Leading and Managing Human Development Practice: A Distributed Perspective

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Overview

▶ Leadership: What is *it?*

▶ Leading What?: The *Practice* of Human Development

▶ Leading How?: A *Distributed* Perspective.

  ▶ Leader Plus

  ▶ Practice Aspect

▶ Leading *Challenges?*: When taking a Distributed Perspective

Leading: What is it?

Task One: What is Leadership?

▶ Read the two definitions of leadership

▶ With the person next to you, identify one similarity and one difference between the two definitions

Leadership

- [Leadership refers] to the interaction among members of a group that initiates and maintains improved expectations and the competence of the whole group to solve problems or attain goals

- [Leadership refers] to people who bend the motivations and actions of others to achieve certain goals; it implies taking initiatives and risks

Leadership

▶ Leadership refers:

▶ social influence relationship or interaction,

▶ intended to enable change in the motivation, knowledge, practice, and affect of others, pertaining to their work

▶ In order to achieve particular goals or ends.

Management

- Management is about maintenance; maintaining current organizational arrangements and ways of doing work (Burns, 1978; Cuban, 1988)

Leading What?: Human Development Practice

Anchoring Leading in Teaching

Children's
Opportunities To Learn

↕

Teaching

↕

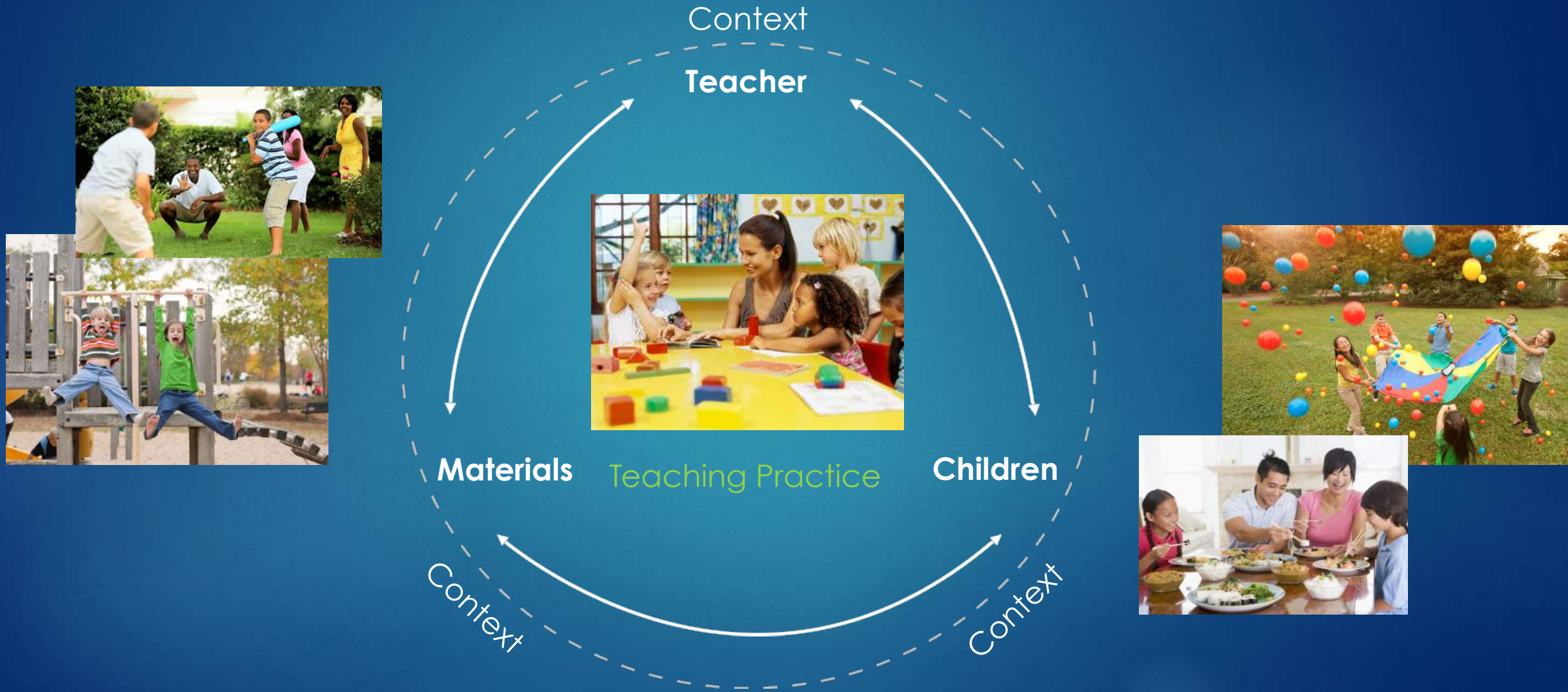What gets taught?   How is it taught?

