Improving School Climate

Improving School and Juvenile Collaboration

Identify Needs

Select Interventions

Plan Implementation

Implement Plan

Examine Progress

Coherent Instructional System

Professional Capacity

Effective Leadership

Family & Community Engagement

Supportive Learning Environment

WHOLE CHILD

READY TO LEARN
READY TO LIVE
READY TO LEAD

Change the Conversation and Build a New System

GaDOE
Georgia Department of Education

You never change things by fighting the existing reality.

To change something, build a new system that makes the existing system obsolete.

-Buckminster Fuller

You never change things by fighting the existing reality.

To change something, build a new system that makes the existing system obsolete.

-Buckminster Fuller

HOW?

It starts with you.

Lateral Thinking

lat·er·al think·ing

The solving of problems by an indirect and creative approach, typically through viewing the problem in a new and unusual light.

Edward DeBono – appointments at MIT, Harvard, and Oxford universities

THE PATH

?

PROBLEM

SOLUTION

LINEAR

LATERAL

$2+2 = $ Fish

$3+3 = $ Eight

$7+7 = $ Triangle

$2+2 =$ Fish $2+\text{S}=\text{8}$

$3+3 =$ Eight $3+\text{E}=8$

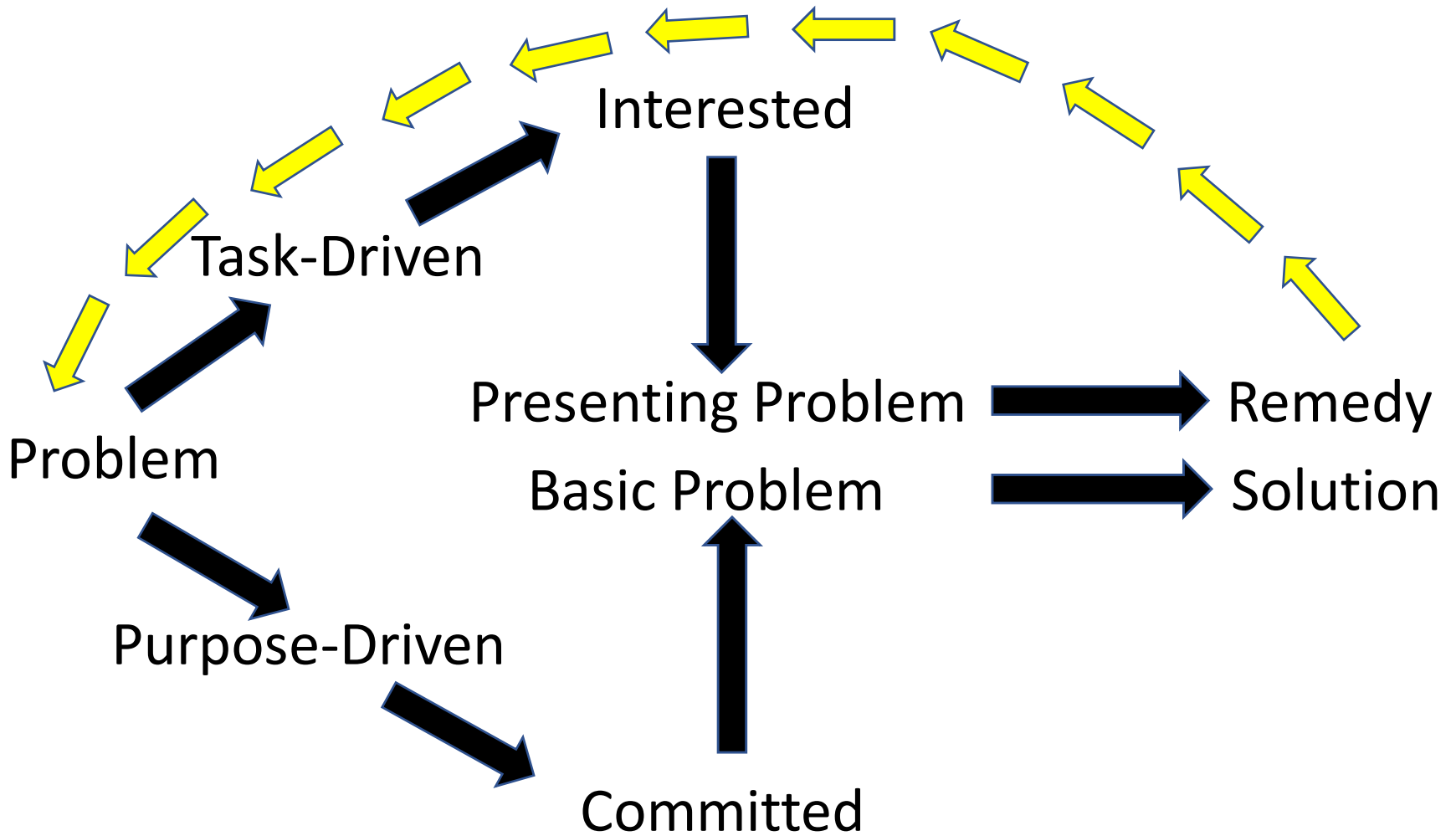$7+7 =$ Triangle $7+\text{V}=\nabla$

Lateral Thinking

- Break existing patterns and change paradigms
- Generate more ideas and develop fresh thinking
- **Solve** challenging problems in new and different ways

Remedy or Solution?

