

School Leadership and Whole System Reform

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EU Education Ministers Event, Sweden

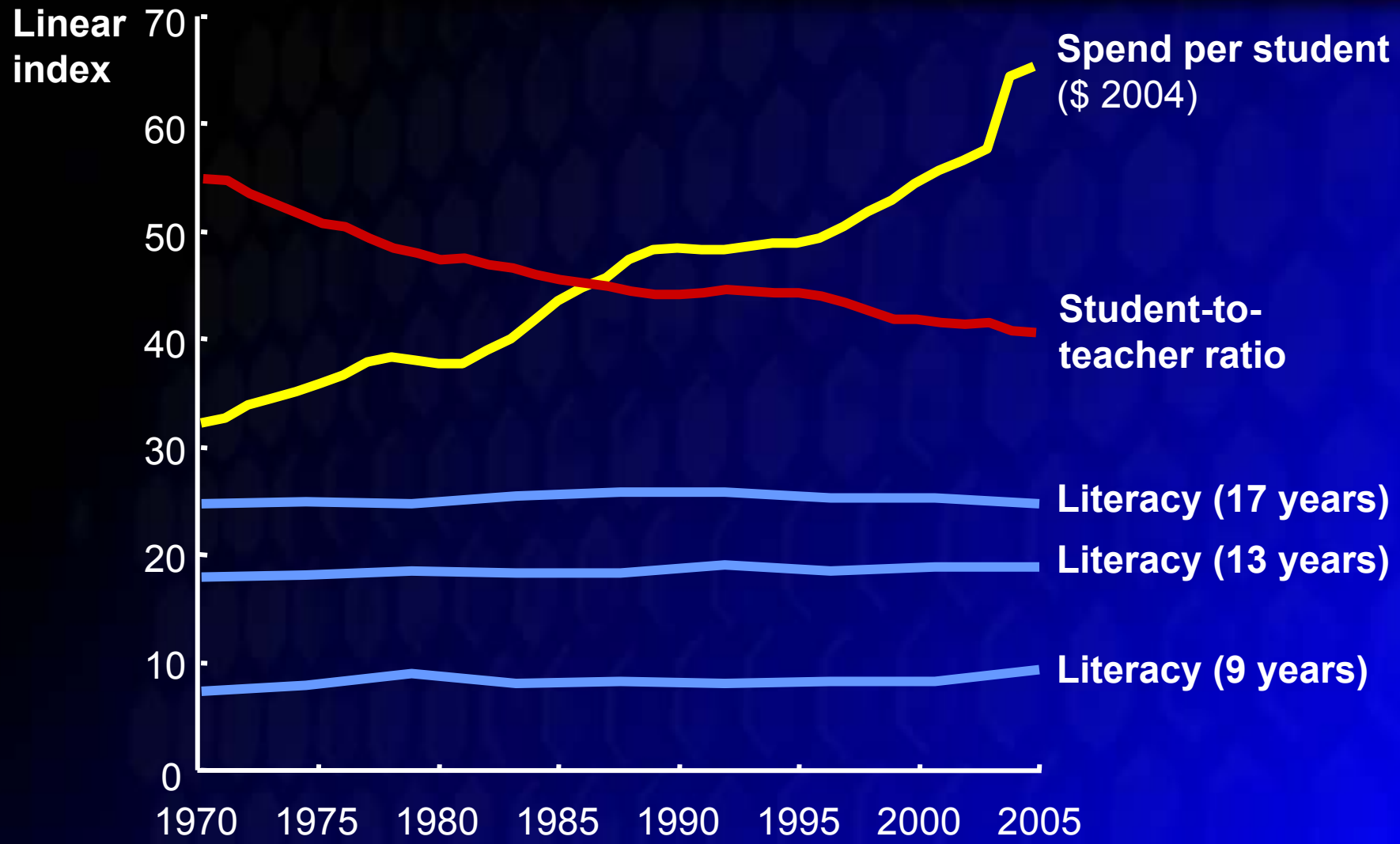
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Agenda

1. The characteristics of effective school systems
2. The impact of good school leadership
3. The development of school leadership capacity
4. The challenges of the 21st century

