

Making Research Matter: Insights from Research on Research Use

Vivian Tseng

@VivianT88

@wtgrantfdn

to inform policy and practice
Supporting Research ^
to Improve the Lives of Young People

Rigorous Scientific Inquiry

- Early research
- Theory
 - Explanatory frameworks
 - Testable propositions
- Empirical Rigor
 - Research design
 - Methods
 - Measures

A Burgeoning Field

- WTG Investment
 - \$25M in grants
 - 60 studies
- IES Investment
 - \$10M
 - 2 national research centers
- International, cross sector scholarship

What does it mean to *use* research evidence?

An aerial photograph of a straight road and a parallel railway track stretching into the distance. The road is on the left, flanked by green fields and trees. The railway track is on the right, also flanked by green fields. The sky is clear and blue. Overlaid on the image is a process flow diagram with four steps: 'Research' at the bottom, 'Identify What Works' in the middle-left, 'Implement What Works' in the middle-right, and 'Improve Outcomes' at the top. White arrows point upwards from 'Research' to 'Identify What Works', and from 'Identify What Works' to 'Implement What Works'.

Improve
Outcomes

Implement
What Works

Identify
What Works

Research

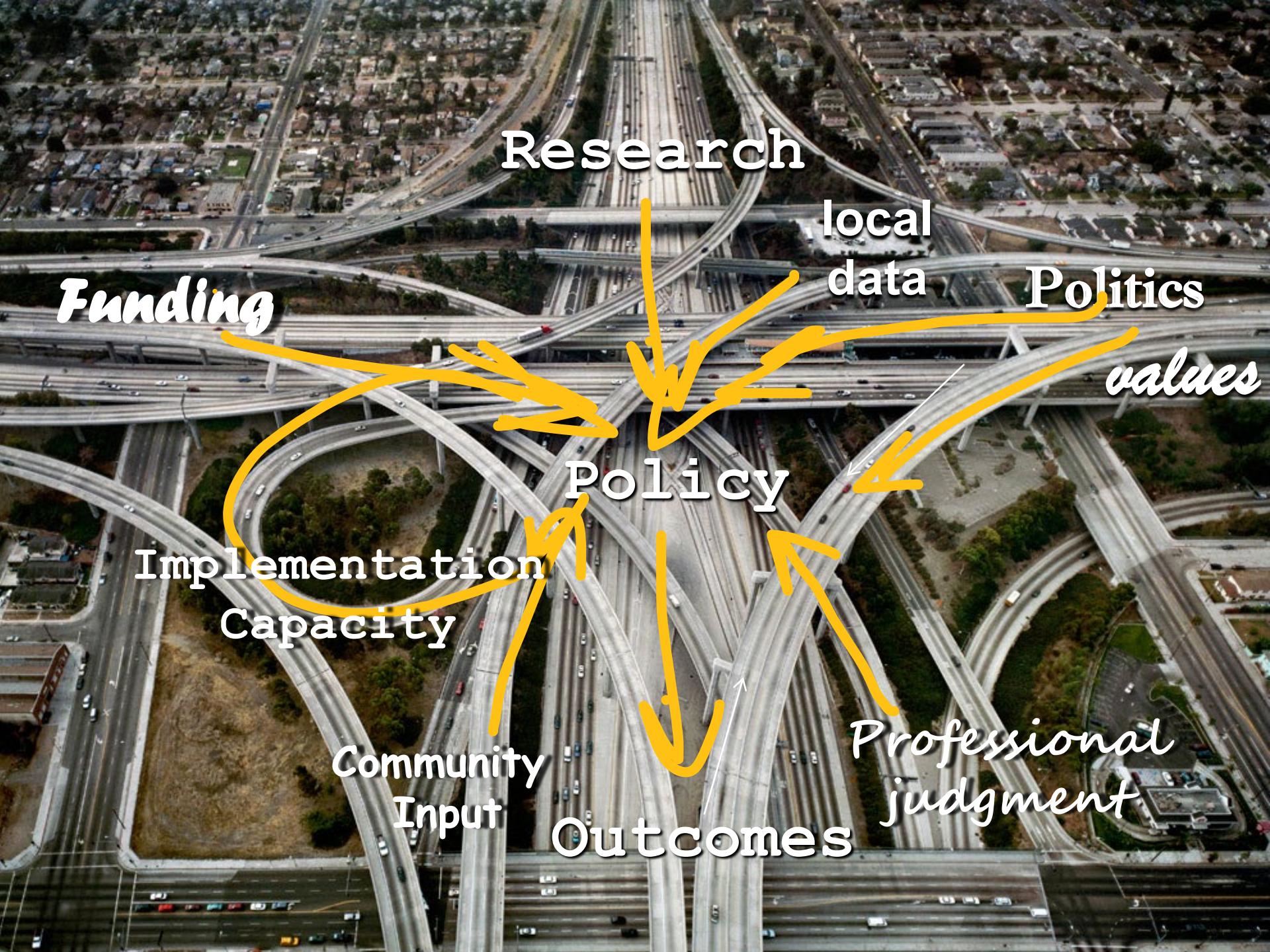


Improve
Outcomes

Communicate
Important Findings

Generate
Important Findings

Research



Research

local
data

Politics

values

Policy

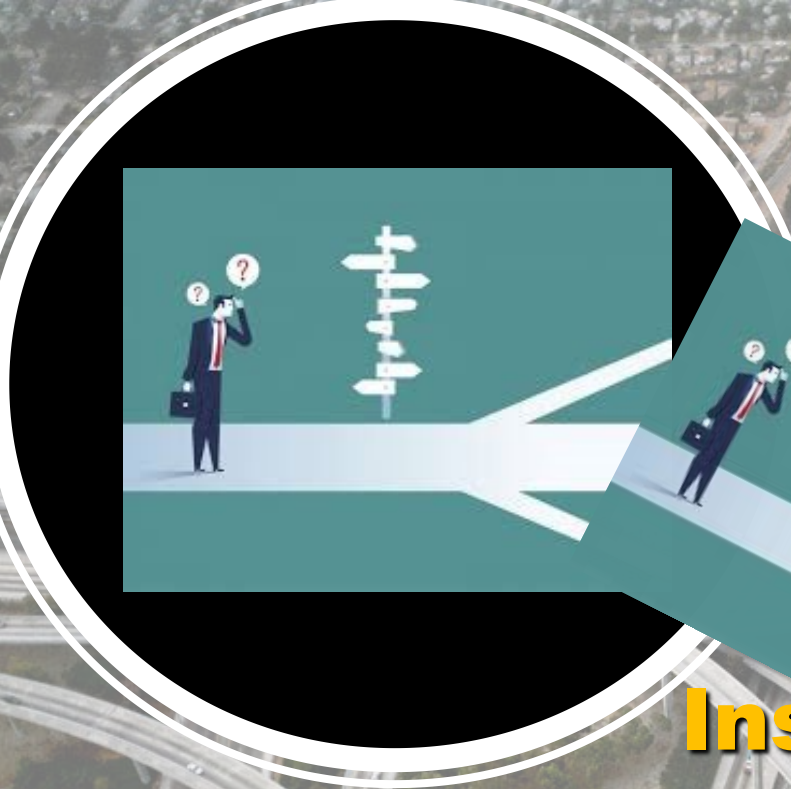
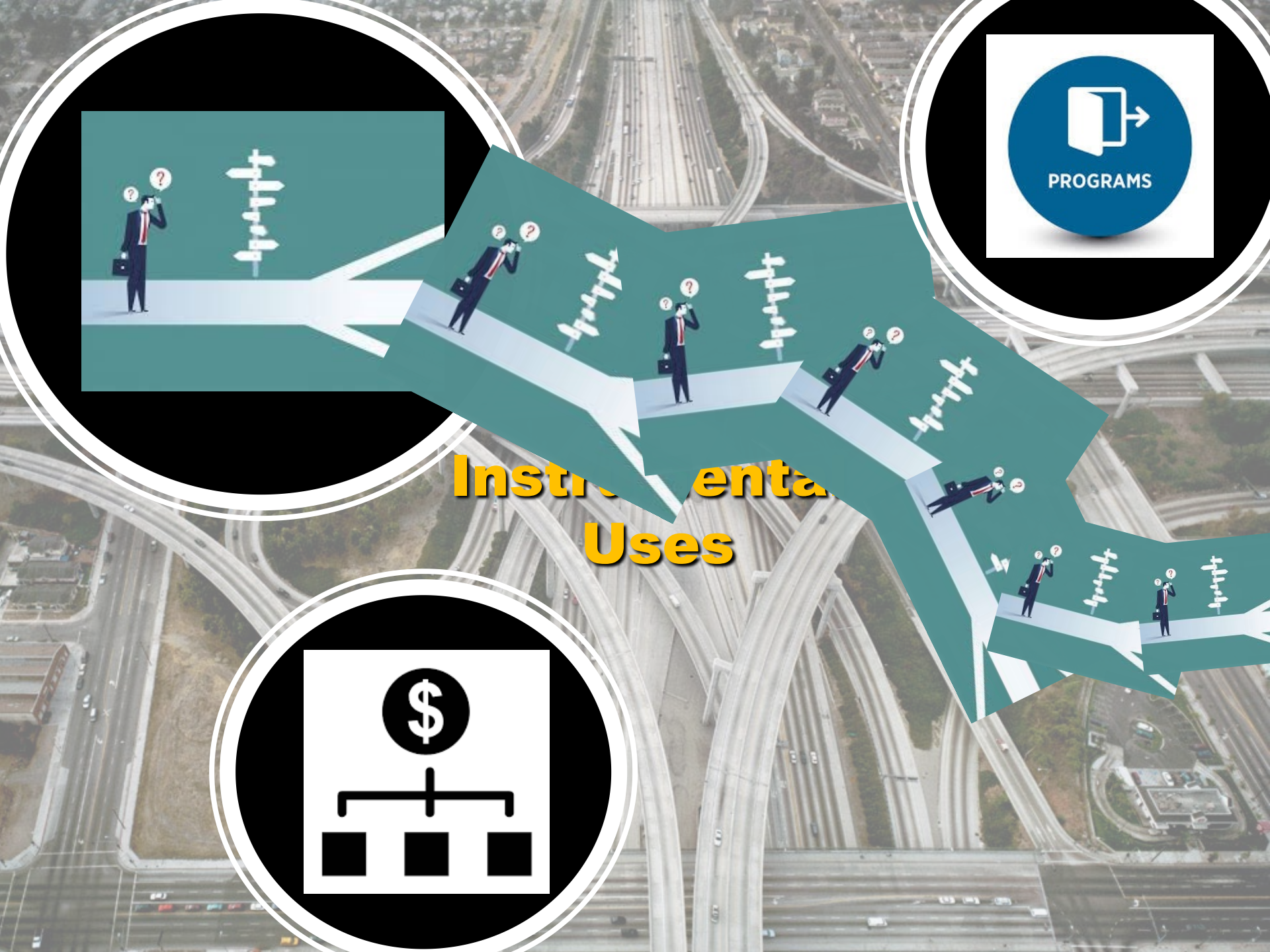
Professional
judgment

