

A young child in a plaid shirt is seen from the side, reaching up and pointing a glowing wand at a vibrant, multi-colored nebula in the dark expanse of space. The nebula features swirling patterns of purple, pink, orange, yellow, and blue. The child's wand emits a bright light that illuminates the nearby nebula. The overall scene is set against a deep black background with scattered stars.

# Transforming Learning: Building Coherence in Complex Times

Joanne Quinn

January 2026



The 2026 Leadership  
Challenge...

What keeps  
Superintendents  
awake at night?





Change is....

---

Complex

---

Rapid

---

Global

---

Digital

---

Urgent

# SPEED OF CHANGE

AI is reshaping  
the world faster  
than most of us  
can process



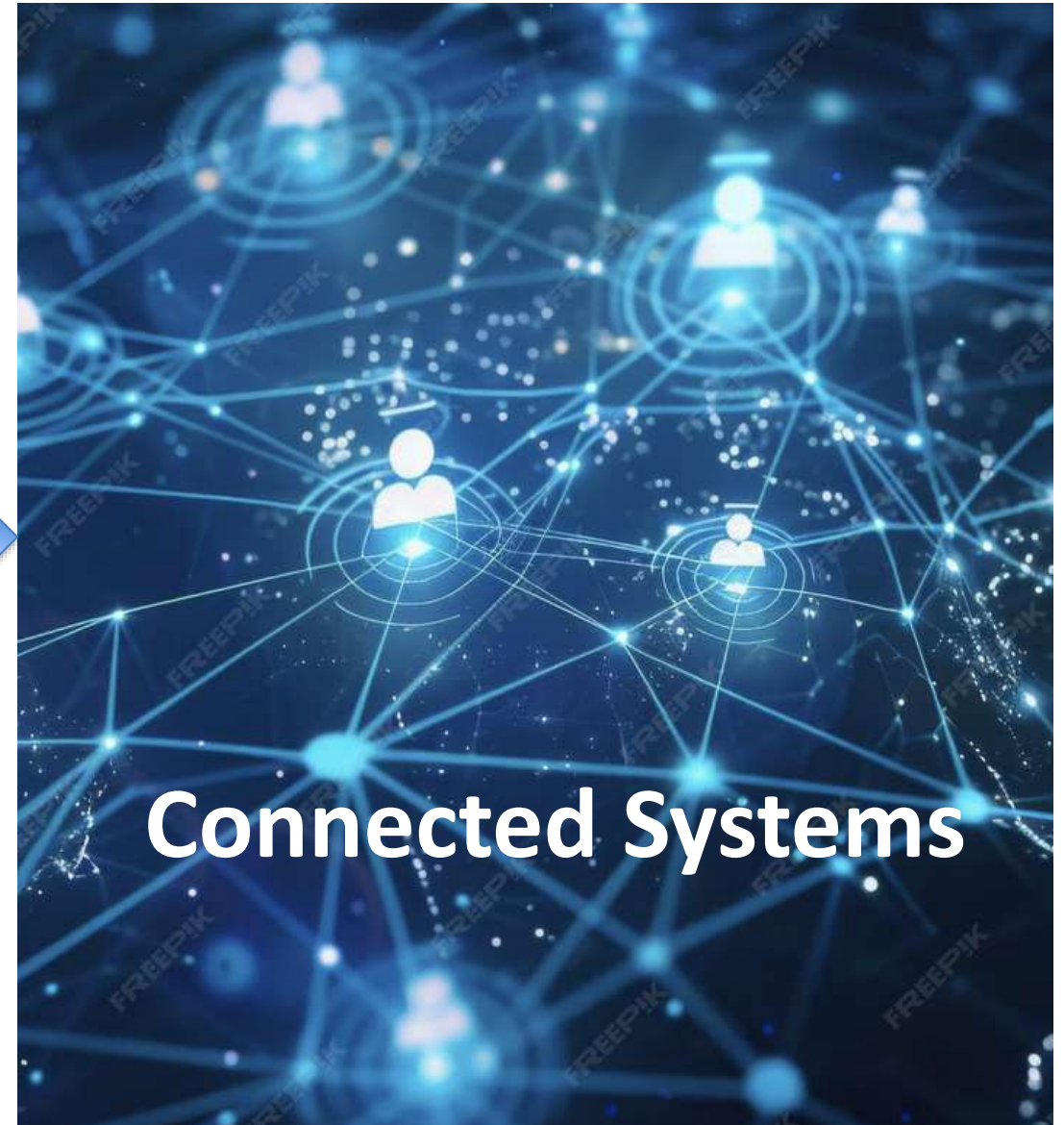
We  
Can't  
Predict  
the  
Future



We never  
could....