Leading and Managing
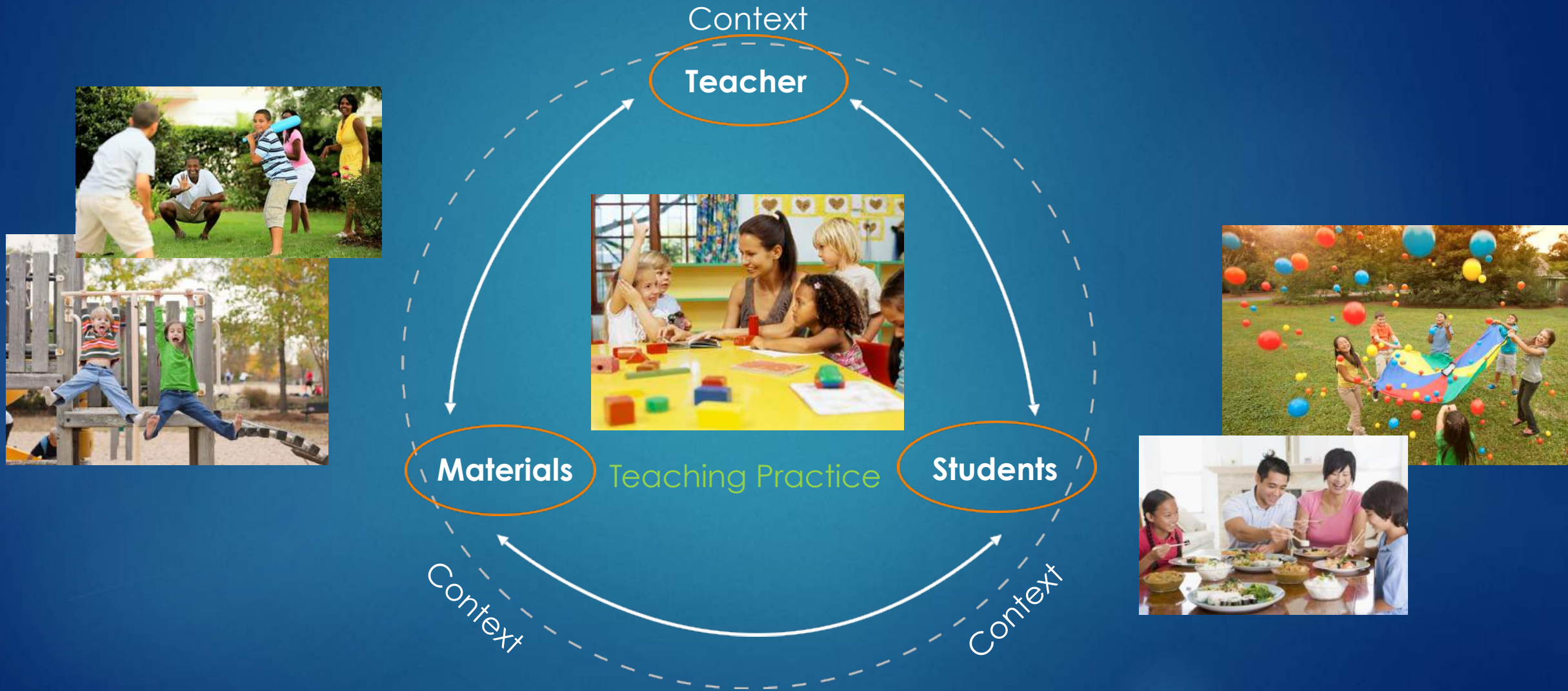
Human Development Practice: Teaching