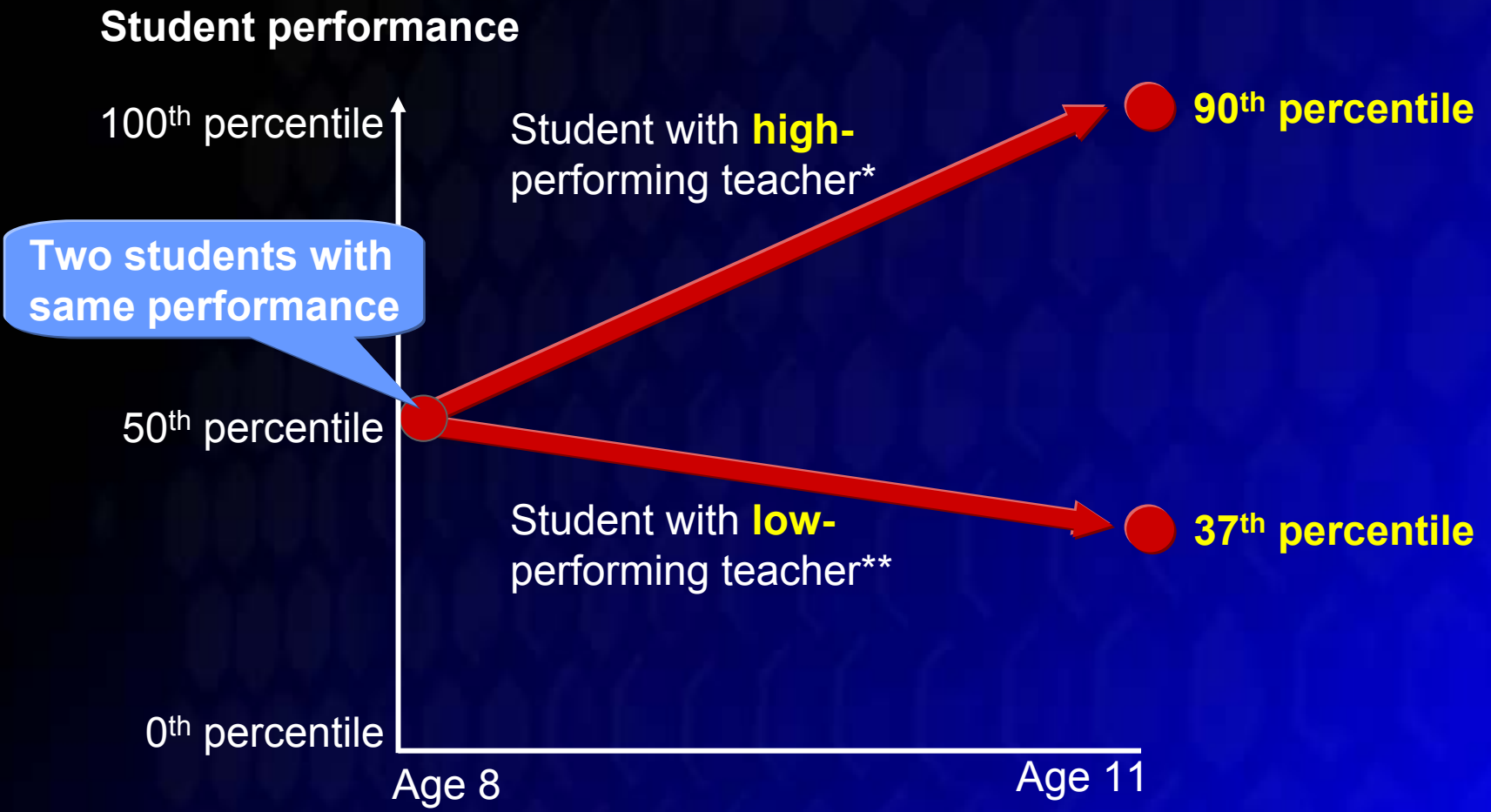
Section 1: The characteristics of effective school systems

Merely reducing student-teacher ratios does not improve outcomes



Source: National Centre for Education Statistics, NEAP, Hanushek (1998)

Consistent quality of teaching is by far the most important factor driving performance



* Among the top 20% of teachers

** Among the bottom 20% of teachers

The nine characteristics of high-performing school systems

Standards and Accountability

Globally-benchmarked standards

Good, transparent data

Every child on the agenda always in order to challenge inequality

Human Capital

Recruit great people and train them well

Continuous improvement of pedagogical skills and knowledge

Great leadership at school level

Structure and Organisation

Effective, enabling central department and agencies

Capacity to manage change and engage communities at every level

Operational responsibility and budgets significantly devolved to school level

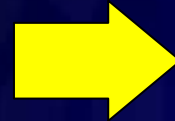
Section 2: The impact of good school leadership

School principals can influence...

