

PROJECT EXCEL-IGNITE

DISCOVERING STUDENT POTENTIAL AND CHANGING
TEACHER PRACTICE THROUGH PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING



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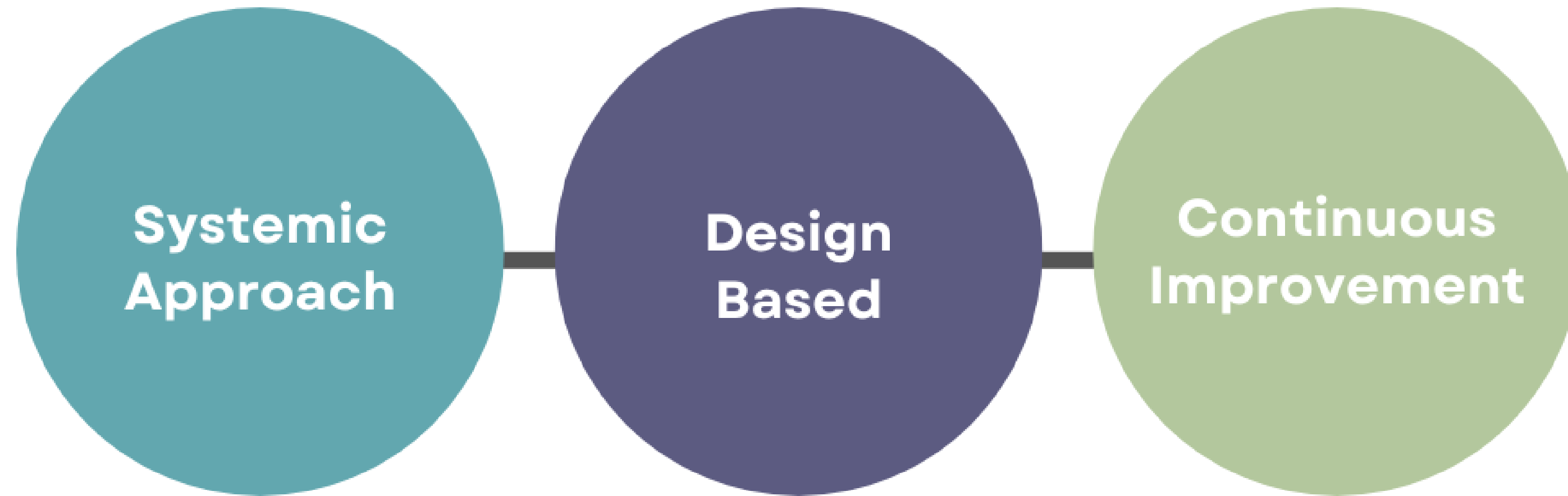
Center for International Education
George Mason University



FAIRFAX, VA

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

- Largest public research university in Virginia at more than 38,000 students.
- 34 percent of undergraduates are first in family to earn a four-year degree.
- Ranked most diverse university in Virginia and 35th-most diverse in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*.