# The Coherence Gap

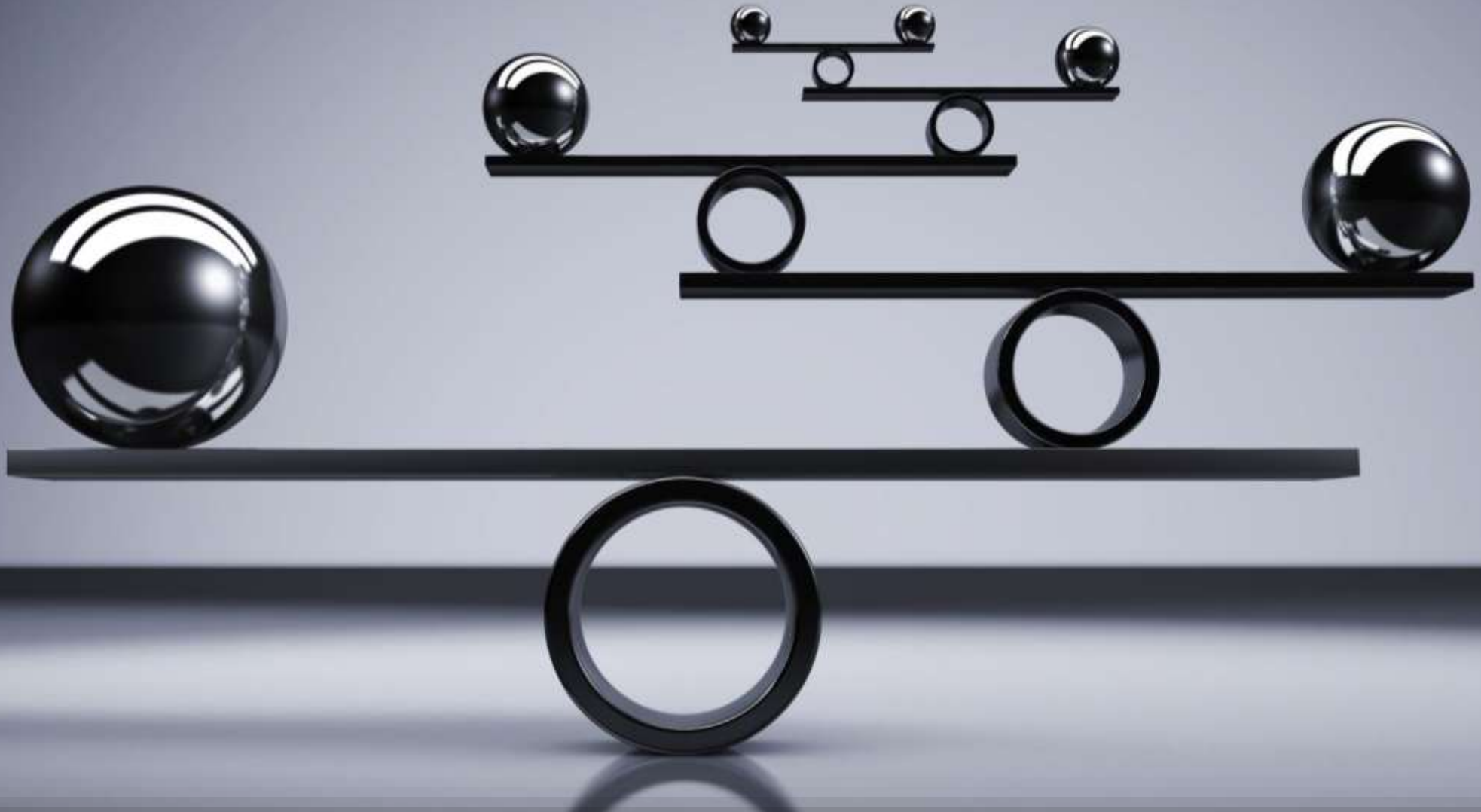




# Coherence

A high-angle photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in a meeting. They are looking at a large blue project plan or map spread out on the table, which is covered with numerous yellow sticky notes. The participants are wearing lanyards, suggesting a conference or workshop setting. The scene is brightly lit, and the focus is on the collaborative work being done.

“Shared depth of understanding about the nature of the work and commitment to action.”



How did shared  
understanding develop?



How did collective action  
evolve?

Joanne Quinn 2026

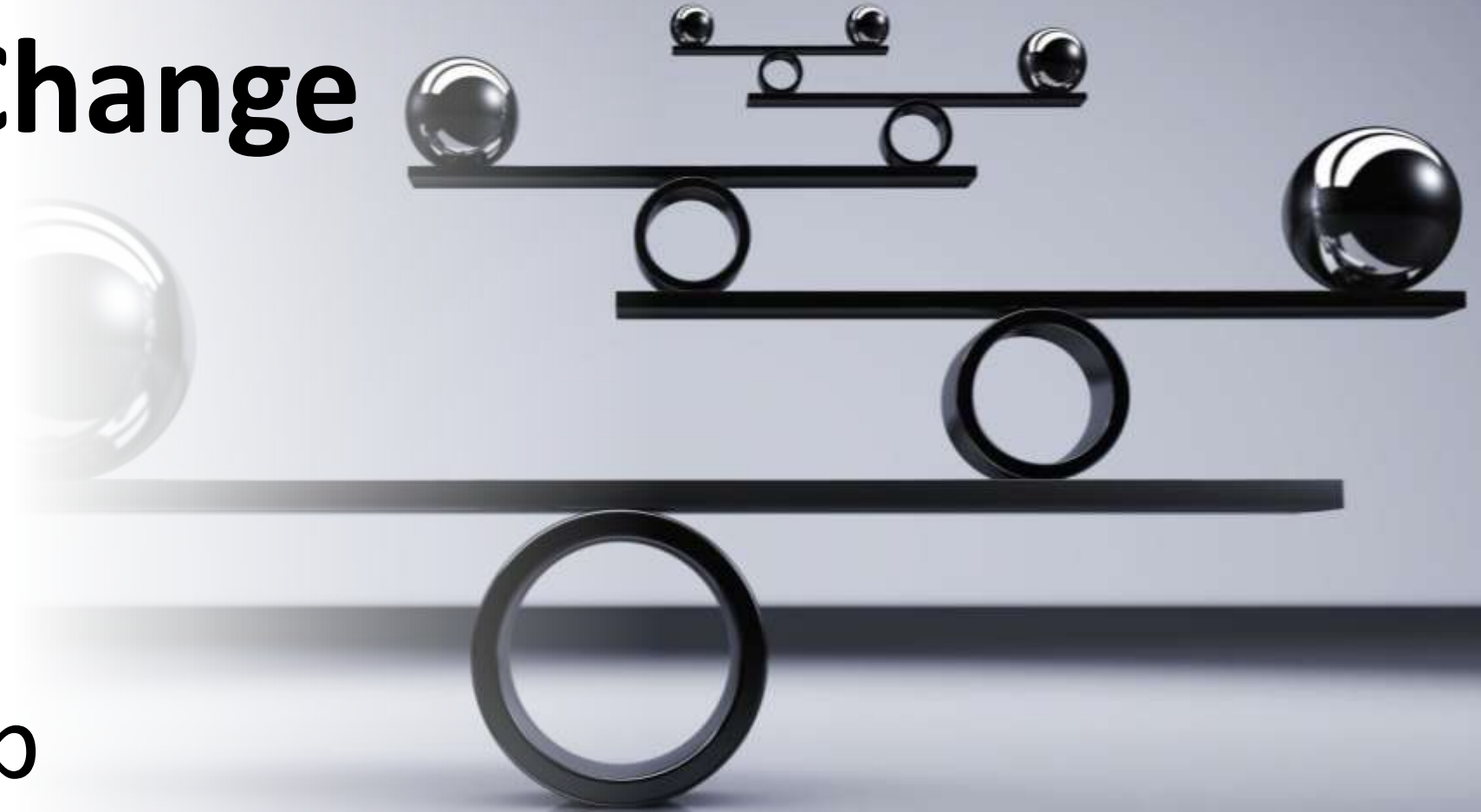




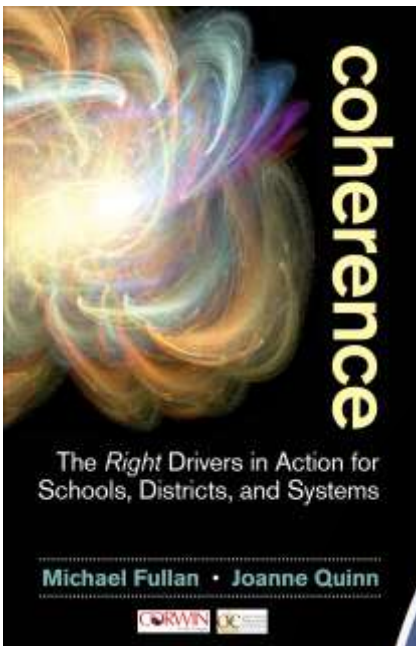
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPeeZ6viNgY>

