

# Sustainability

Resources developed by the U.S. Department of Education



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# What is Sustainability?



Sustainable reforms are **durable**, **adaptive** and **persistently focused** on priority goals for improved student growth **in the face of changing conditions**.

# We define sustainability as having several key characteristics

## System Capacity

LEA Capacity

School Capacity

## Performance Management

Clarity of Outcomes & Theory of Action

Alignment of Resources

Collection and Use of Data

Accountability for Results

## Context

Alignment of the Districtwide System

Public Value

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# System Capacity



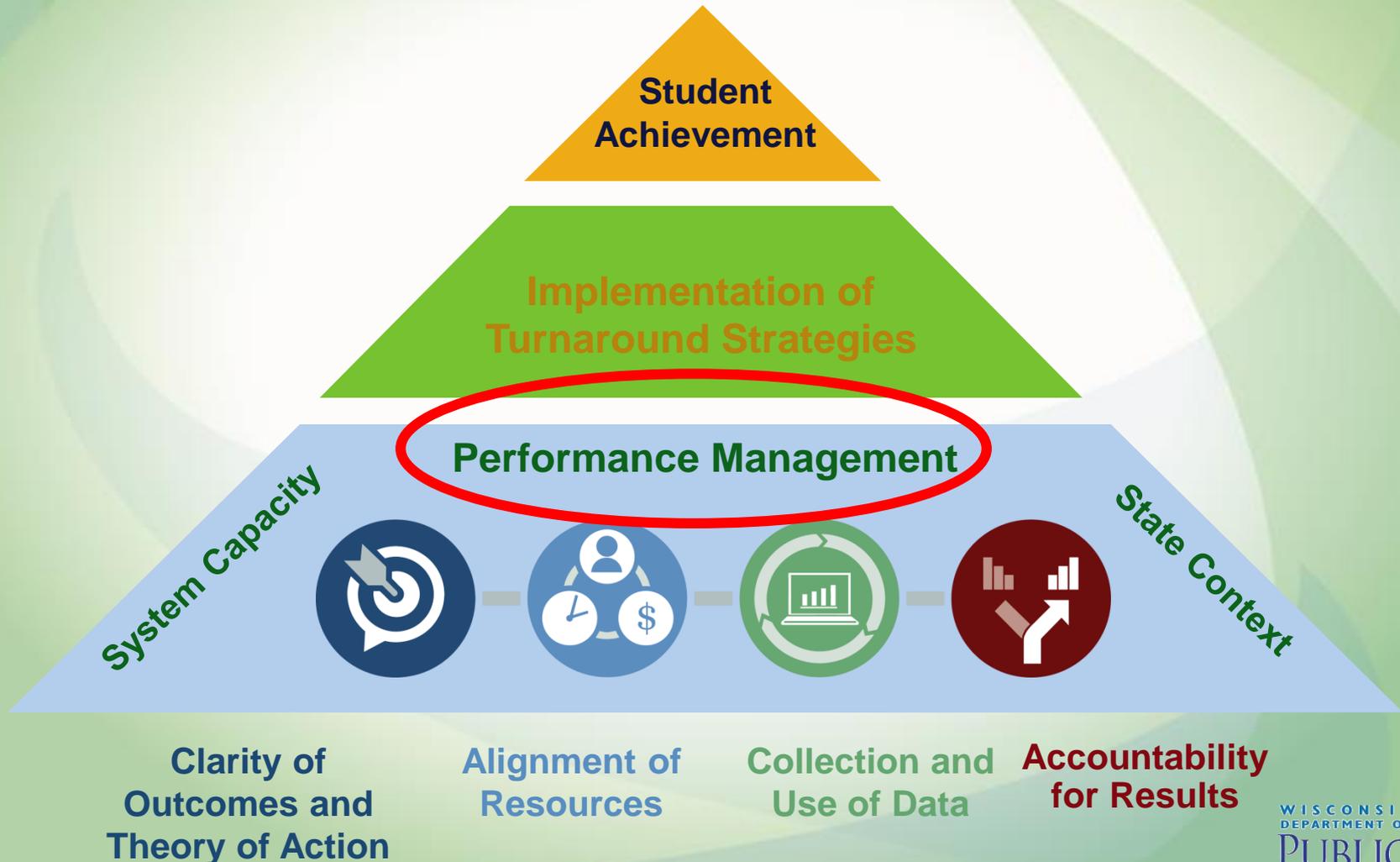
Capacity is the resources, readiness and willingness of a **system** to achieve its priority goals.

Sustainable reform is not the sole responsibility of a single organization or jurisdiction; reforms will not be sustained if they are treated like a special project, separate from the regular operations of the broader school system. Rather, to be sustainable, reform must permeate the community-wide context and, ideally, be taken up by educators and the public as their own purpose.

# Turn and Talk

What is the capacity of your school to sustain reforms? How can you build capacity?

