



Many Faces of Policy Advocacy: Reclaiming Educators' Voice, Knowledge, and Authority in the Struggle for Equity and Justice

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Overview

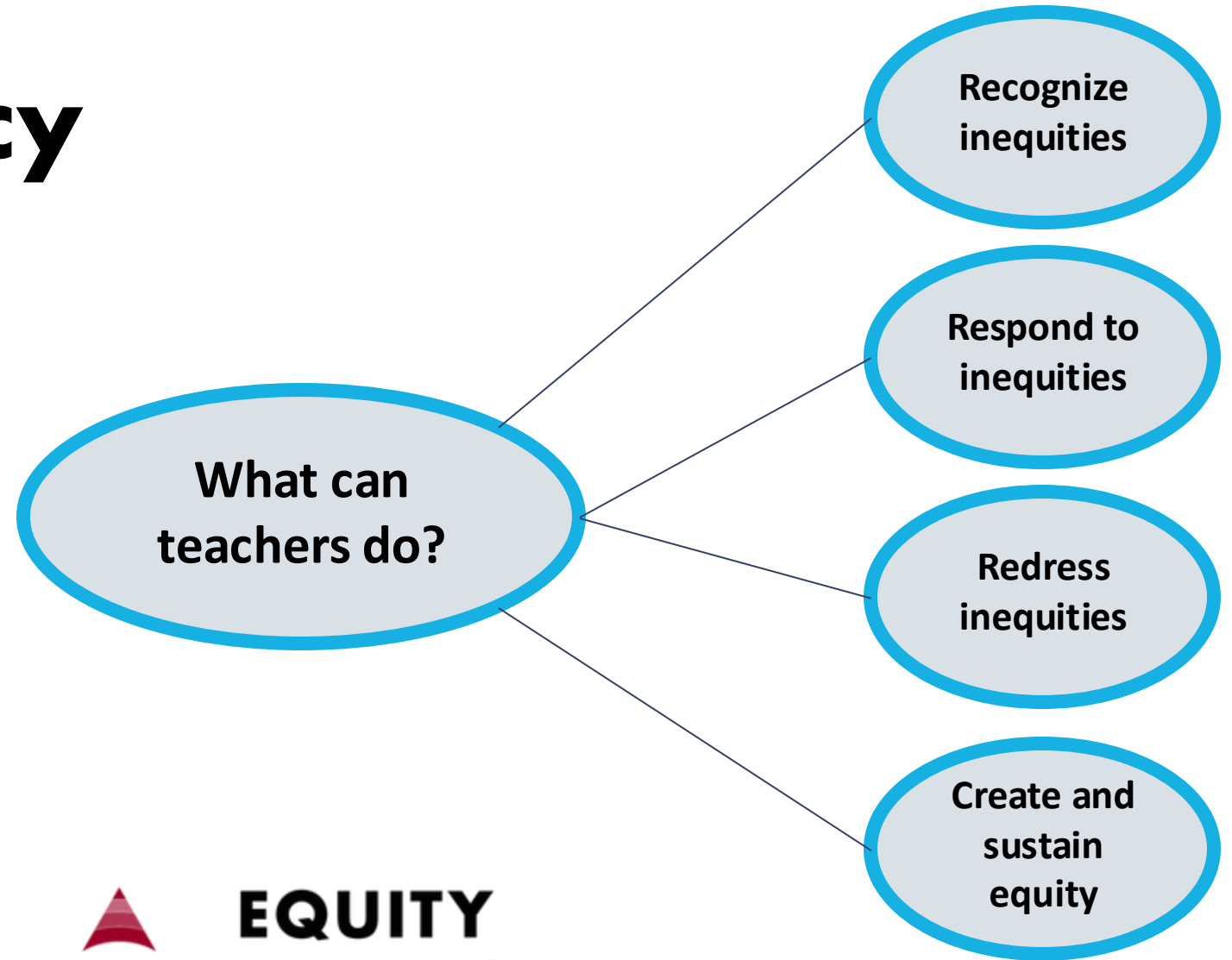
- Equity and Justice
- Educators' Policy Advocacy
- Structural and Systemic Barriers to Teacher Voice
- Recommendations for Policymakers