Problem → Task-Driven → Interested → Presenting Problem → Remedy

Problem → Purpose-Driven → Committed → Basic Problem → Solution

Solutions: Lateral Thinking - Epidemiology

Diseases

Do not occur by chance: **there are always determinants** for the disease to occur.

Are **not distributed at random**: distribution is related to risk factors that need to be studied for the population in order **to identify solutions.**

Behaviors

Do not occur by chance: **there are always determinants** for **disruptive behavior to occur.**

Are **not distributed at random**: distribution is related to risk factors that need to be studied for the population in order **to identify solutions.**

Solutions: Lateral Thinking - Epidemiology

Diseases

Do not occur by chance: there are always

...

need to be studied for the population in order **to identify solutions.**

Behaviors

Do not occur by chance: there are always

...

need to be studied for the population in order **to identify solutions.**

LOOK FOR PATTERNS and CLUES to find basic problem and use lateral thinking to find solutions.

How do we identify solutions?

"Decisions are more often ***driven by our reactions*** than by data."

Khal Simon

How we **characterize behavior** in large part determines how we react to the behavior.

How we **characterize behavior** in large part determines how we react to the behavior.

ATTRIBUTION

How we **characterize behavior** in large part determines how we react to the behavior.
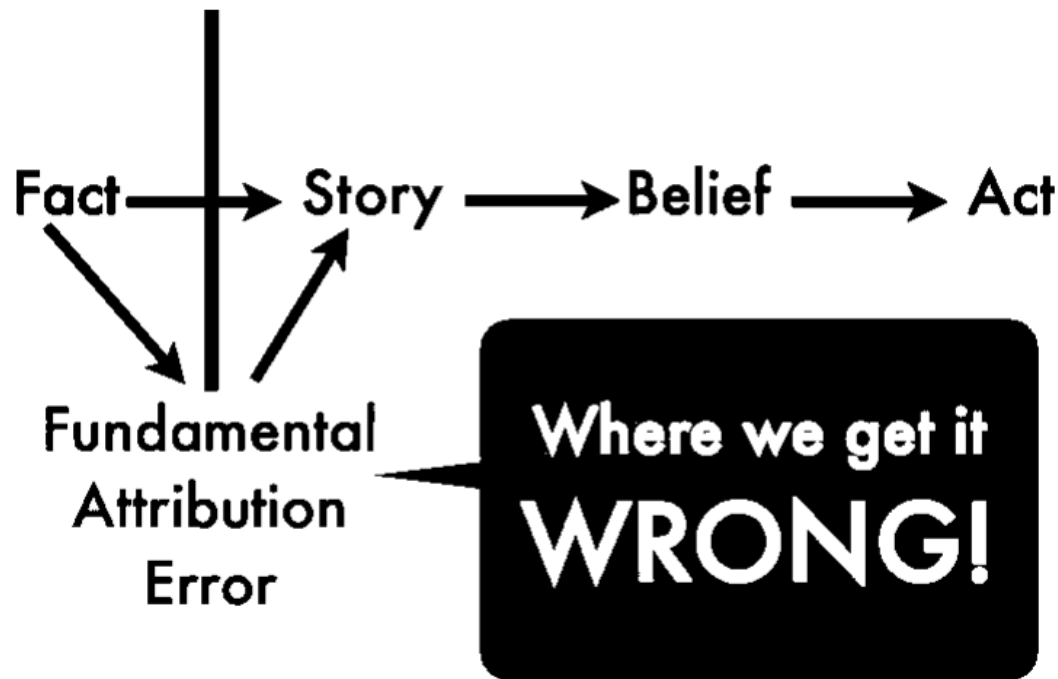

at·tri·bu·tion

The action of regarding something as being caused by a person or thing.

What happens when we attribute the wrong cause to the behavior?
Fundamental Attribution Error

Even though most research on crime favors the view that both personality and situational factors play a mutual role in determining behavior, **most people neglect to realize or acknowledge this**.

The fundamental attribution error tends to only apply when making attributions about the behavior and motives of others.