- ▶ Contested ends, Uncertain means

- ▶ Mutual dependency between teacher and child

- ▶ Unpredictability of teacher-child interactions

- ▶ Knowledge intensive practice

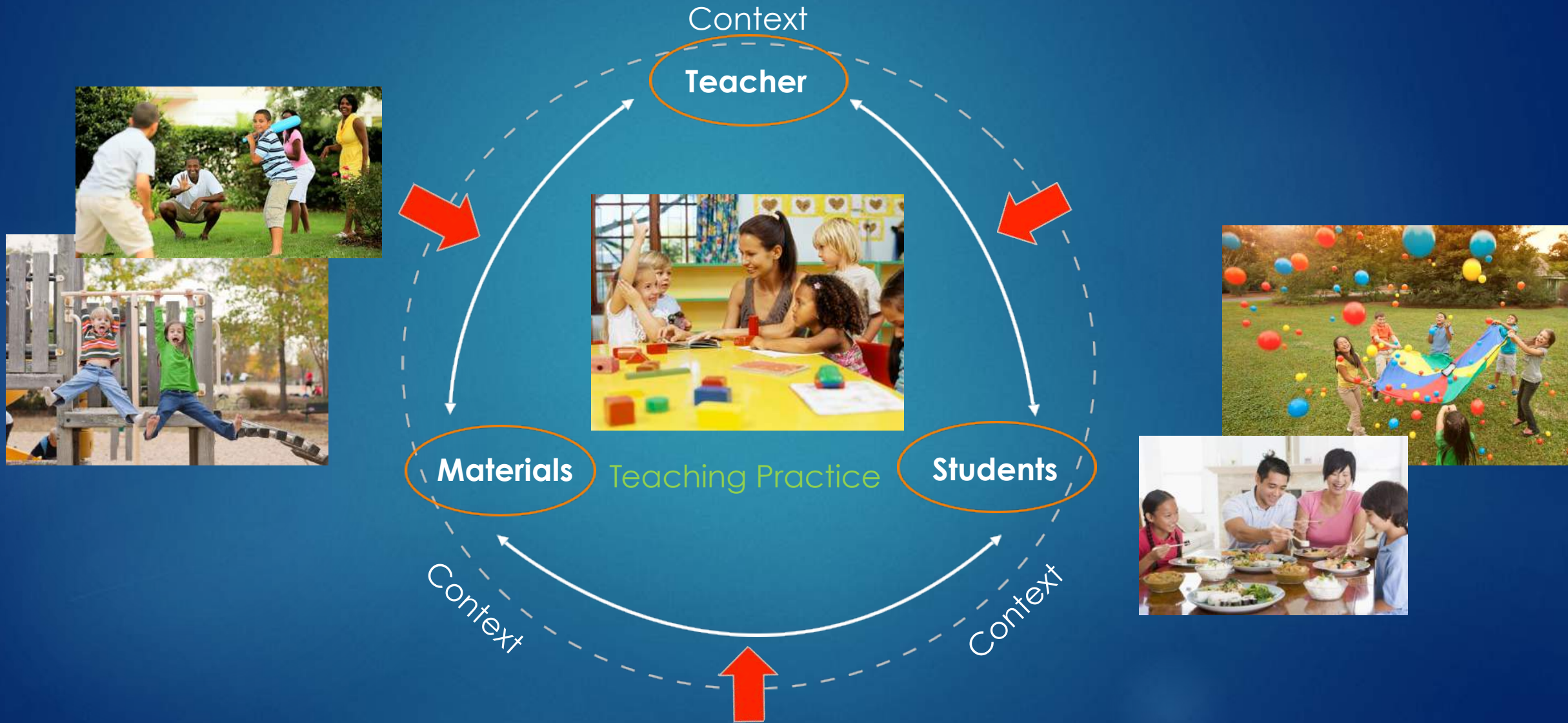- ▶ Solo practitioners but practice is social and interdependent

Teaching as a Social Practice

Context

Teacher

Materials Teaching Practice **Children**

Context Context

Teaching as a Social Practice

Context

Teacher

Materials

Teaching Practice

Students

Context

Context

Teaching as a Social Practice

Leadership & Management Work: *What Matters?*

▶ Setting Direction

▶ Human Development

▶ Organizational Development

Leading How?: Taking A Distributed Perspective

"Heroics of Leadership" Genre

The Problem: "Heroics of Leadership" Genre

- The lure of leaders and their gallant acts

- The leader is center stage, while others play follower

- Setting pre-school principals up for failure.