- School quality
- School culture
- School-community relations
- The attractiveness of teaching as a profession
- The development of the system as a whole

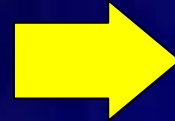
Three key lessons about school leadership

“School leadership is **second only to classroom teaching** as an influence on student learning.”



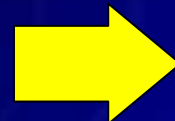
School leadership is important

“Almost all successful leaders draw on the **same repertoire of basic leadership practices.**”



School leadership can be learned

“A small handful of **personal traits** explains a high proportion of the variation in leadership effectiveness.”

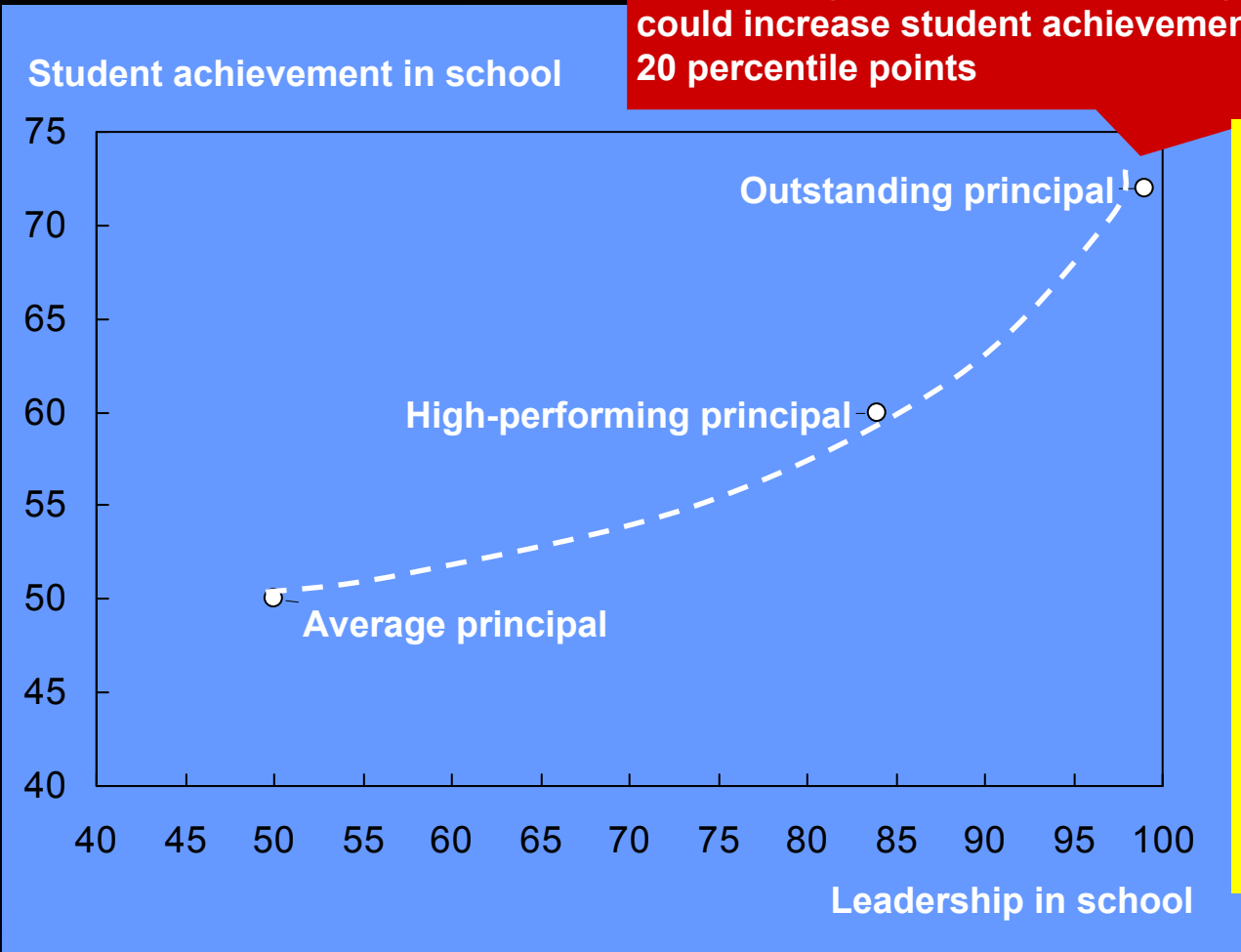


Schools need to choose carefully

Effective school leadership is critical to student achievement

Percentile¹

Replacing an 'average' principal with an outstanding principal in an 'average' school could increase student achievement by over 20 percentile points



- Effective school leadership includes three roles**
- **Instructional** focuses on improving current instructional practice
 - **Change** focuses on altering the instructional practices themselves and their supporting systems