Outcomes

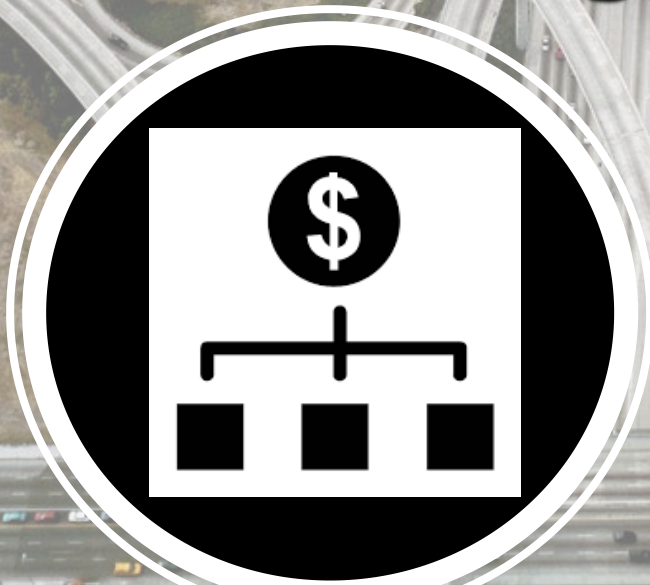
Community
Input

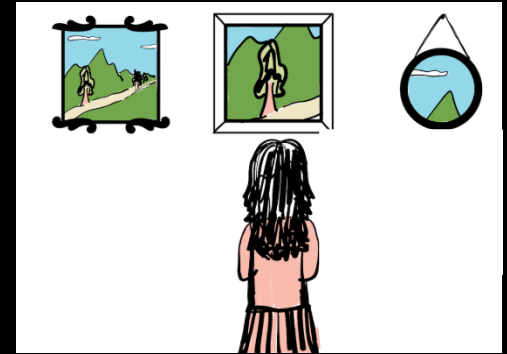
Implementation
Capacity

Funding



Instrumental Uses





Conceptual Uses



Relational Uses



Understanding the Policy Process

Common Core State Standards

**problem
definition**

**policy
development**



**policy
adoption**

(Lorraine McDonnell & Stephen Weatherford)

Common Core

POLICY STAGE	RESEARCH USERS	RESEARCH & OTHER EVIDENCE USED
Defining the Problem (& Solution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Governors • Education advocates • NGA • CCSSO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low achievement of U.S. students compared to global competitors • Variability in state standards • Countries with higher achievement have national standards
Developing the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA • CCSSO • Standards writers • Reviewers • Validation Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on learning progressions • Researchers' professional judgment • Teachers' professional judgment • SEA staff experience
Adopting the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Boards of Education • NGA • CCSSO • Advocacy groups • Foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little formal research • State-by-state comparisons of standards • Messaging toolkit (templates of Op-Eds, letters to the editor, FAQs)

(adapted from Weatherford & McDonnell)

Defining the Problem & Solution

Benchmarking for Success
(NGA, CCSSO, Achieve, 2008)

“...[recommend] adopting a common core of internationally benchmarked standards in math and language arts for grades K-12 *to ensure that students are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be globally competitive.*”

(McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013)

Common Core

POLICY STAGE	RESEARCH USERS	RESEARCH & OTHER EVIDENCE USED
Defining the Problem (& Solution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Governors • Education advocates • NGA • CCSSO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low achievement of U.S. students compared to global competitors • Variability in state standards • Countries with higher achievement have national standards
Developing the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA • CCSSO • Standards writers • Reviewers • Validation Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on learning progressions • Researchers' professional judgment • Teachers' professional judgment • SEA staff experience
Adopting the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Boards of Education • NGA • CCSSO • Advocacy groups • Foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little formal research • State-by-state comparisons of standards • Messaging toolkit (templates of Op-Eds, letters to the editor, FAQs)

(adapted from Weatherford & McDonnell)

Developing the Standards

Research on
learning progressions

Teachers'
professional
judgment

Researchers'
professional
judgment

SEA Staff's
professional judgment

**Math
Standards**

```
graph LR; A[Research on learning progressions] --> E[Math Standards]; B[Teachers' professional judgment] --> E; C[Researchers' professional judgment] --> E; D[SEA Staff's professional judgment] --> E;
```

