Title II, Part A, of the *Improving Teacher Quality Grant* administered by the MO Department of Higher Education. The total costs of the project were financed with \$78,509.40 (65%) in federal funds and \$41,931 (35%) from non-governmental sources (Columbia College).

Contact Dr. Karen Weston if you would like to receive further information.

kjweston@ccis.edu

(573) 875-7637

www.ccis.edu