 - **Administrative** focuses on maintaining an orderly environment, budgeting, and support functions

¹ For leadership and student achievement, percentile implies the relative placement within the distribution

Studies consistently find that the only common feature of excellent and improving schools is excellent leadership

HMI, “Ten Good Schools,” 1977

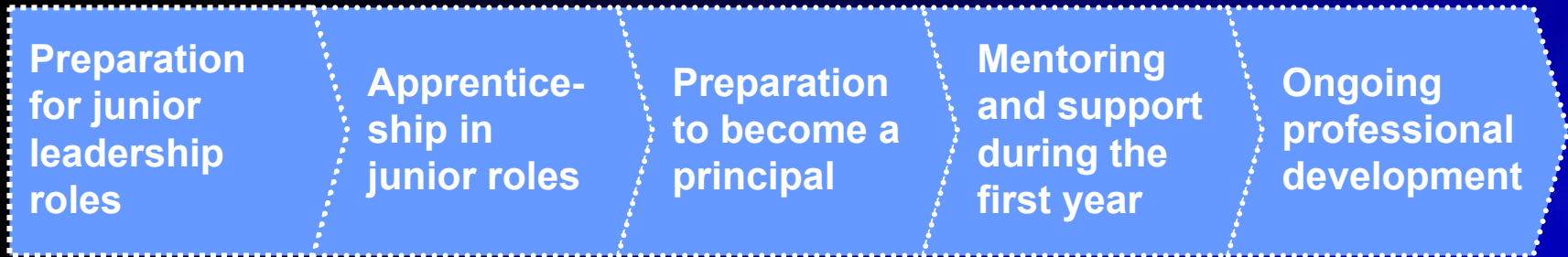
[Good schools] “differ in very many respects as institutions... What they all have in common is effective leadership. ... Without exception, the most important single factor in the success of these schools is the quality of leadership.”

NCSL, “Seven Strong Claims,” 2006

“As far as we are aware, there is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its pupil achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership.”

Section 3: The development of school leadership capacity

School systems needs to develop the skills of their leaders throughout their careers



National Institute of Education – (Singapore)

“We train our teachers and vice-principals to apply best practices; we train our principals to create them”