# Levers of Change

- Purpose
- Precision
- Leadership
- Collective Action





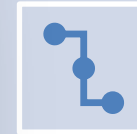


# The Coherence Framework

## 2.0



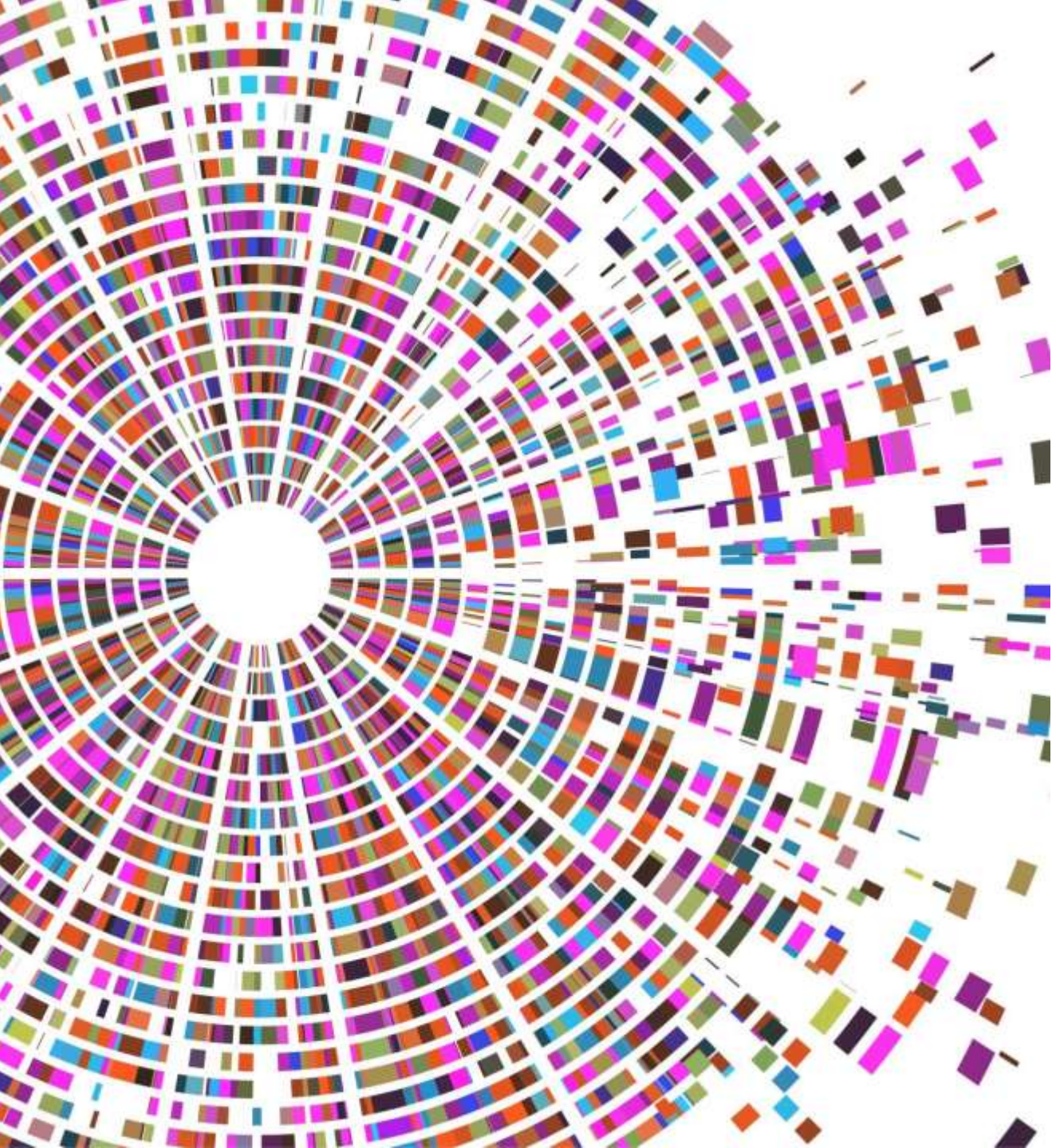
Sense-makers



Connecters



Catalysts

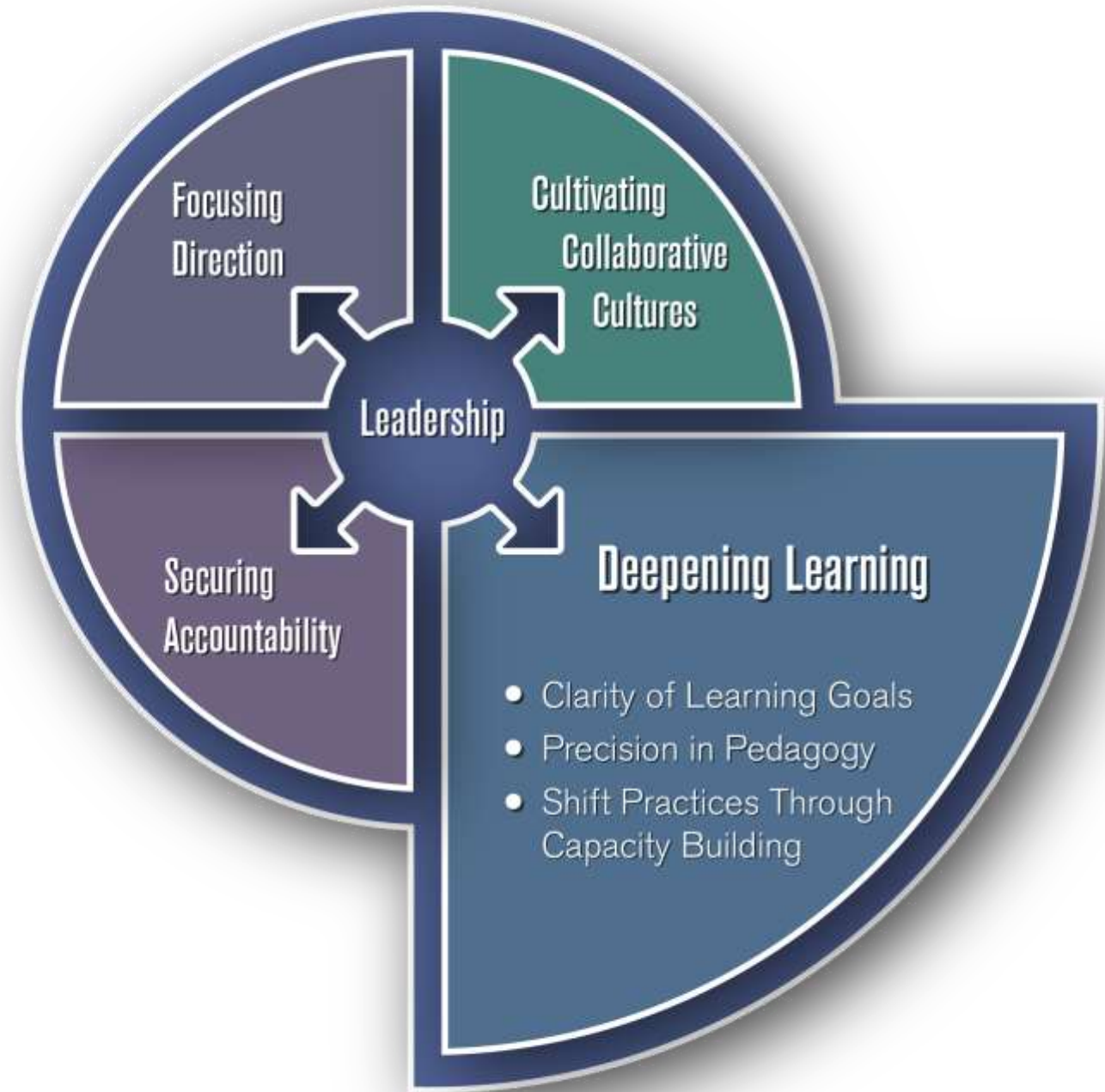


# Leadership Moves that Build Coherence

- Clarity
- Capacity
- Connections
- Collective Action



# Deep Learning as the engine of coherence



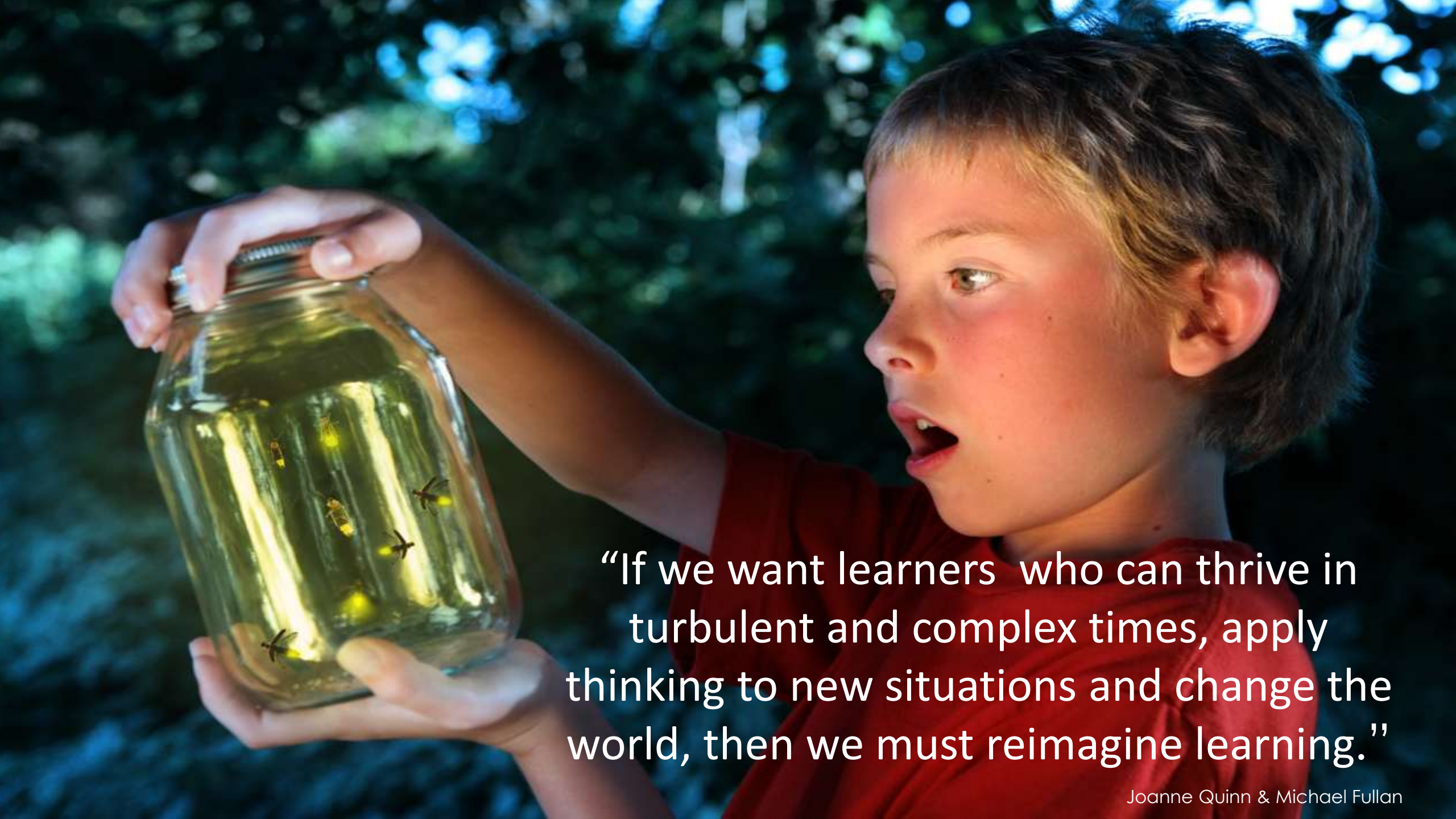




# Deep Learning: The Multiplier of Coherence

Joanne Quinn 2026





“If we want learners who can thrive in turbulent and complex times, apply thinking to new situations and change the world, then we must reimagine learning.”

Joanne Quinn & Michael Fullan





- Agency and adaptability
- Human skills in an AI world
- Learning that **transforms** not transmits





New Pedagogies for Deep Learning

# A Global Innovation Partnership



New Pedagogies for  
**Deep Learning**  
A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

# NEW PEGAGOGIES FOR DEEP LEARNING (NPDL)

## A Global Innovation Partnership







# What's Deep About Deep Learning?

# Global Competencies for Deep Learning-6Cs

Deep Learning is the process of developing the six global competencies



## Character

- Proactive stance toward life and learning to learn
- Grit, tenacity, perseverance and resilience
- Empathy, compassion and integrity in action



## Citizenship

- A global perspective
- Commitment to human equity and well-being through empathy and compassion for diverse values and world views
- Genuine interest in human and environmental sustainability
- Solving ambiguous and complex problems in the real world to benefit citizens



## Collaboration

- Working interdependently as a team
- Interpersonal and team-related skills
- Social, emotional, and intercultural skills
- Managing team dynamics and challenges



## Communication

- Communication designed for audience and impact
- Message advocates a purpose and makes an impact
- Reflection to further develop and improve communication
- Voice and identity expressed to advance humanity



## Creativity

- Economic and social entrepreneurialism
- Asking the right inquiry questions
- Pursuing and expressing novel ideas and solutions
- Leadership to turn ideas into action



## Critical Thinking

- Evaluating information and arguments
- Making connections and identifying patterns
- Meaningful knowledge construction
- Experimenting, reflecting and taking action on ideas in the real world



What you  
observe  
about the  
learning in  
this video?