Equity and Justice

Equity Literacy

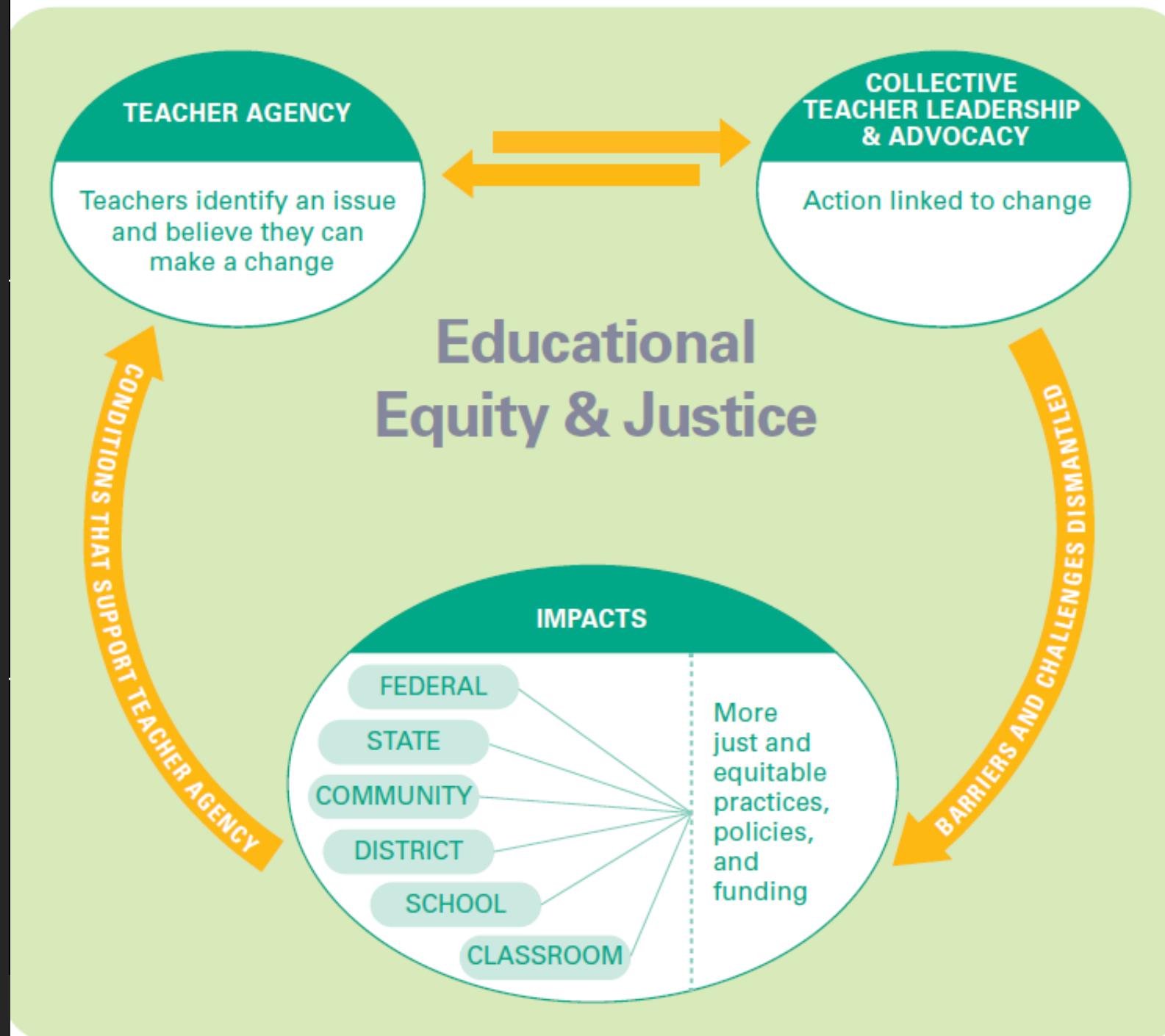
“Equity is a process through which we ensure that policies, practices, institutional cultures, and ideologies are actively equitable, purposefully attending to the interests of the students and families to whose interests we have attended inequitably.”

(Gorski, 2020)



Teacher Leadership and Advocacy Conceptual Map

(Catone et al., 2017)





Educators' Policy Advocacy

What is policy advocacy?

Policy advocacy is ...

“intentional activities initiated by the public to affect the policy making process” (Gen & Wright, 2013, p. 165)

“efforts taken by teachers to influence education policy toward equitable systems change” (Hara & Good, 2023, p. 6).