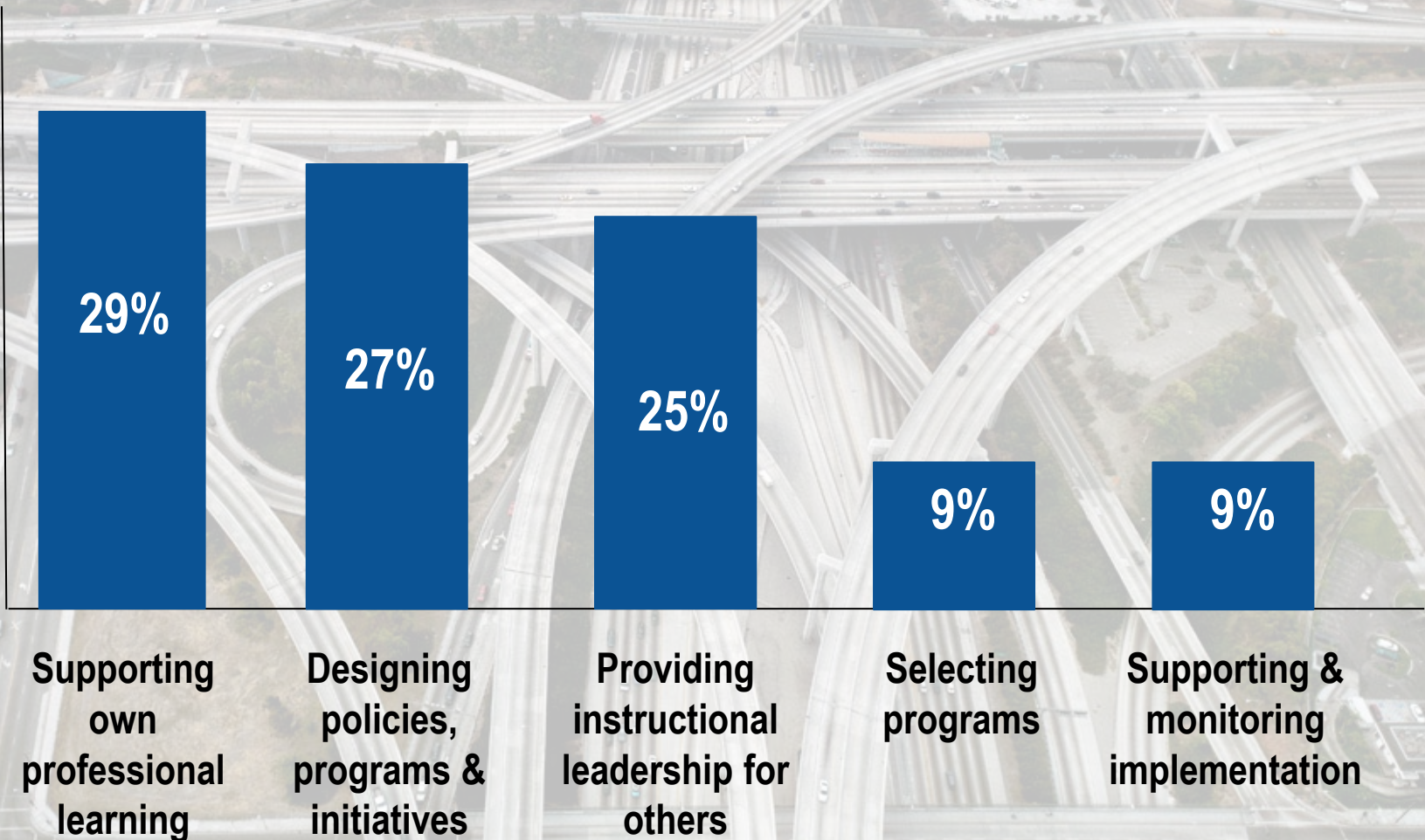
Common Core

POLICY STAGE	RESEARCH USERS	RESEARCH & OTHER EVIDENCE USED
Defining the Problem (& Solution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Governors • Education advocates • NGA • CCSO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low achievement of U.S. students compared to global competitors • Variability in state standards • Countries with higher achievement have national standards
Developing the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGA • CCSO • Standards writers • Reviewers • Validation Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on learning progressions • Researchers' professional judgment • Teachers' professional judgment • SEA staff experience
Adopting the Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Boards of Education • NGA • CCSSO • Advocacy groups • Foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little formal research • State-by-state comparisons of standards • Messaging toolkit (templates of Op-Eds, letters to the editor, FAQs)

(adapted from Weatherford & McDonnell)