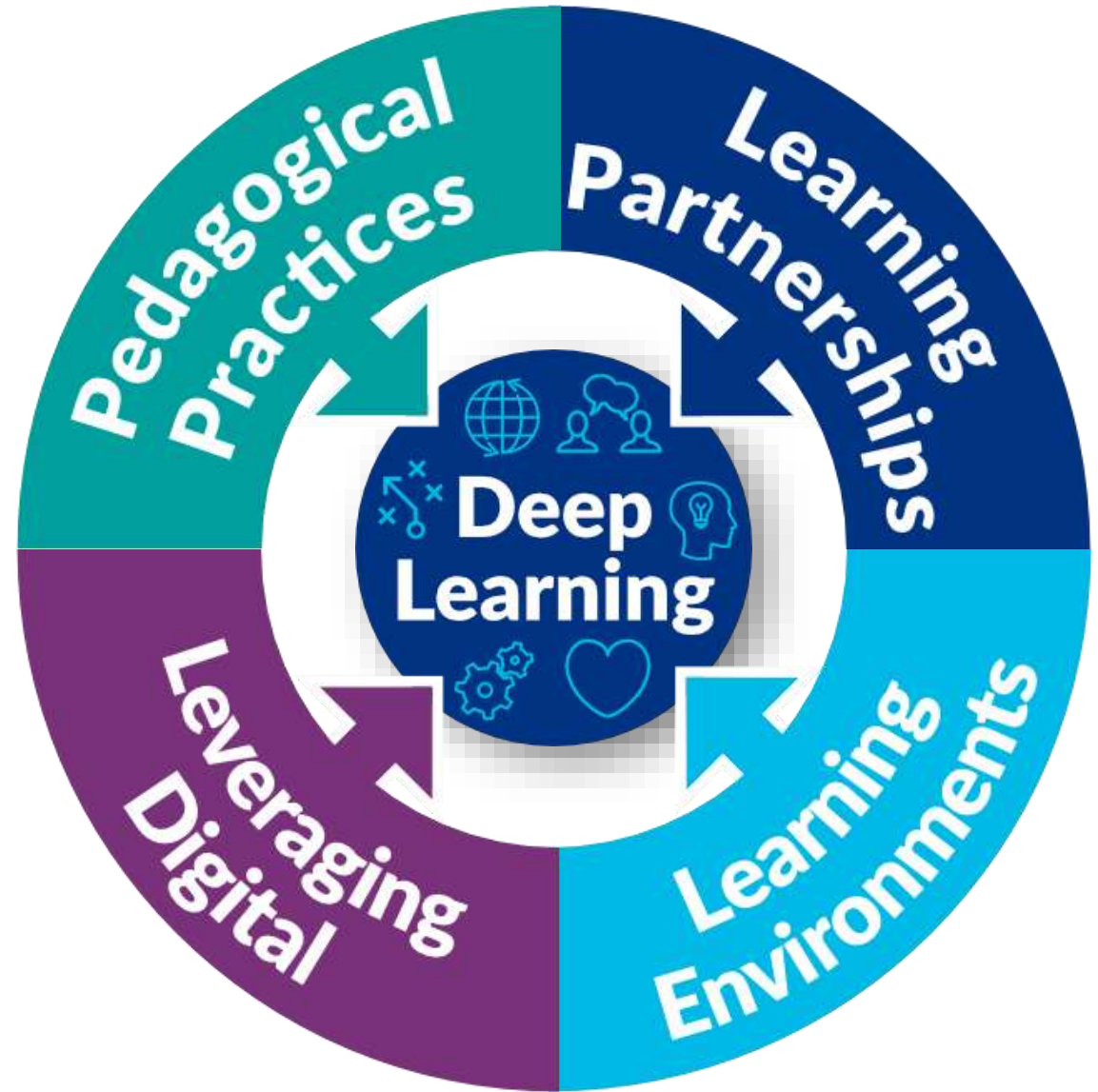


[Connecting Science to Problem-Solving in the Real World 1080P.mp4](#)



# Four Elements of Learning Design

Four elements of learning design support teachers to create rich deep learning experiences that develop the 6Cs.



# New Metrics: Measure what Matters

JOANNE QUINN  
JOANNE McEACHEN  
MICHAEL FULLAN  
MAG GARDNER  
MAX DRUMMY

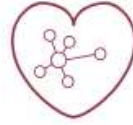
Dive into  
**DEEP LEARNING**  
Tools for Engagement

CORWIN

114

SECTION 03 | Learning Progressions

## Deep Learning Progressions



### Character Deep Learning Progression

Learning to deep learn, armed with the essential social and emotional character traits of self-directed learning, grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience, the ability to make learning an integral part of living; and to proactively change outcomes for themselves and others.



New Pedagogies for  
**Deep Learning™**  
A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Dimension	Limited Evidence	Emerging	Developing	Accelerating	Proficient
<b>Self-directed learners with a proactive stance toward life and learning to learn</b>	<p>When given a Deep Learning experience, learners need a lot of direction and structure. They expect to be given rather than to create a plan.</p> <p>Learners do not yet demonstrate an openness to learning.</p>	<p>With guidance, learners are starting to build their skills in planning and making choices and decisions about their learning.</p> <p>Learners can work with teachers to choose a topic and find or create an opportunity to learn what they need.</p> <p>Learners are beginning to view errors and feedback as opportunities to learn.</p> <p>Learners are beginning to demonstrate a positive view toward learning; they are developing a sense of self-efficacy and interest in achievement.</p>	<p>Learners are increasingly taking responsibility for their own learning, both as individuals and within groups. They can plan their approach to tasks, monitor their own progress, and reflect on and improve the quality of their work as they do it.</p> <p>They welcome feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve.</p> <p>Learners show a positive view toward learning and understand that this willingness to learn leads to achievement.</p>	<p>Learners have strong capabilities in self-regulation, self-reflection, and taking responsibility for their own learning. They can think effectively, make decisions for themselves, and take ownership of their learning.</p> <p>Learners seek feedback as needed and either adjust the current learning experience or improve the next learning task.</p> <p>Learners regularly show a positive learning stance that is open to learning. They are eager to bring their best to each learning and achievement opportunity. They are learning to balance the drive to succeed with other important aspects of life.</p>	<p>Learners are highly efficient at finding and creating their own learning opportunities in ways that help them build the knowledge and skills they will need to succeed in life and to create worthwhile solutions.</p> <p>Learners are self-directed, self-regulated co-learners and co-designers of the learning.</p> <p>Learners actively seek out feedback and use it to better understand their approaches to learning.</p> <p>They see learning as an integral part of life. Learners share their positive outlook with others and have a drive to do their best, even in challenging circumstances. They balance their drive to succeed with other important aspects of life.</p>
<b>Grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience</b>	<p>Learners become discouraged or give up when faced with challenges, unexpected problems, or negative feedback when trying to complete a task, experience, or action. This seriously impacts their ability to work through the challenge and find a solution.</p>	<p>Learners require support and encouragement to deal with setbacks, negative feedback, and difficult challenges.</p> <p>They are starting to show some grit and resilience but tend to lose momentum unless supported.</p>	<p>Grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience are developing in the way learners approach and complete their Deep Learning or experience and deal with challenges.</p> <p>Major setbacks or negative feedback may challenge them. They deal well with small to moderate challenges, pausing and reflecting to think of new solutions and persisting until they find a breakthrough.</p>	<p>Grit, tenacity, and perseverance are clearly evident in the way learners approach and complete their Deep Learning tasks.</p> <p>In the face of major setbacks or negative feedback, they pause, reflect, adapt as necessary, and approach the issue with determination until they find a breakthrough.</p> <p>Learners are able to articulate how and why these character qualities are essential for life and work.</p>	<p>Learners have highly developed grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience.</p> <p>This allows them to be flexible and work through and support others through challenges.</p> <p>Feedback and challenges are sought out and used as an opportunity to learn.</p> <p>They understand the importance of these character qualities as essential for creating meaningful change in life, work, and the world.</p>