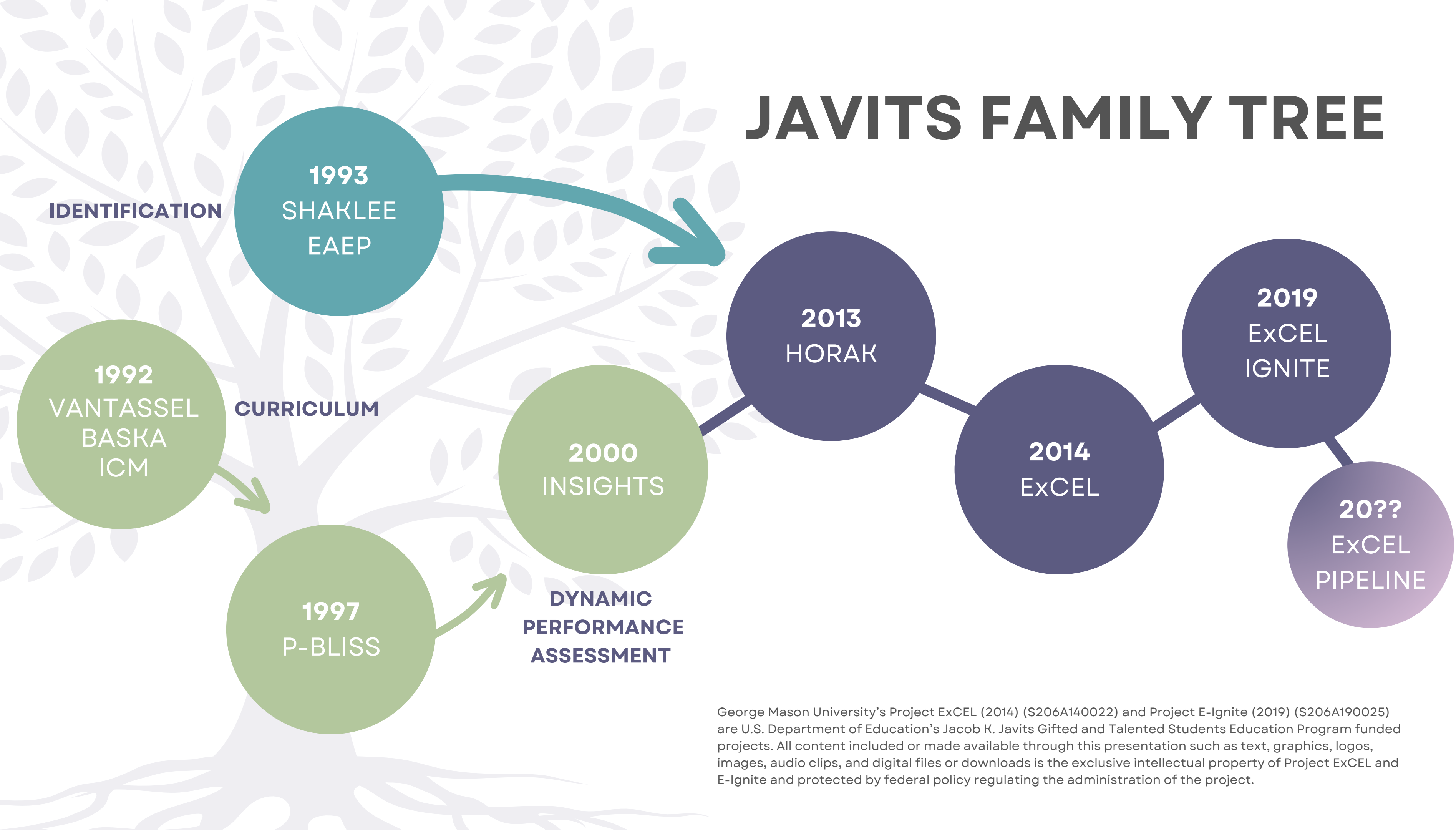
ExCEL Model

ENGAGEMENT | ACTION | GROWTH

RESEARCH QUESTION

CAN WE USE PBL AS A UNIVERSAL
SCREENING WITH A DYNAMIC
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TO
IDENTIFY AND SERVE TRADITIONALLY
UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS IN
GIFTED PROGRAMS?

JAVITS FAMILY TREE



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IMPLEMENT

IDENTIFY

MEASURE



INQUIRY INSTRUCTION



PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING



CASE-BASED LEARNING



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING



INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING



PROBLEM SOLVING

IMPACT OVERVIEW

3

States

5

School District
Partners

168

Teachers Trained

13,705

Students Engaged in
Problem-Based Learning
(PBL)