6 month programme to develop new principals

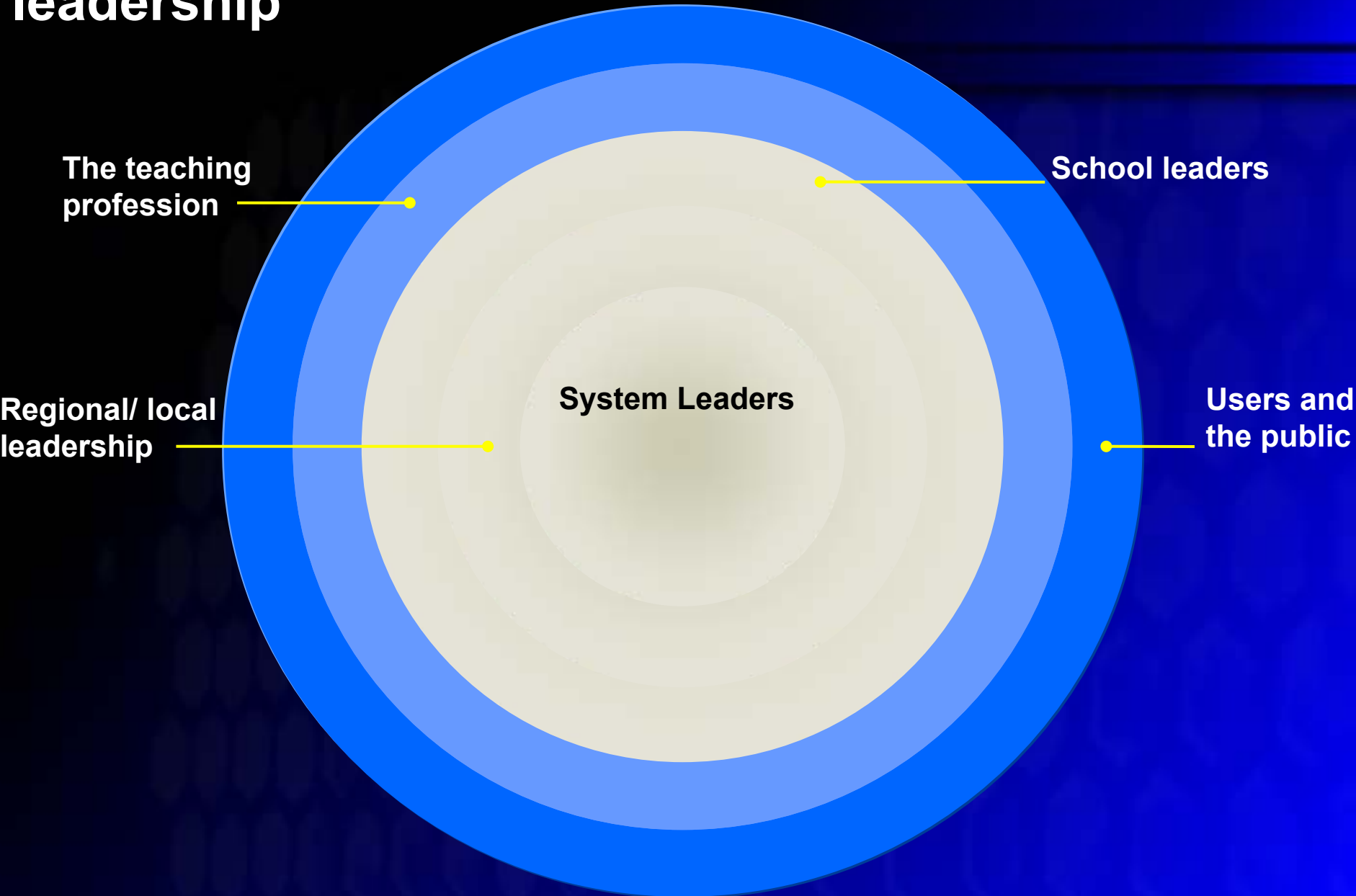
- **Management and leadership courses** taken from leading executive training programmes
- **One day a week in schools** where candidates are assigned to develop innovative approaches to the toughest problems
- **Group projects** where candidates work in teams
- **2-week overseas placement** with a major corporation (e.g., IBM, HP, Ritz Carlton), where they shadow top private-sector executives
- **Rigorous evaluation** – only candidates who demonstrate the required competencies will succeed

National College for School Leadership – (England)

Structured career development

- **Middle management** - development opportunities
- **Preparation** - Workplace-based Qualification (NPQH) for aspirant headteachers (principals)
- **Induction** - Mentor-based support for headteachers appointed to a new role
- **Continuous development** - Opportunities for experienced headteachers to develop their careers
- **System leadership** - Successful headteachers prepared to assist or lead larger groups of schools
- **Succession planning** - nationally and locally