# Collective Inquiry using the School Conditions Rubric

# Using the School Conditions Rubric

School Conditions Rubric				
Dimensions	Limited	Emerging	Accelerating	Advanced
Vision and Goals	There are no Deep Learning strategies, goals or implementation supports in place to achieve Deep Learning. Decisions and resources reflect the status quo.	Deep Learning strategies and goals are formally written and articulated. Some decisions regarding resources, processes and funding reflect a shift towards Deep Learning.	There is a written and understood strategy articulating Deep Learning goals and how they are implemented, driven by a Learning.	A concise, well-articulated strategy with focused Deep Learning Goals and implementation support is owned by all members of the school community and used to drive decision making.
Leadership	Leaders rely on formal roles and structures and view Deep Learning as an add-on rather than integrator and accelerator of processes. There is no strategy to intentionally develop leaders, and engagement in deep learning is restricted to a few early innovators.	Lead-learners are emerging across the school who clearly see their role in developing leaders, structures and formal and opportunities, fostering Deep Learning. Student, teacher and community leadership is emerging.	Lead-learners and processes that properly shifts in practice and intentionally develop leaders. There is engagement in Deep Learning across the school and among some students, families and communities, who actively take part in the creation of Deep Learning experiences.	Lead-learner capacity exists with a clear strategy to develop, diffuse and distribute leadership capacity across the school. Students, families, communities and all members of the school community are informed, engaged and influential in deep learning for all students.
Collaborative Cultures	Collaboration between and among leaders, teachers and learners is limited. We do not know how we do it.	There is an emerging collaborative culture developed around deep learning and collective capacity building. Leaders are using reflective practices and critical thinking skills to support Deep Learning.	A culture of learning and collaborative inquiry exists in which most teachers and leaders reflect on, review and adjust their teaching practices. Capacity building is clearly focused on teaching skills needed for Deep Learning. Through vertical and horizontal relationships, collaboration and practices are becoming more transparent. School-level inquiry and learning involves teachers from all levels, who may also be collaborating across schools.	A powerful culture of collaborative deep learning pervades the school. Learning collaboratively is the norm and includes structures and processes to build collective capacity. The culture uses the group to change the group by fostering strong vertical and horizontal relationships that support innovation and risk taking. Capacity building focuses on precision in pedagogy and incorporates cycles of learning and application within and across the school.





# Leading Coherence for System Transformation



Coherence



Deep Learning



System  
connectedness



Engagement  
Achievement  
Workforce readiness



System  
Transformation

Collective Clarity in Action



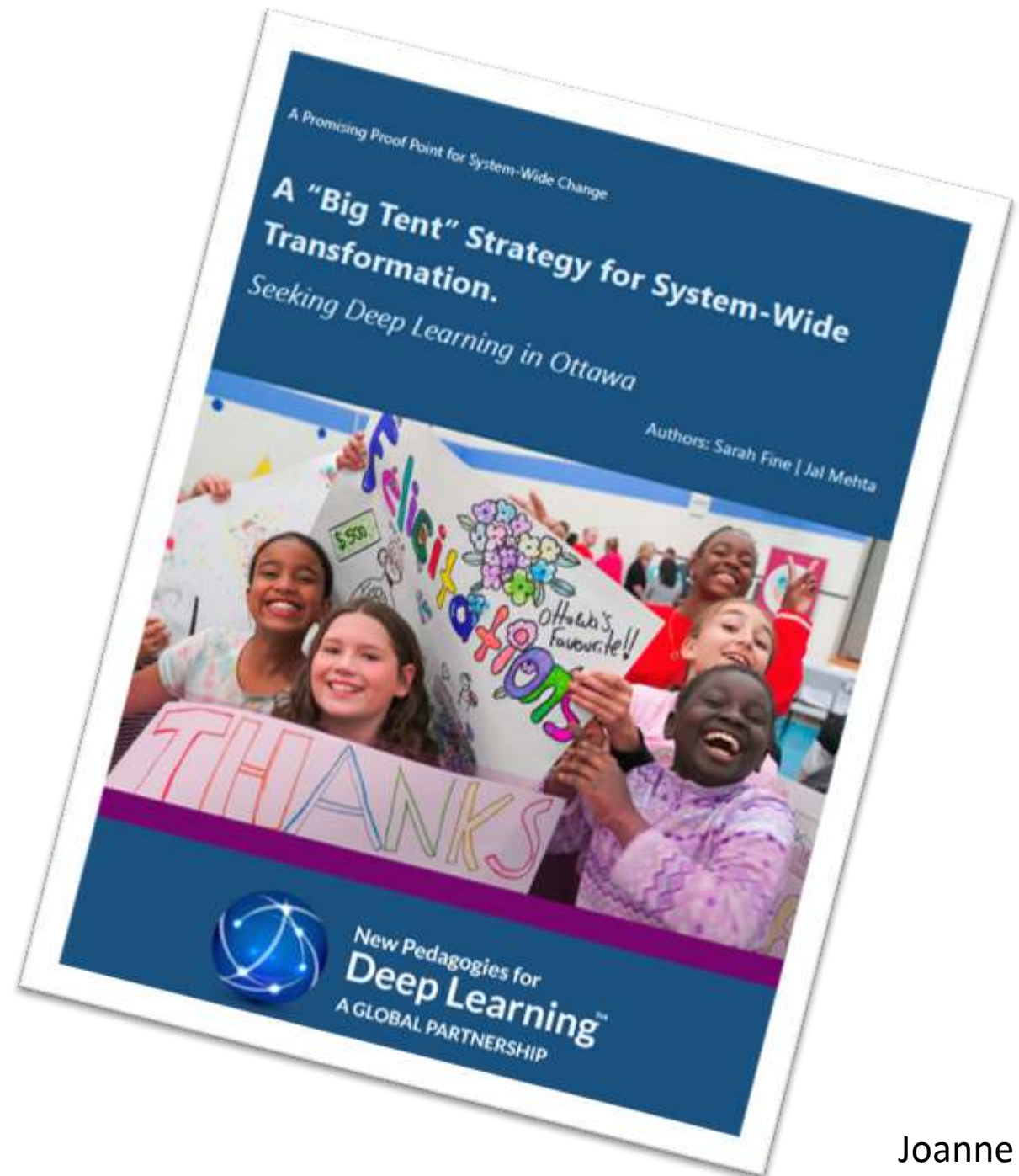


# Deep Learning at the OCSB



[https://youtu.be/727g9OUDv\\_E](https://youtu.be/727g9OUDv_E)

What was  
powerful ?