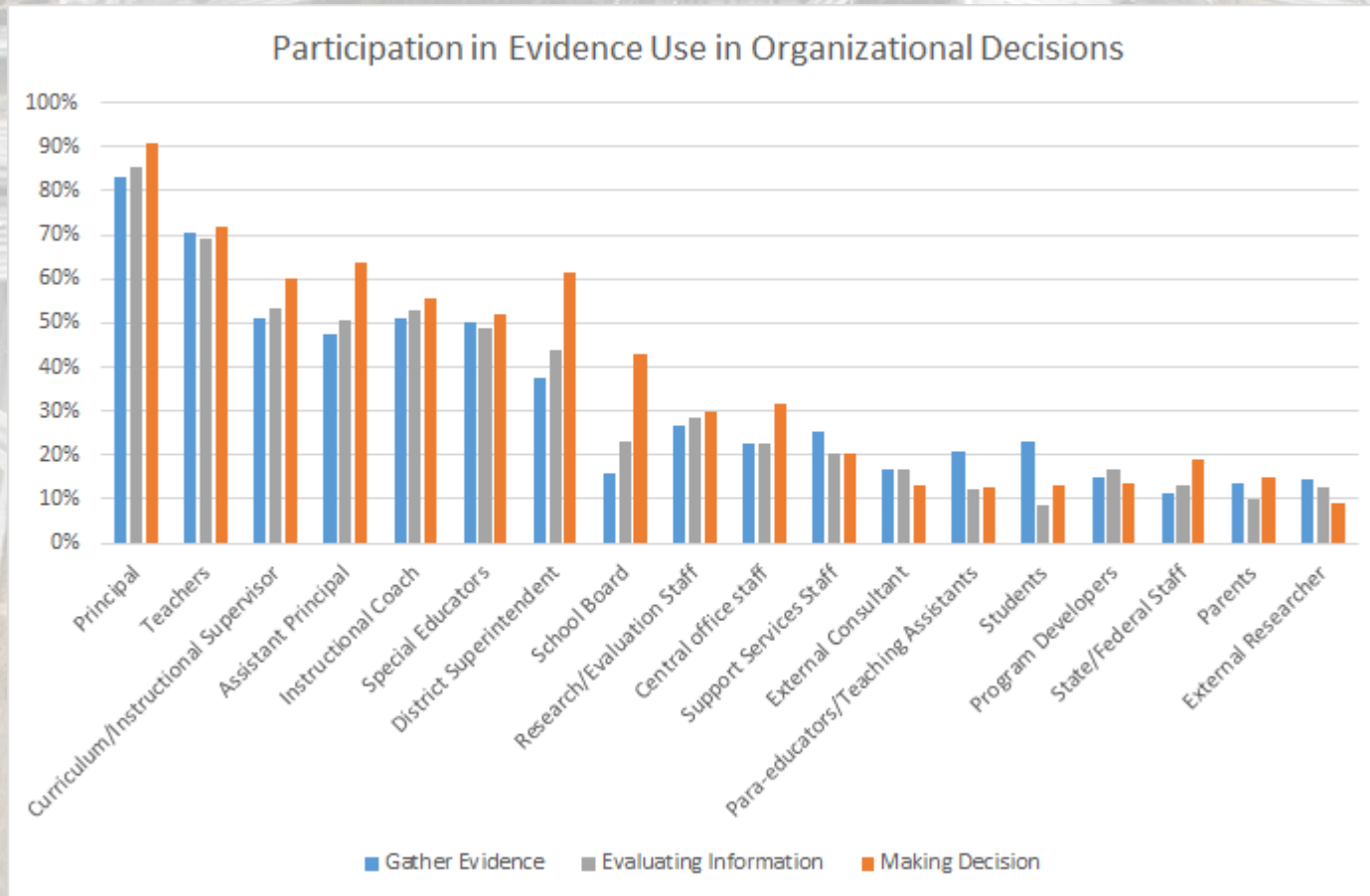
Understanding Research Users

Why use research?



([adapted from Farrel & Penuel](#))

Who is involved?



(adapted from May, Farley-Ripple, & Shewchuk)

What influences use of research evidence?



Trust & Relationships

Routines



CAPACITY BUILDING



Research Agenda on Research Use

- 1) Strategies to improve use of research
- 2) Strategies to improve production of useful research
- 3) How and under what conditions using research improves outcomes