-The Psychology of Law and Criminal Behavior

For example…
Fundamental attribution error and language

Several youth's lack of experience with typical verbal exchanges, in which all parties are listened to, is a disadvantage to youth whose past experiences have centered around hostility, blame, retribution, defensiveness, and brief emotionally charged verbal exchanges instead of full conversations.

Not acknowledging this fact, we then assign "cause" to their behavior and react (suspend, adjudicate) to the attributed "cause" instead of the speech, language, and communication deficits.

Persistent disruptive behavior often keeps underlying speech, language, and communication needs from being identified if behavioral issues are attributed as the presenting problem.

-Law, 2017

Children with language deficits are often extremely **disorganized** and **agitated** in an unstructured verbal situation when they cannot fully comprehend or respond to the language stimuli with which they are confronted, and this behavior may easily be misinterpreted as "**psychotic**," "**borderline**," or "**defiant**."

Gualtieri et al.

Research into the prevalence of speech, language, and communication difficulties among youth in secure detention **found that more than two-thirds had below average language skills**. Yet, most of the time their behavior was **attributed to disrespect for others**.

Bryan, 2007

Youth involved with juvenile justice are up to **5 times more likely than their non-offending peers to have language difficulties**, hindering their ability to benefit from talk-based therapies aimed at reducing recidivism.

Hopkins, et al. 2017
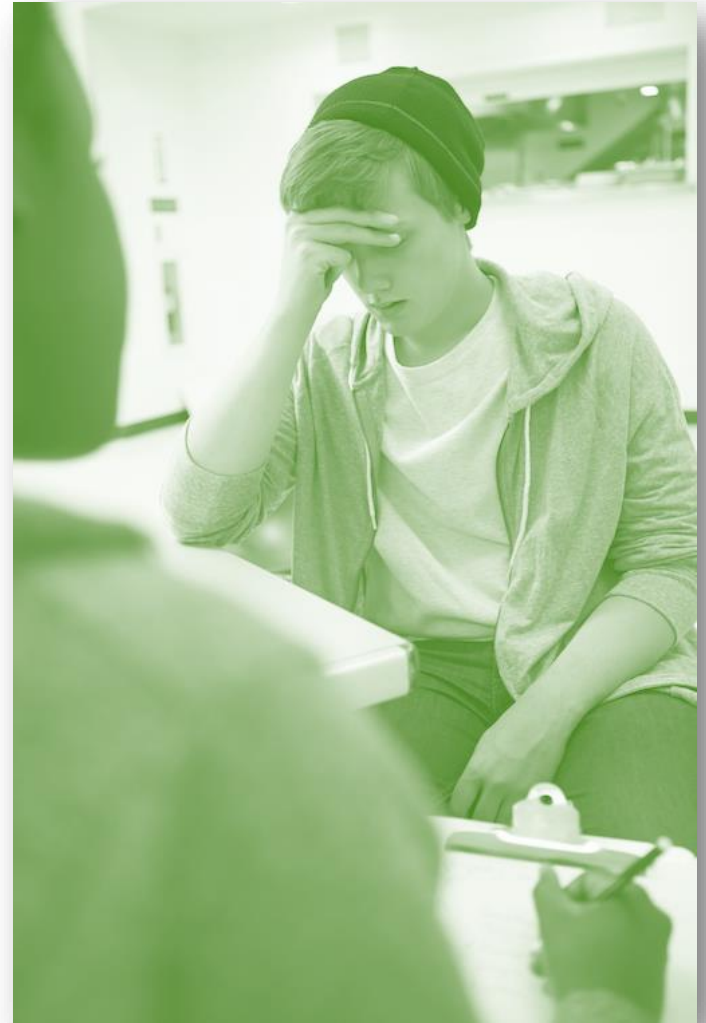
About **50 to 60 percent** of young male offenders have clinically significant levels of language deficits.

Most young male offenders **are not given a speech and language evaluation** because the behavior has been **attributed** to the personality and the attitude of the youth.

Snow, 2013

Oral Language Difficulties and the Restorative Justice Conference: How might these look?

Oral Language Difficulty	Manifestation in an RJ conference
Reduced auditory comprehension, for example, difficulties understanding vocabulary, complex grammar, figurative language	• The young person *appears* to understand what is being said, and may nod in agreement, but misses important information and nuances. • Difficulties processing (making sense of) long, embedded sentences (for example, *The student who spoke to your mother at the supermarket is the boy whose friend you met at a party last month*). • Difficulties processing (making sense of) figurative language. • Suggestibility/acquiescence/over-compliance—the young person wants to "please" and may agree to inaccurate propositions, in order to do so.
Reduced expressive vocabulary	• A lack of emotion-related words, such that expressing remorse and saying things that convey authenticity and genuineness — even if these are felt and intended—can be difficult. • "Yep," "nope," "dunno," "maybe"—all minimalist responses aimed at avoiding having to speak, but potentially conveying resistance to engagement in the process.
Reduced expressive syntax	• A tendency to produce short, unelaborated sentences, making the young person seem immature or intellectually impaired.
Reduced concentration skills	• Being easily distracted, becoming restless, not focusing on the discussion at hand—and as a consequence, appearing to be rude or uncaring.