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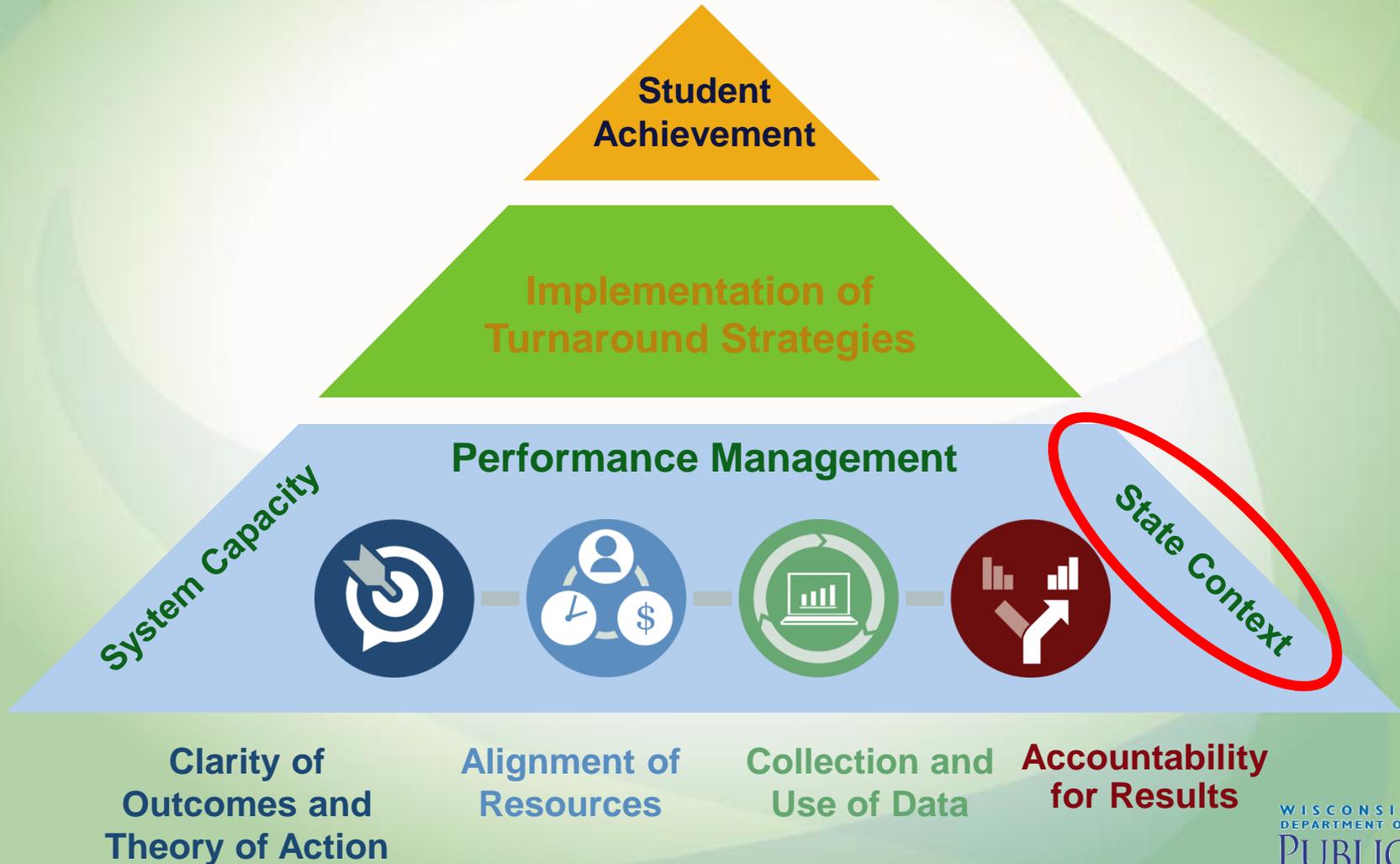


# PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IS A CRUCIAL PIECE OF SUSTAINABILITY



Performance management is a **systemic approach to ensure quality and progress** toward organizational goals by **methodically and routinely monitoring the connection between strategies and the outcomes sought.**

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# Context for Sustaining Reform



LEAs operate in a complex context. LEAs should take the complex and changing environment into account, reacting to it and **actively** shaping it and leveraging its strengths.

LEAs need to be prepared for the context to change over time. The sustainability of reform requires constant attention to changing circumstances to manage a balance between persistent adherence to attaining goals and **responsive** adaptation to address the real challenges of implementation.

# Turn and Talk

How does your school pay attention to the context in which you operate? What is especially challenging about your particular context?

# LARGE-SCALE EDUCATION REFORM: LIFE CYCLES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Reforms that are designed to make dramatic changes in practice depend on the extent to which leaders and teachers understand the reasoning that lies behind the changes in governance or curriculum or teaching. Sustainable change is predicated on individuals within the school coming to understand the reforms and being able to apply them in new situations. All too often, the reasoning and principles are not obvious to those receiving the reforms.”