# Ohio Vignette 1:

## **From Credit Recovery to Purposeful Learning**

### **Context**

- Large urban district
- Chronic absenteeism and credit recovery pressures

## OHIO Links:

- **Workforce Aligned Skills:** communication, problem- solving, civic contribution
- **Graduation indicators**
- **Student engagement**

## The Shift

Reframed credit recovery around Deep Learning Tasks

Students engaged in community-based challenge with core ELA and Math standards embedded

Students publicly presented solutions to city planners

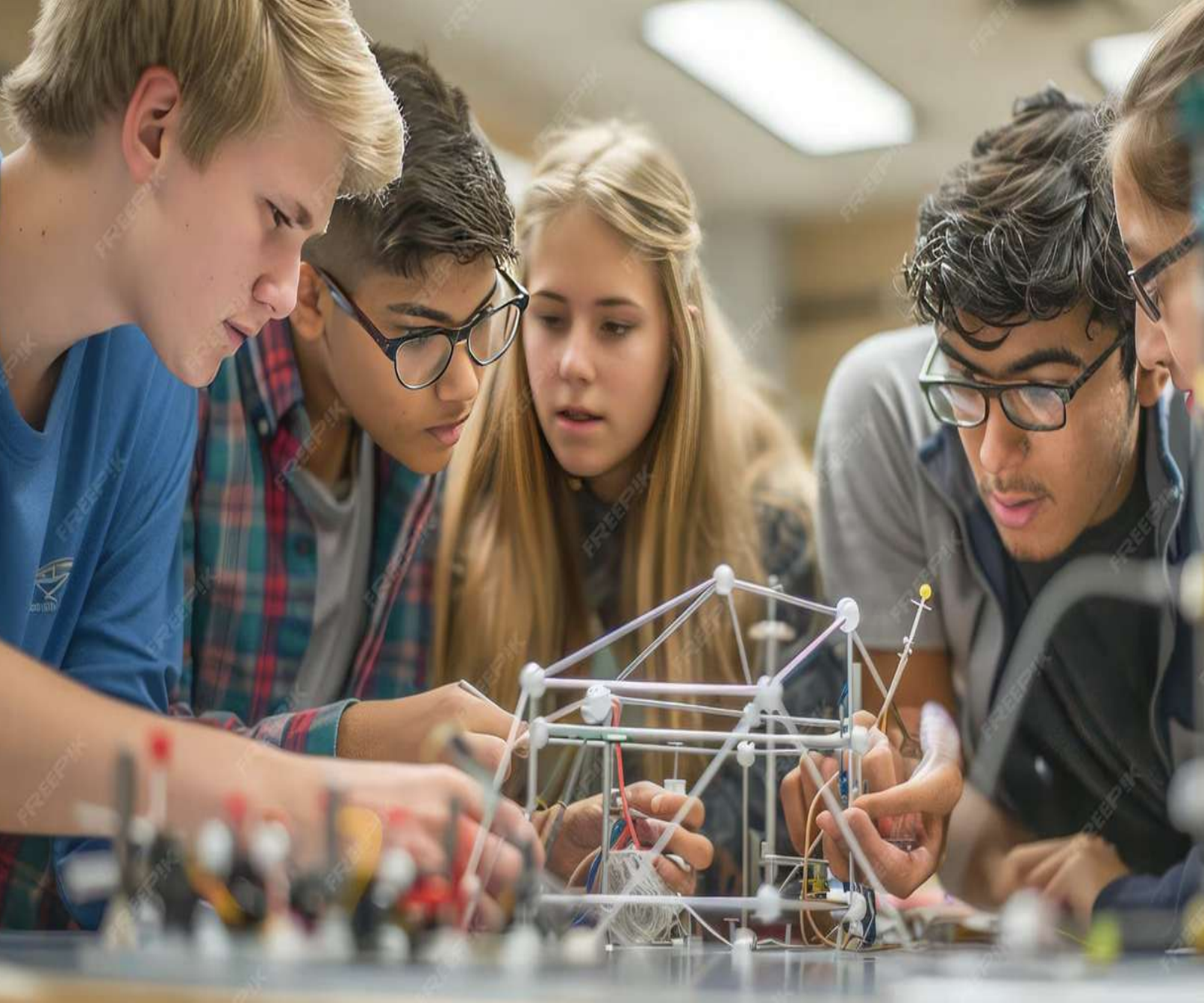
## Impact

attendance improved because learning was worth showing up for

Students earned credits through demonstrated mastery

Teachers collaborated across departments





## Ohio Vignette 2:

# **Workforce Readiness without Losing Kids to the City**

### **Context**

- Rural district
- Declining enrollment
- Limited local workforce pipeline

## OHIO Links:

- Workplace development
- Career pathways
- Community vitality

### The Shift

District partnered with local healthcare providers, and agri business

Students engaged in career- connected deep learning projects

AI and digital tools used to expand access and expertise

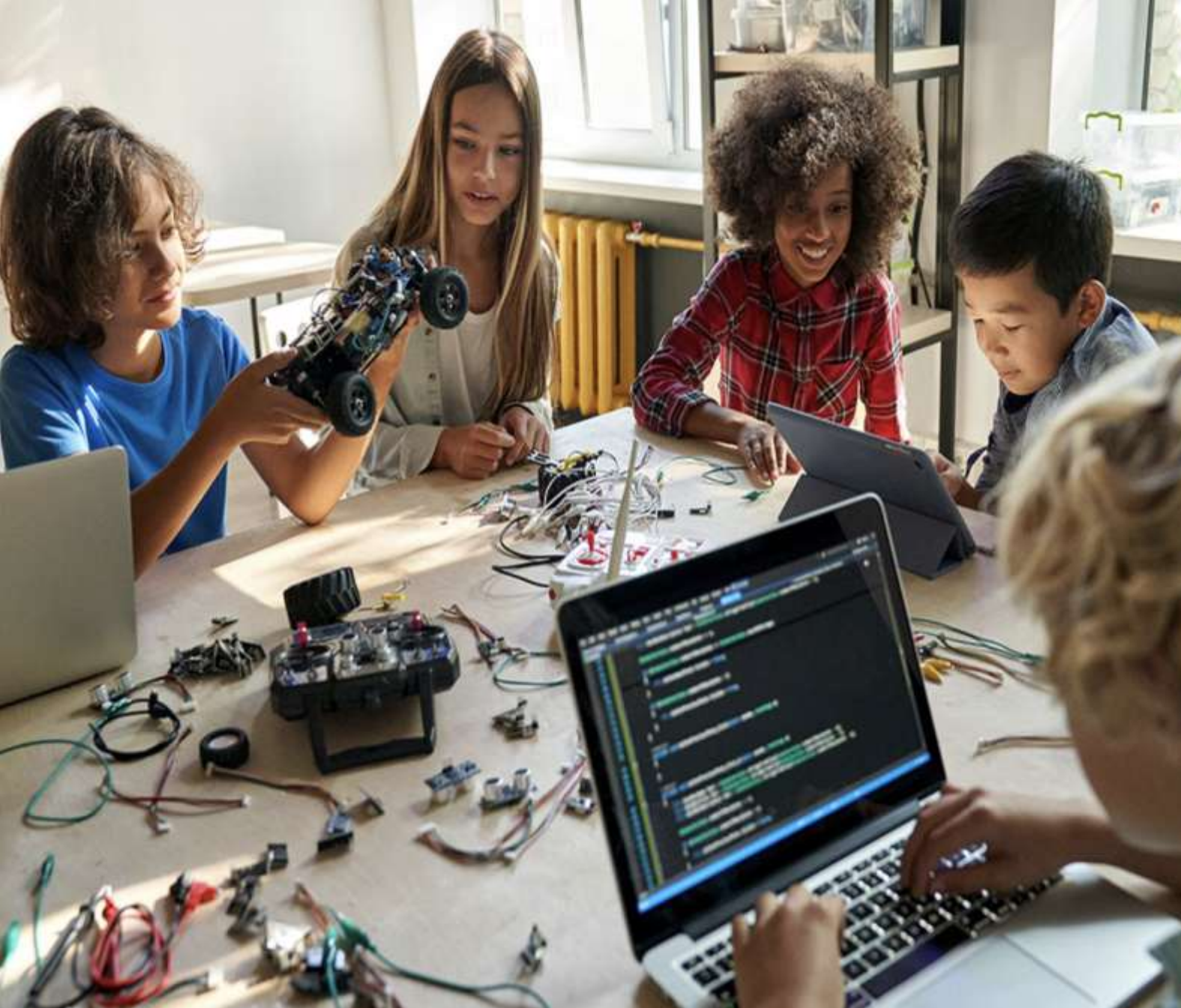
### Impact

Students saw a future in **their** community

Employers became learning partners

Teachers redesigned assessment around performance and reflection





## Ohio Vignette 3: AI as a Learning Accelerator- Not a Shortcut

### Context

- Didn't ask whether to allow AI- they asked how AI could deepen learning while preserving academic integrity

## OHIO Links:

- Academic integrity
- Future ready skills
- Responsive AI guidance

## The Shift

Teachers used Ai to generate ideas or feedback