New Layers

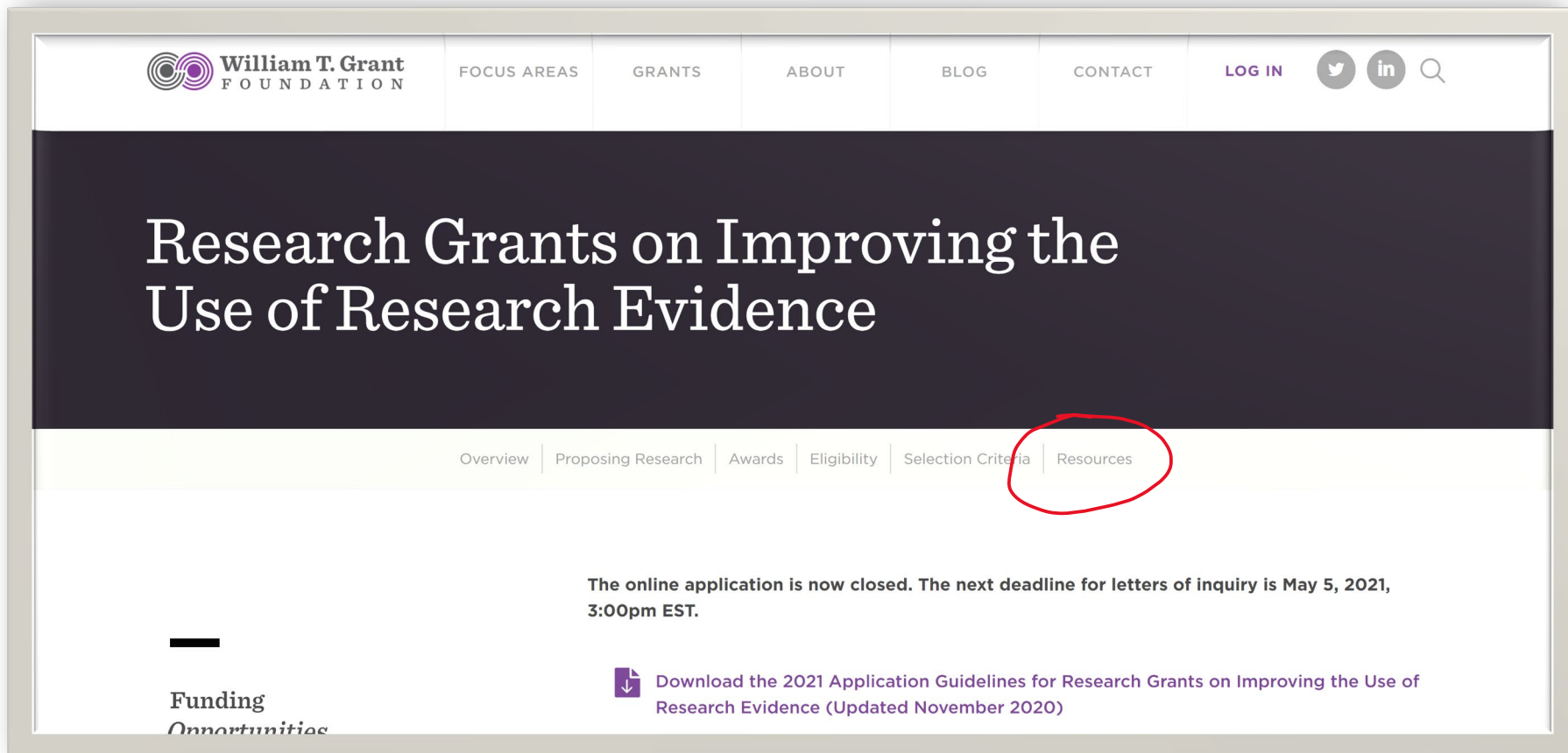
❖ Robust methods and measures

- *Studying the Use of Research Evidence: A Review of Methods*
- *Measurement Repository (forthcoming)*

❖ Critical race lens

- *Panel: Critical Race Perspectives on URE*
- *Centering the Margins: Redefining useful Research Evidence*
- *Identifying & Testing Strategies to Improve the Use of Antiracist Research Evidence*

www.wtgrantfoundation.org



www.democratizingevidence4.us

Home About Mission Strategies ▾ Resources ▾ Ideas Join Us



THE POWER AND OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM

Advancing equity in education with evidence and democratic engagement.



What is Democratizing Evidence?

Democratizing evidence is about ensuring that diverse stakeholders, particularly those most closely situated to the issues, have the power and opportunity to shape the production and use of research evidence.

For too long, evidence has been the provenance of the elite, but we can shift that dynamic. Individuals and institutions can leverage resources and wield considerable influence on the conventional wisdom about how, by whom, and for whom research evidence is produced and used. Achieving equity is the key goal.

This means envisioning an education system of the future that is informed by evidence and democratically engages people from different civic and professional roles, races, ethnicities, incomes, ages, and positions in society, in decision making about high quality education for everyone.

JOIN US



Questions?