*p. 23 - LARGE-SCALE EDUCATION REFORM: LIFE CYCLES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY*

<http://cdn.cfbt.com/~media/cfbtcorporate/files/research/2003/r-large-scale-education-reform-2003.pdf>

# Assessing and creating ongoing “buy-in” and readiness

From the National Implementation Research Network’s Active Implementation Hub:

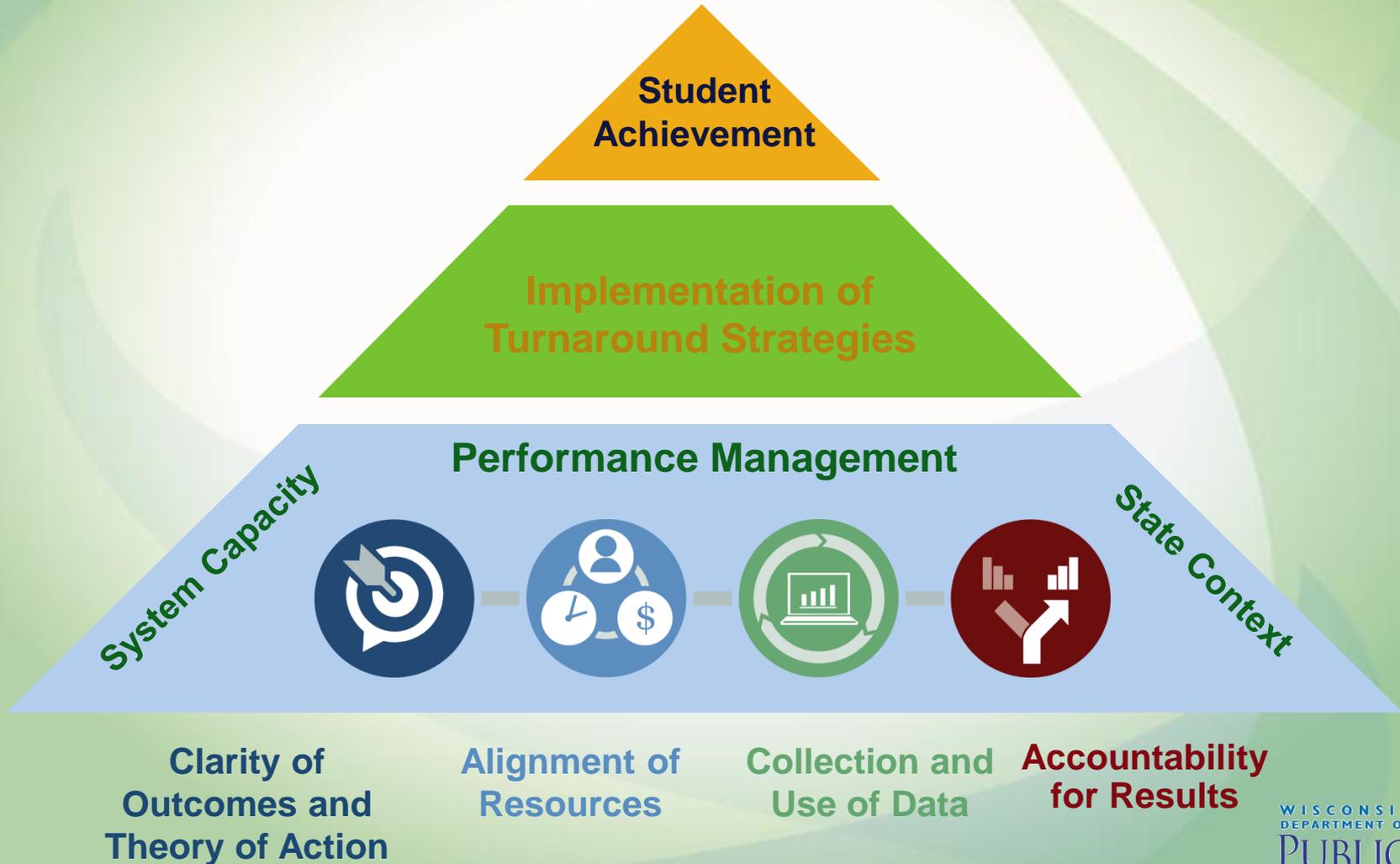
Implementation Teams provide information about the reasons for change; the innovation; and, the implementation supports and commitment of leaders to make changes in the system that will facilitate the effective use of innovations in classrooms, buildings and districts. Implementation Team work supports the “buy-in” process and creates readiness.

# Assessing and creating ongoing “buy-in” and readiness

Common questions asked by stakeholders are:

- **What will be different this time?**
- **Is this just another ‘fad’ that will pass? Why should I invest my time or energy?**
- **What was wrong with the way we have been doing things? Does this mean I have been performing poorly?**
- **How can I get more information? How can I participate?**

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# FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

As you proceed through the rest of this conference, think about what efforts you want to be able to sustain.

What are the strategies you are using to achieve your goals?

How can you anticipate challenges to your reforms that will help you to sustain them?

What will you need to do to be able to sustain these efforts?