785

Students Identified for
Advanced Coursework

220

PBL Units Implemented

Testing

Scaling

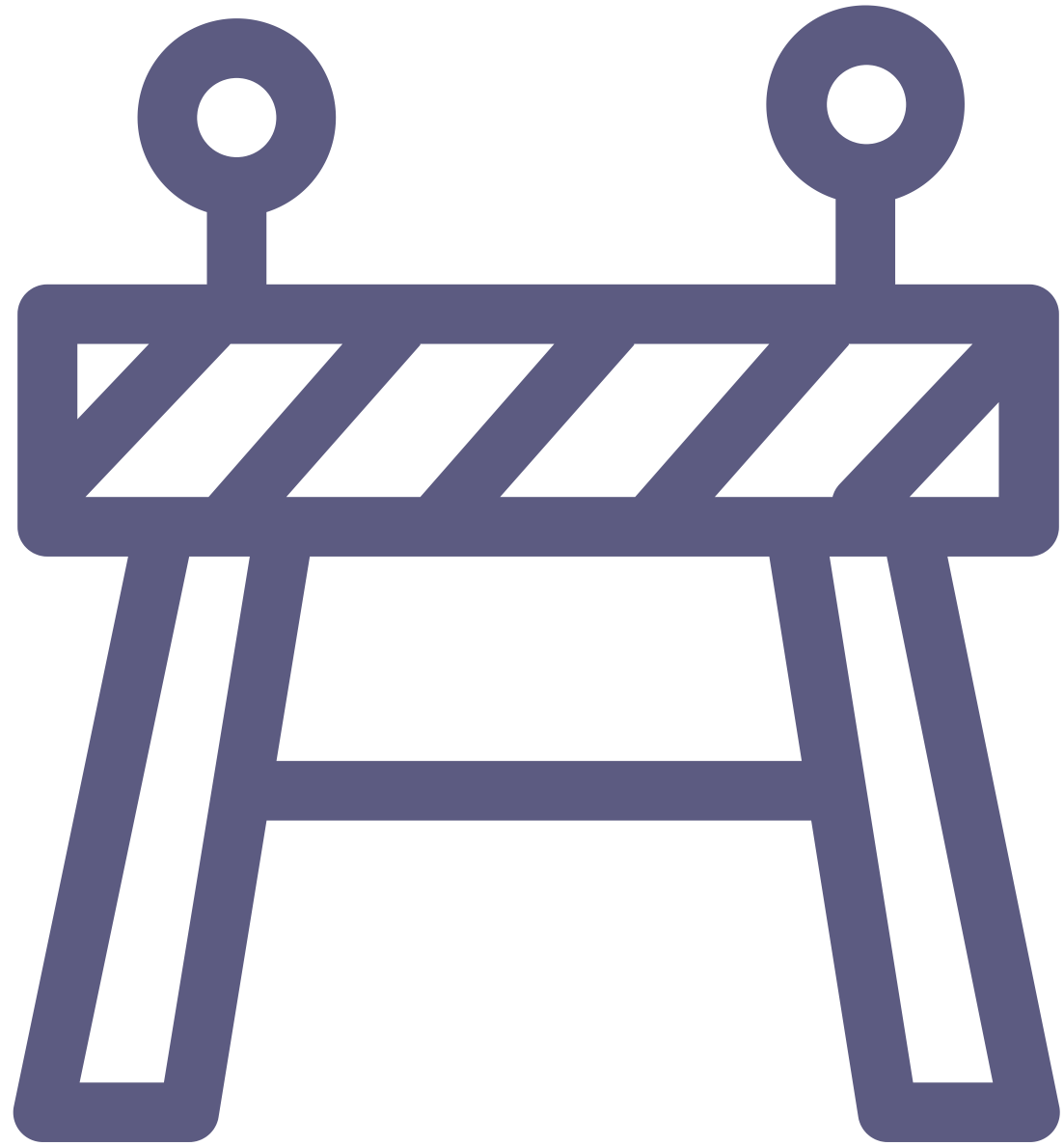
Sustaining



“

**IF AMBIGUITY CAN BE
TOLERATED UNTIL A PLAN IS
FORMED, THE PROGRAM
CAN BE SUSTAINED.**

A. Horak



STUMBLING BLOCKS TO SUSTAINABILITY:

Competing Priorities

Turnover

Scale

COMPETING PRIORITIES

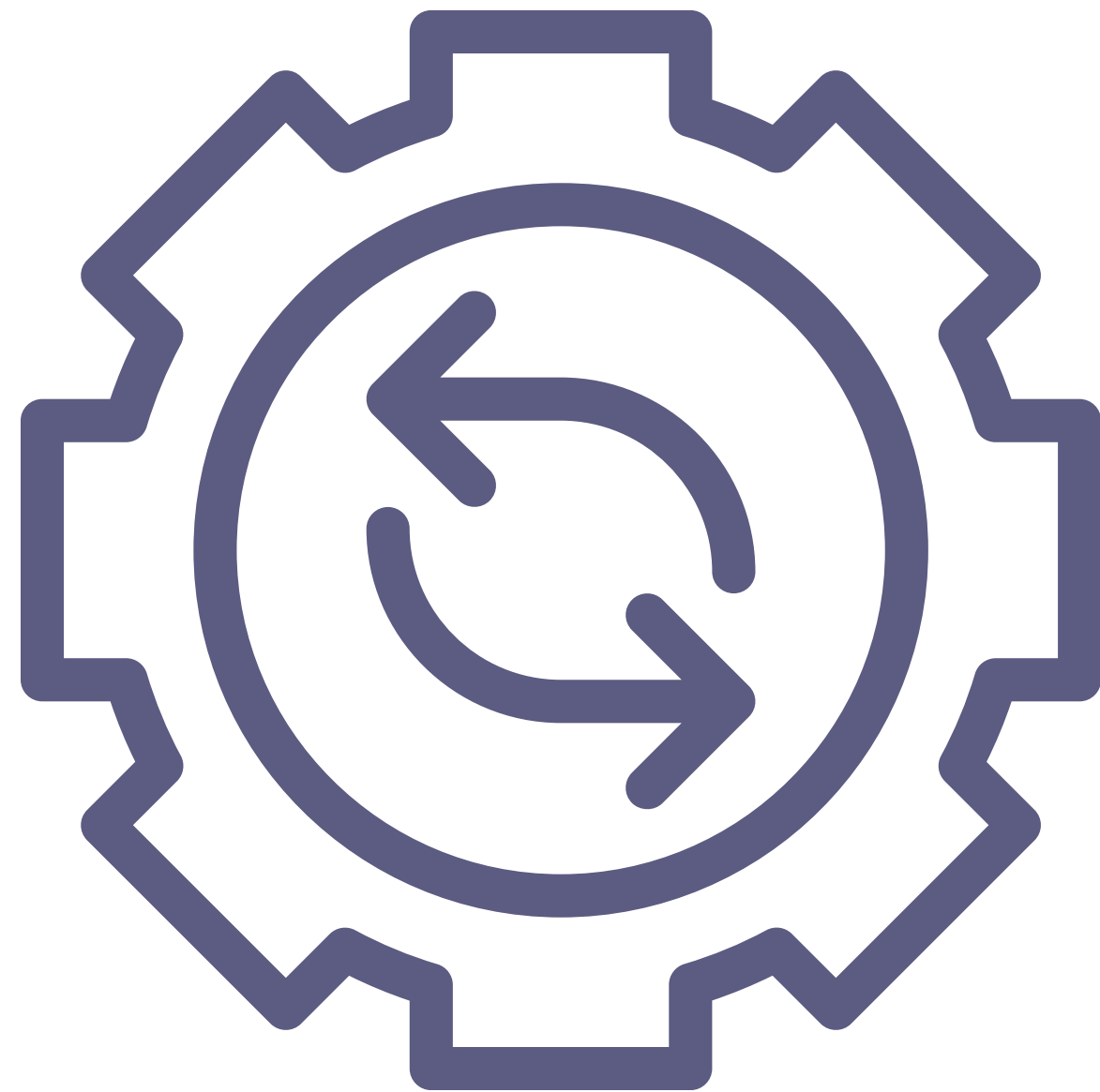
- Acknowledge competing priorities are real
- Work within existing structures
 - People structure
 - Reporting/Scheduling structure
 - Branding/Documents Structure
- Shift from problem-solving to problem-finding
 - Ask a lot of direct questions
 - Offer to help in any way needed
 - Clear is kind
 - Set-up knowledge sharing norms/strategy
- Use schedules, timelines, and deadlines (external, reporting) to create accountability

TURNOVER

- Build an invested team
 - Work for ExCEL and let ExCEL to work for you
- Develop an Apprenticeship Model
 - Trust and delegate
- Hire the help you need
 - You can't be the expert on everything
 - Remember change may happen as the project evolves
- Create infrastructure that supersedes institutional knowledge at the individual level
- Create clear and efficient protocols that can be replicated and learned easily by new team members
- Find your champion
 - Every partner organization has a champion!
 - Champion may change over time

SCALE

- Define your core (and get rid of the extras)
- Stay informed of context
 - News alerts
 - Understand challenges within each level
- Develop a targeted/customized support plan
 - Plans can change!
- Scale back implementation, # of units, grade levels, teachers, schools
 - It's not all or nothing
 - Delayed/rolling start
- Permission to let go of perfectionism



Future Project Pipeline - Sustaining

- How can we create opportunities for sustainability?
- What do districts need to implement with fidelity and scale over time?
- How can we measure student growth after PBL implementation as a direct result of professional learning?

QUESTIONS?



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