Oftentimes, teachers and administrators **attribute the behavior of students to internal factors** such as <u>attitude</u>, <u>negative personality</u>, and <u>disrespect</u>. Seldom does anyone note the language of students or the **lack of expressive language skills**. <u>This is especially true in schools with a</u> **<u>negative school climate</u>**.

Folley, 2017

School Climate

28

School Climate is the experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, social interactions, access, engagement, connections, teaching and learning practices, building quality, safety, and organizational practices.

School climate sets the tone for all the learning and teaching done in the school environment and, as research proves, it is predictive of students' ability to learn and develop in healthy ways and behave appropriately and productively.

The Center For Social and Emotional Education

Research shows that a **positive school climate** directly impacts important indicators of success such as increased teacher retention, lower dropout rates, higher rates of student achievement, decreased incidences of violence, fewer out-of-school suspension, and reductions in referrals to juvenile court.

The Center For Social and Emotional Education

What Does a Positive School Climate Look Like?

Students….

- Feel physically safe
- Feel social and emotional security
- Believe they are supported in their learning and goals (both short & long term)
- Believe their social and civic learning and activities are important and supported
- Believe they are respected, trusted, and connected to the adults and the learning environment
- Feel like they belong

Students….

- Are disciplined and not punished
- Are encouraged to contribute ideas for resolving problems
- Are offered choices
- Are taught replacement behaviors
- Are disciplined and taught how to self manage their behavior
- Are taught social skills

"Negative perceptions of peer interpersonal relations, unequal sharing of school resources, the physical appearance of one's school building, and other school climate elements **uniquely predict greater behavioral health issues**, whereas positive teacher-student relations and a positive school climate were **associated with wellness**…."
(Suldo, McMahan, Chappel, and Loker)

School climate affects not only students' motivation and school satisfaction, but their lifestyles, health, mental health, and quality of life, as well.
(Vieno, Santinello, Galbiati, and Mirandola)

An unstable/unhealthy, non-supportive, non-responsive school climate can exacerbate the conditions of students with behavioral health problems, **which increases the likelihood of suspensions and referrals to juvenile court**. (Sugai)

How do we improve school climate?

CODE OF CONDUCT Safety, Discipline, and School Climate

"Schools have adopted a variety of approaches to **improve school climate** in an effort to reduce student discipline problems.

The majority of schools that recognize the need to improve school climate are using school-wide behavioral-management strategies, such as **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**."

P B I S
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT

The most effective, research-based strategy for improving school climate is **PBIS**.

PBIS evolved from four main sources:
- ✓ applied behavior analysis
- ✓ normalization/inclusion practices
- ✓ person-centered focus on prevention and intervention with a population-based framework
- ✓ creates change in how schools handle discipline, how schools make decisions, and how staff interact with students