Focus on student agency, ethics and instructional use

Documented learning decisions and revisions

## Impact

Assessment shifted from ' Did you use AI?' to " What did you learn because you used AI?"

AI as a learning accelerator



Breakout Session

# Coherence Moves

Bring one idea back



What powerful  
coherence moves  
did you observe?



How could the  
moves apply to  
different contexts

A close-up, angled view of a compass rose. The compass is mounted on a dark, circular base. The word 'CHANGE' is prominently displayed in large, raised, silver-colored letters along the top arc of the compass face. Other directional labels like 'NW', 'NE', 'E', 'SE', 'S', and 'SW' are also visible in smaller letters. The compass needle is a vibrant red color and is pointing towards the 'CHANGE' label. The lighting creates highlights on the metallic surfaces of the compass and the base.

# Coherence Moves

- Narrow priorities
- Model learning- focused leadership
- Build capacity not dependence
- Create reciprocal accountability





# From Complexity to Coherence

- Coherence is a leadership discipline
- Deep Learning is an integrator and multiplier
- Systems improve when learning improves

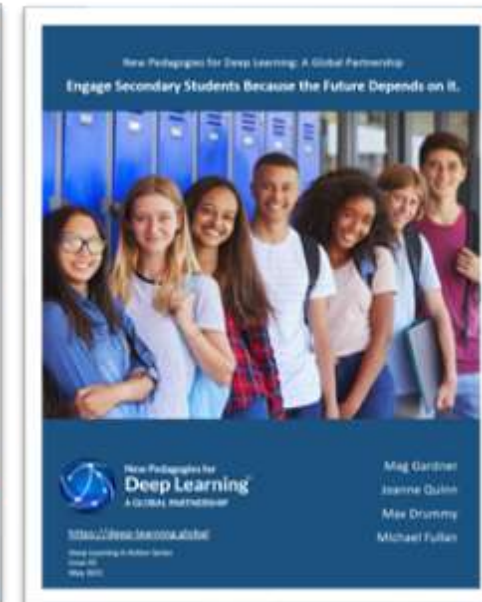
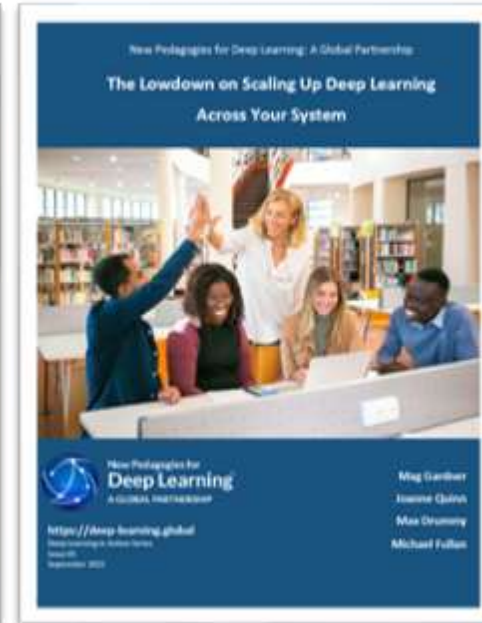
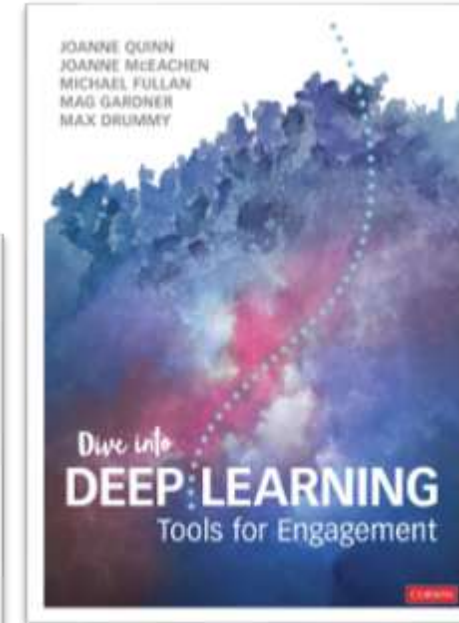
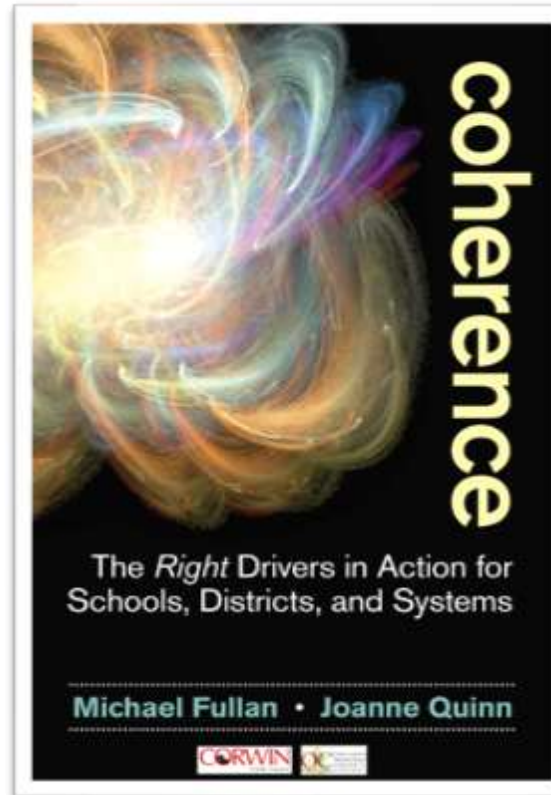
What is one  
**coherence move**  
you will make in  
the next 90 days  
that will directly  
impact student  
learning?





# Learn more...

<https://bit.ly/OHIOJQ26>



<https://deep-learning.global>



**Engage the World Change the World**  
**Good at learning Good at life**

Deep Learning: Engage the World Change the World ( 2018)