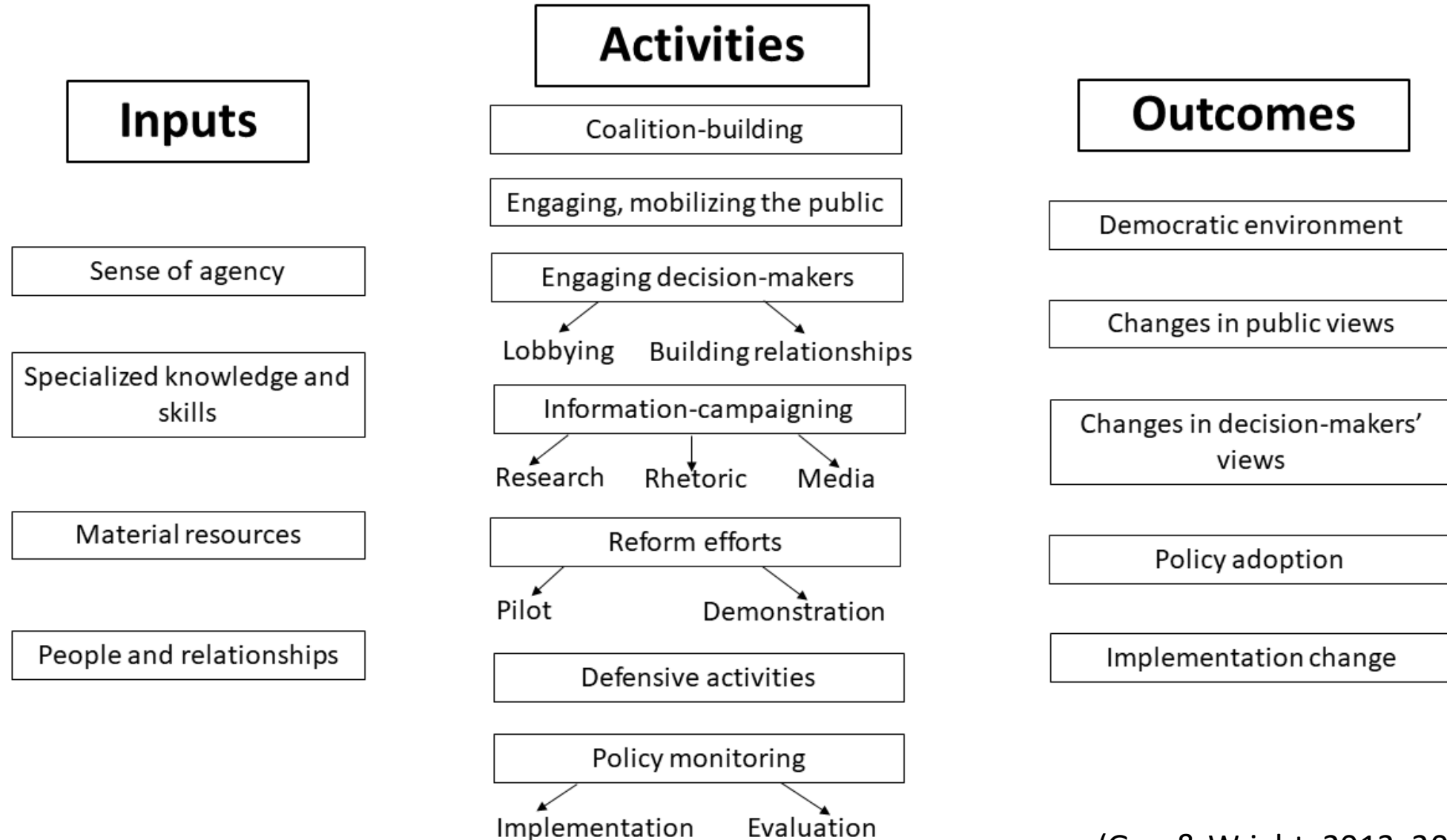
- Public education and influencing public opinion
- Research for interpreting problems and suggesting preferred solutions
- Consistent action and public mobilizations
- Agenda setting and policy design
- Policy implementation, monitoring, and feedback
- Social media campaigns

(Catone, et al., 2017; Dubetz & de Jong, 2011, pp. 250-251)