Active PBIS District

Never Participated

Inactive

Projected FY19
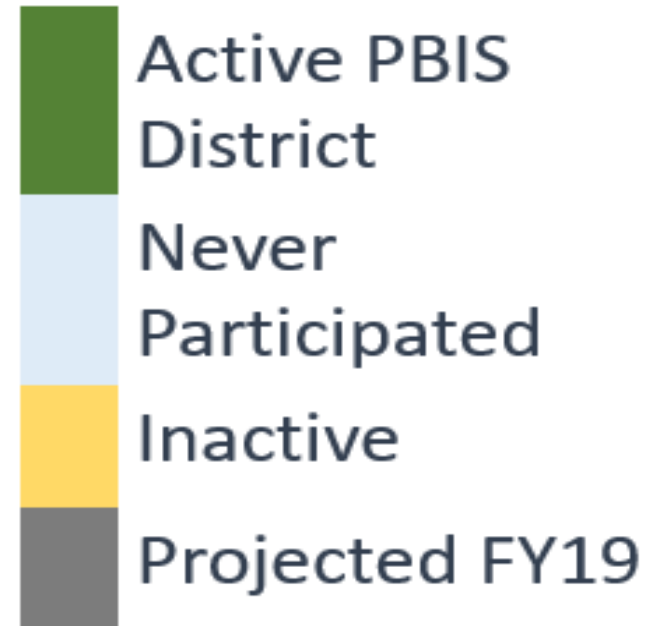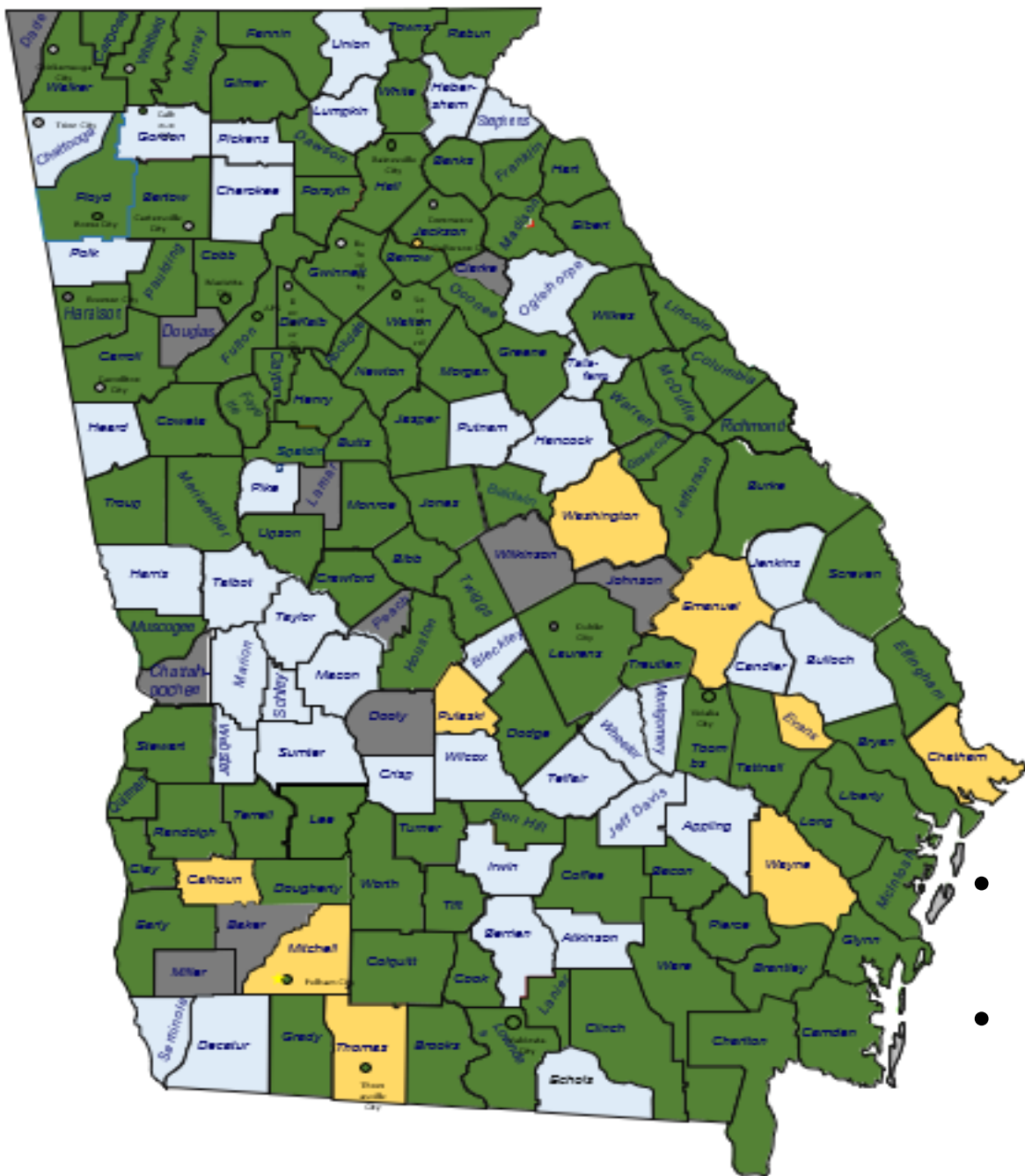
PBIS-Trained Schools

- 2008 = **80** PBIS-Trained Schools
- 2018 = **1,361** PBIS-Trained Schools

PBIS Works Because…

• **PBIS** is a **research-based**, proactive, school-wide system using school-based data to develop processes to **promote positive behavior**, with a **focus on prevention** of inappropriate behaviors. **[Minimizes triggers for overreactions]**

• **PBIS** creates change in how schools handle discipline, how schools make decisions, and how staff interact with students. **Reduces Fundamental Attribution Error: [Symptomatic vs. Defiant]**

• **PBIS** defines a set of **universal behavior expectations taught** through classroom instruction, the use of a **common language**, and **positive staff-to-student interactions**. **[Positive interactions]**

School Climate

PBIS Works Because…

- **PBIS** focuses on **epidemiological population-based** prevention and intervention that encourages more appropriate individual interventions
- **PBIS** encourages **lateral thinking for problem-solving (creative problem-solving)**
- **PBIS** is **solutions-based** <u>not</u> remedy-based
- **PBIS stabilizes school climate** to allow interventions to work
- A **positive school climate** becomes an **expectation** not a goal

School Climate

42

More about school climate…

HB 763 (2018) State Code 20-2-690.2

"The chief judge of the superior court of each county shall establish a **student attendance** and **school climate** committee for its county."