The Principal-Plus Aspect

- The pre-school principal works with others when performing leadership and management tasks

- Other formally designated pre-school leaders take responsibility for leading and managing

- Individuals with no formal leadership designations have a hand in leading and managing instruction in pre-schools.

An Alternative to the 'Heroics of Leadership' Genre

"Initially I tried to do it all. I was trying to do it all and that was impossible. You cannot be all things to all people... I don't know everything about everything."
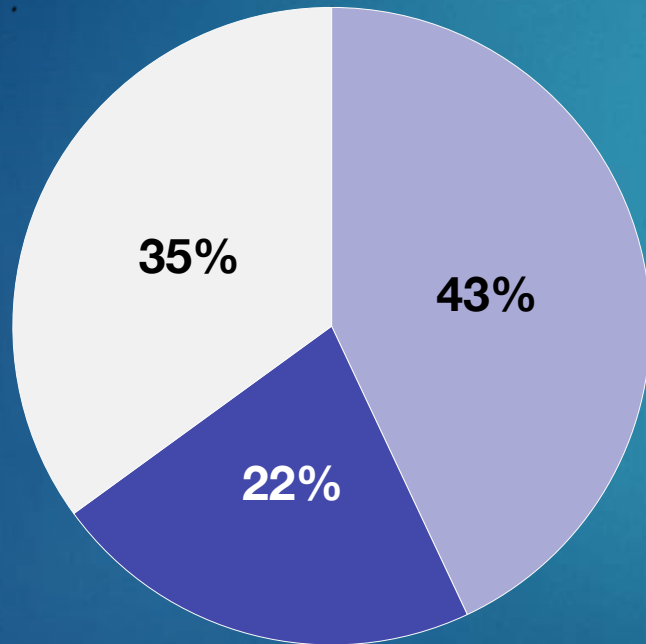
Principal Johnson

Spillane, J. P. (2006). Distributed leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

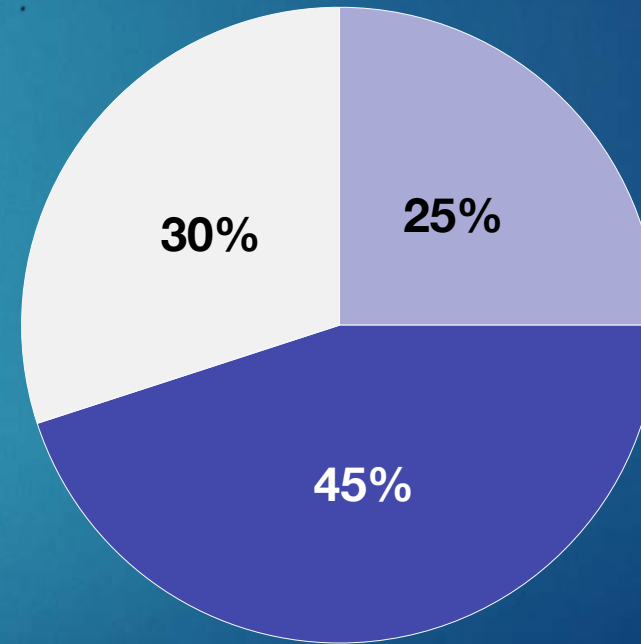Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating school leadership practice: A distributed perspective. Educational Researcher, 30(3), 23-28.