Successful reform requires ever-widening circles of leadership

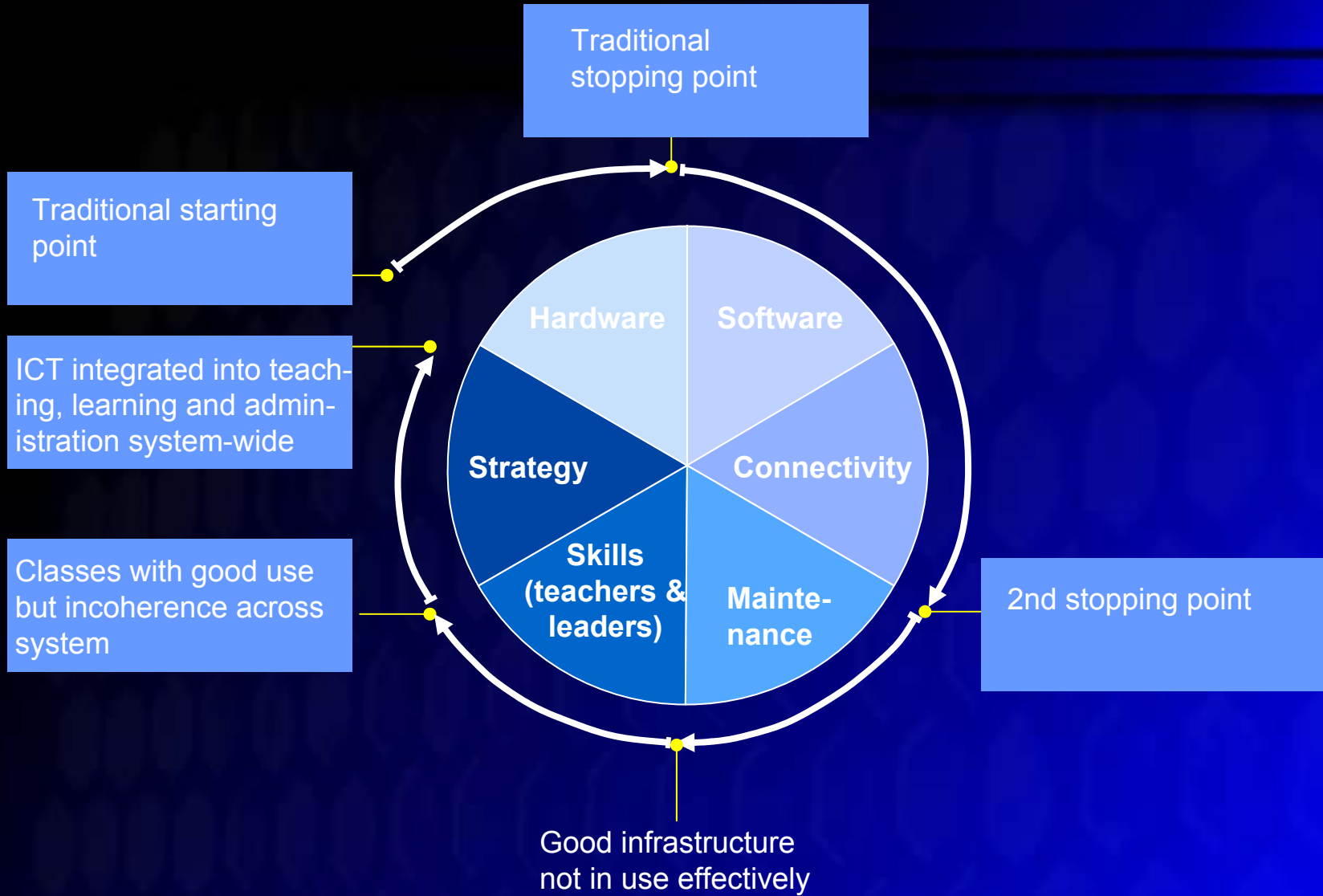


Section 4: The challenges of the 21st century

Five challenges for the future

- 21st century curriculum?
- The human capital model?
- School and out-of-school?
- Knowledge management?
- Technology?

Leadership development as part of a wider strategy



School leaders and cultural change

- Hit & miss
- Uniformity
- Provision
- Producers
- Inputs
- Generalisation
- Talk equity
- “Received wisdom”
- Regulation
- Haphazard development
- Demarcation
- Look up

Comfortable



- Universal high standards
- Diversity
- Choice
- Customers/citizens
- Outcomes
- Specificity
- Deliver equity
- Data and best practice
- Incentives
- Continuous development
- Flexibility
- Look outwards

Demanding