"The purpose of the committee shall be to ensure coordination and cooperation among officials, agencies, and programs involved in compulsory attendance issues, to reduce the number of unexcused absences from school, and to increase the percentage of students present to take tests which are required to be administered under the laws of this state, and **to improve the school climate in each school**."

Student Attendance and School Climate Committee

- The chief judge of the superior court;
- The juvenile court judge or judges of the county;
- The district attorney for the county;
- The solicitor-general of state court, if the county has a state court;
- The Department of Juvenile Justice, which may include representatives from area juvenile detention facilities
- The superintendent, a certificated school employee, and a local school board member from each public school system in the county
- Certificated school social worker from each public school system

Student Attendance and School Climate Committee

- The sheriff of the county;
- The chief of police of the county police department;
- The chief of police of each municipal police department in the county;
- The county department of family and children services;
- The county board of health;
- The county mental health organization;
- The county Family Connection representative

Student Attendance and School Climate Committee

- The sheriff of the county;
- The chief of police of the c...
- The chief of police of ...
  the county;
- The county ...
- The co...
- Th...

...ntative
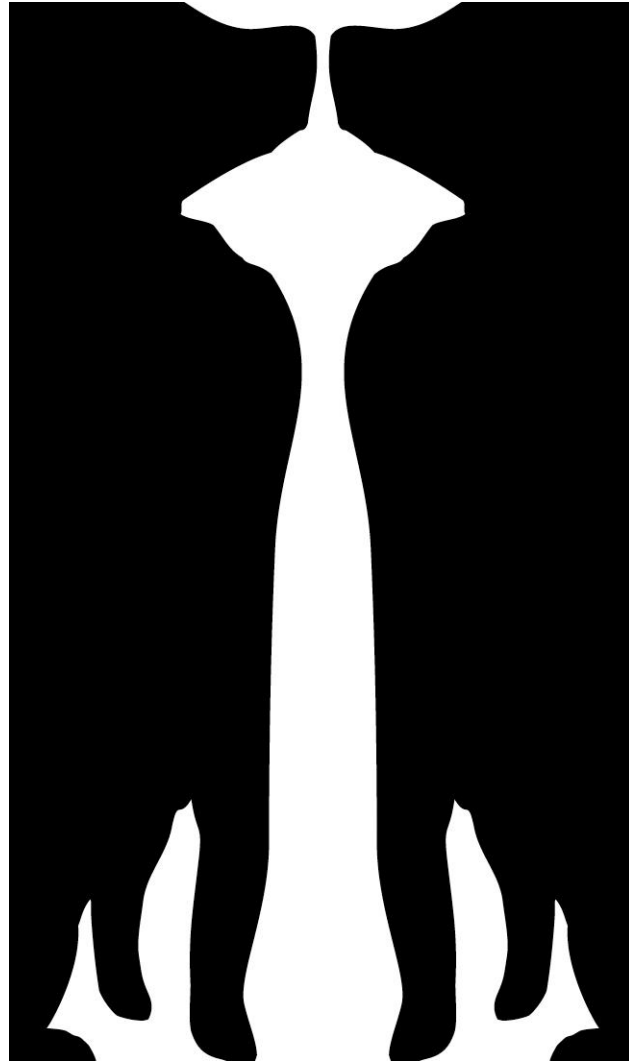
We don't all see the same thing at the same time.
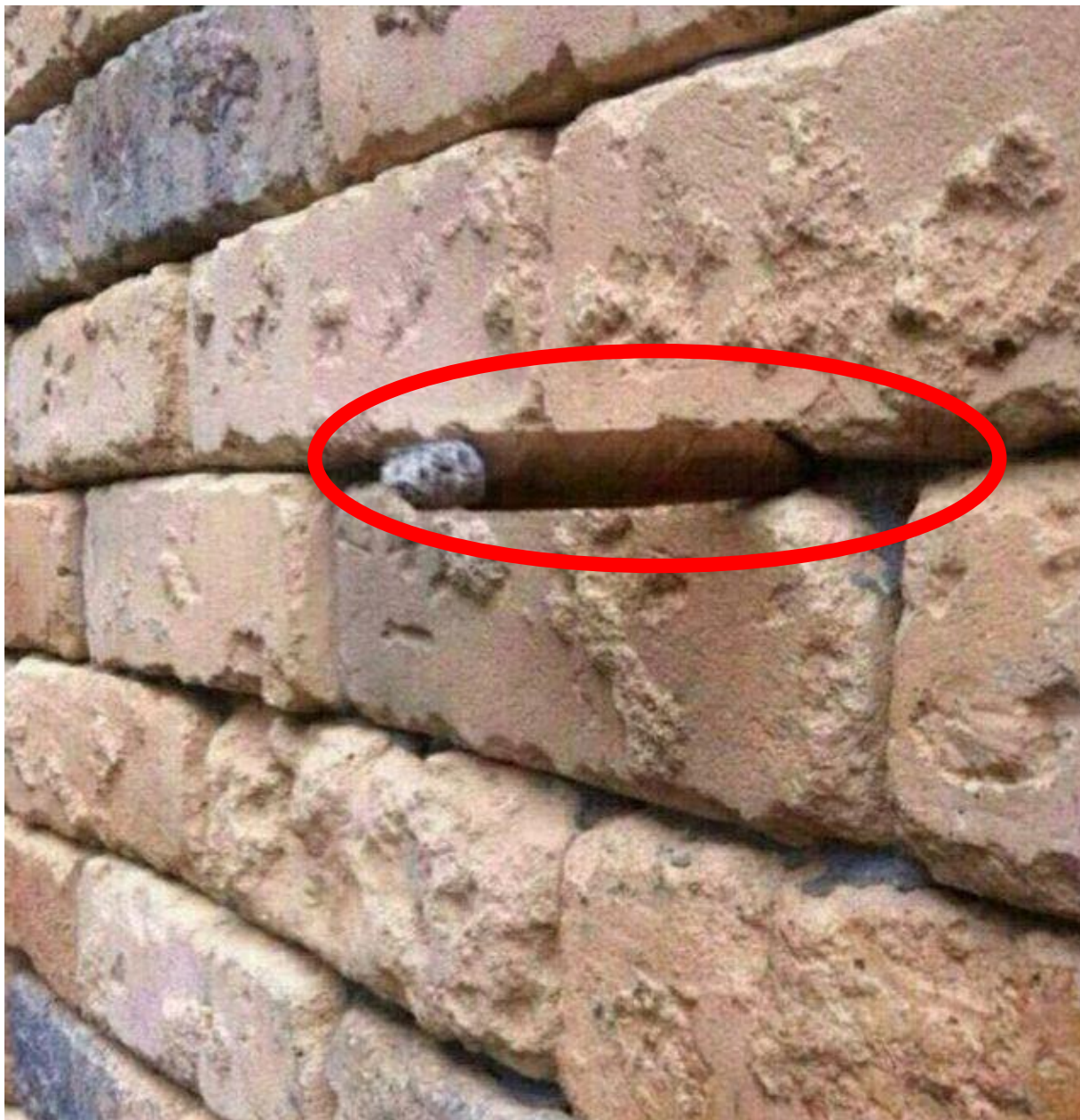
Sometimes we need others to help us see what is in front of us.
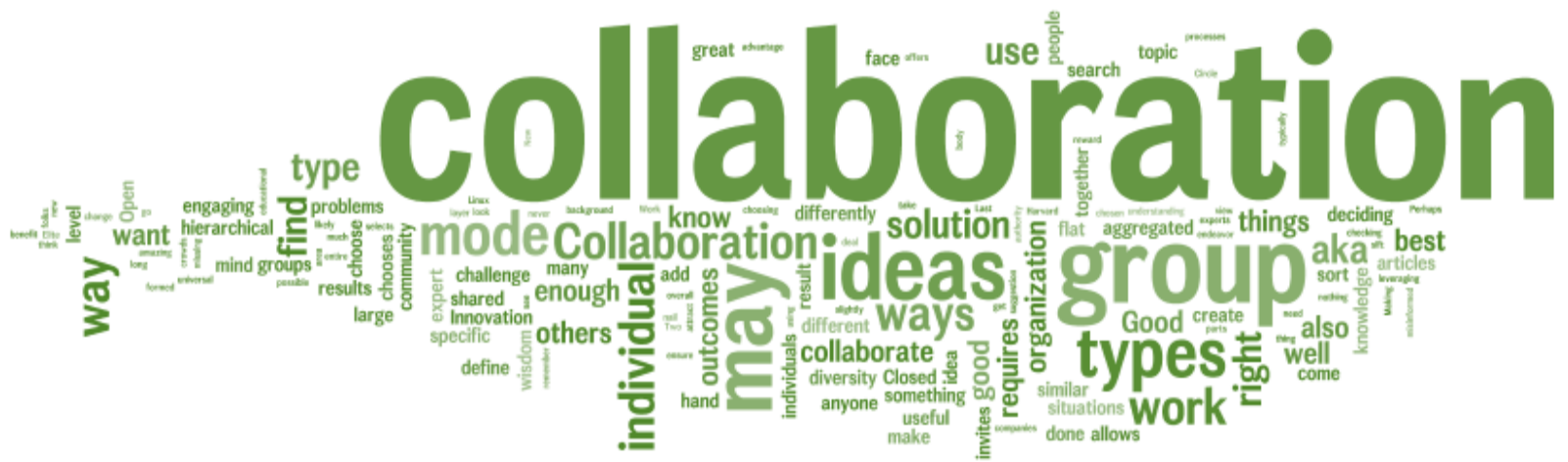
We don't all see the same thing at the same time.