A Distributed Perspective: The Practice Aspect

Leaders
Pre-school Principal, Specialists,
Teachers, Parents, Children

Leadership Practice

Situations
Tools, Routines,
Structures, Rules

Followers

Teachers, Pre-school Principal,
Specialists, Children, Parents
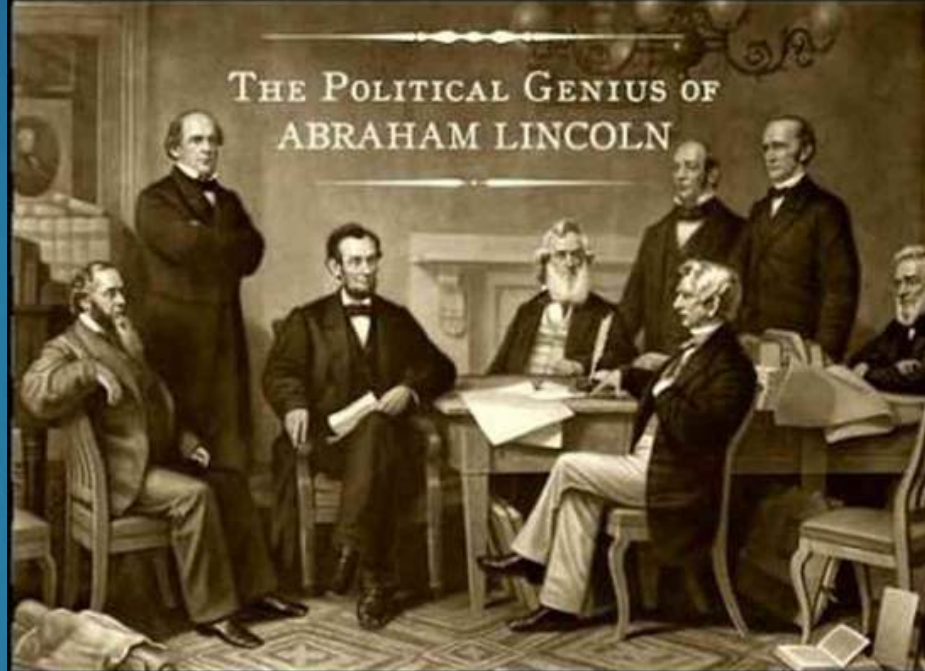
A Distributed Perspective

▶ A diagnostic framework that draws attention to particular dimensions of leadership & management work

▶ A design framework for guiding leadership and management improvement efforts

Dispelling Some Myths about a Distributed Perspective

- Principal or agency director somehow less relevant or even irrelevant … WRONG

- Everyone is a leader … WRONG

- The more leaders, the better … WRONG

Spillane, J. P., & Diamond, J. B. (2007). Distributed leadership in practice. New York: Teachers College Press.

Leading Challenges?: Work Practice, Work Norms, & Work Beliefs or Scripts

Practice

- ▶ Strong Ties: Frequent Interactions Among pre-school Leaders, Teachers, & Parents

- ▶ Ties that span school sub-units (e.g., K1 or K2) and that span the organization

- ▶ Interactions Focused on Teaching and Learning

- ▶ Designing and Deploying Organizational (and System) Routines to change practice

Norms

- Teaching as a Public Practice (not a Private Practice)

- Collective Responsibility

- Trust

- Constructive Critical Disposition (rather than Culture of Niceness) for developing knowledge and supporting innovation

Cultural-Cognitive Beliefs or Schema

- Belief that All Children regardless of ethnicity, race, class, caste, gender can learn and do challenging work

- Belief that knowledge is distributed, not just an individual 'in-side the head' matter

- Belief that leading and managing human development practice is distributed

Concluding Thoughts

▶ **Leadership is fundamental to improving human development practice.**

▶ **A distributed leadership perspective focuses our attention on:**

  ▶ **Practice, the practice of leading and managing teaching in pre-schools**

  ▶ **Practice is all about interactions, not just actions of indidivual leaders**

  ▶ **Situation as more than just the stage on which we interact; it defines practice because it frames and focuses how we interact with one another**

Spillane, J. P., & Diamond, J. B. (2007). *Distributed leadership in practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

More At:

- http://www.distributedleadership.org
- http://distributedleadership.org/DLS/Presentations.html

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