Sometimes we need others to help us see what is in front of us.

The Collaboration Continuum

Contact — Communicate — Cooperate — Coordinate — Collaborate

Investment Increases

Risks Increase

Outcomes Improve
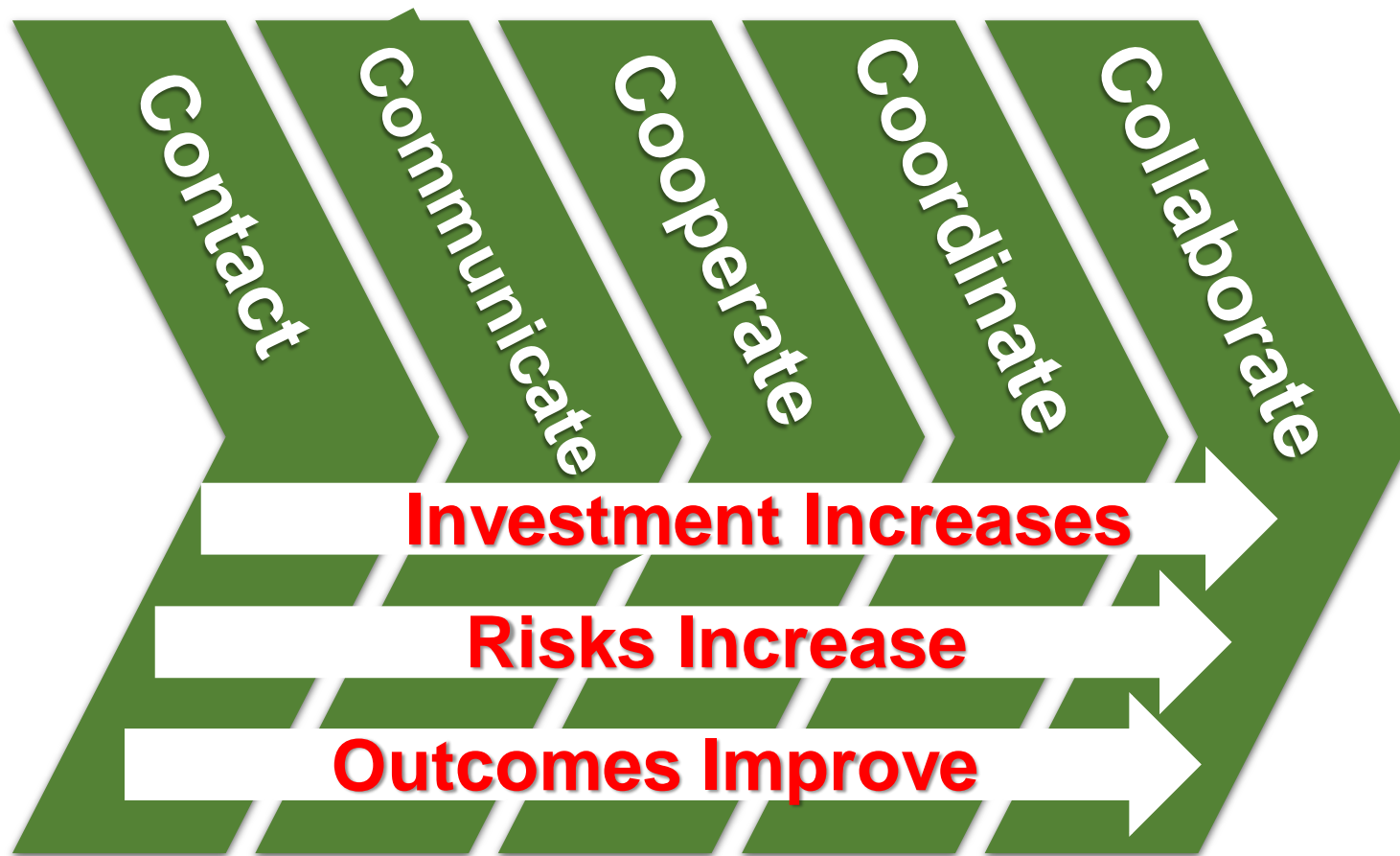
- **Lateral thinking**
- **Epidemiological: Patterns and Clues**
- **Attribution**
- **Language**
- **Remedy vs. Solution**
- **School climate**
- **PBIS**
- **Student Attendance and School Climate Committee**
- **Collaboration……**

Judge Steve Teske