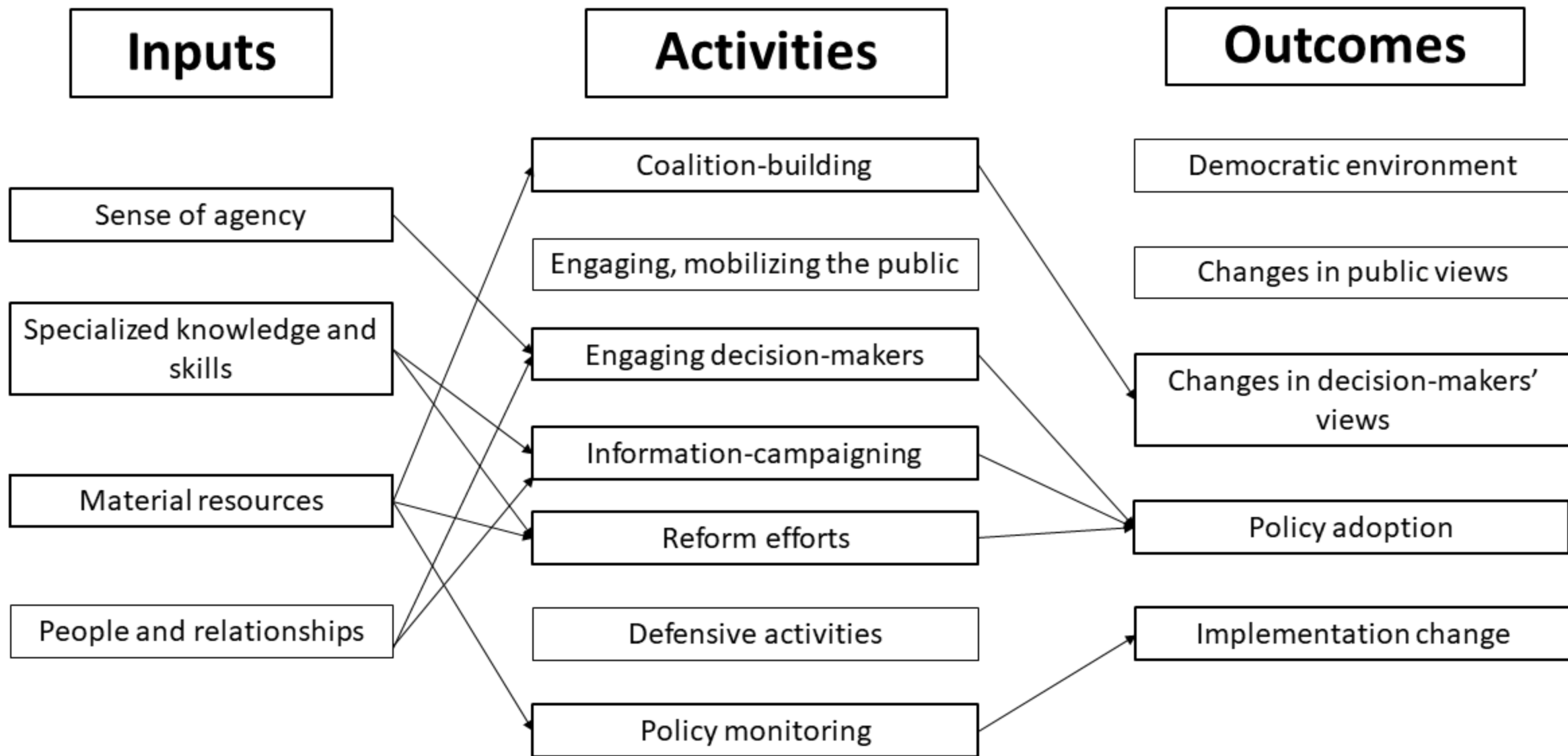


What are the Benefits of Educator Advocacy?

Policy Advocacy



**When can educators
influence policy?**



(Aydarova, Rigney, & Dana, 2022a)



What are the Barriers to Educator Advocacy?

Structural and Systemic Barriers to Teacher Advocacy

Limited knowledge of policy

Lack of support structures

Lack of inclusion of teacher voices





Limited Knowledge of Policy

“As teachers, there is so much that teachers don't know and not because we don't want to know. I just think that it just happens that way. We get stuck in our **mundane day-to-day class, home, class, home, class, home**, and we don't really know what's going on and how policy is created and all the things that we could do to actually make a difference for future teachers and students.”
[Teacher, Policy Fellow, Interview 2023]

A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a patterned shirt, stands in front of a large window, presenting to a group of people seated in the foreground. The group includes a man with a beard and glasses, and a woman with dark hair in a bun. The background shows a modern office interior with large windows overlooking a city building.

Opportunities to Learn about Policy and Advocacy

Opportunities to Learn – Preservice Programs

Coursework

Ed Policy

Analysis

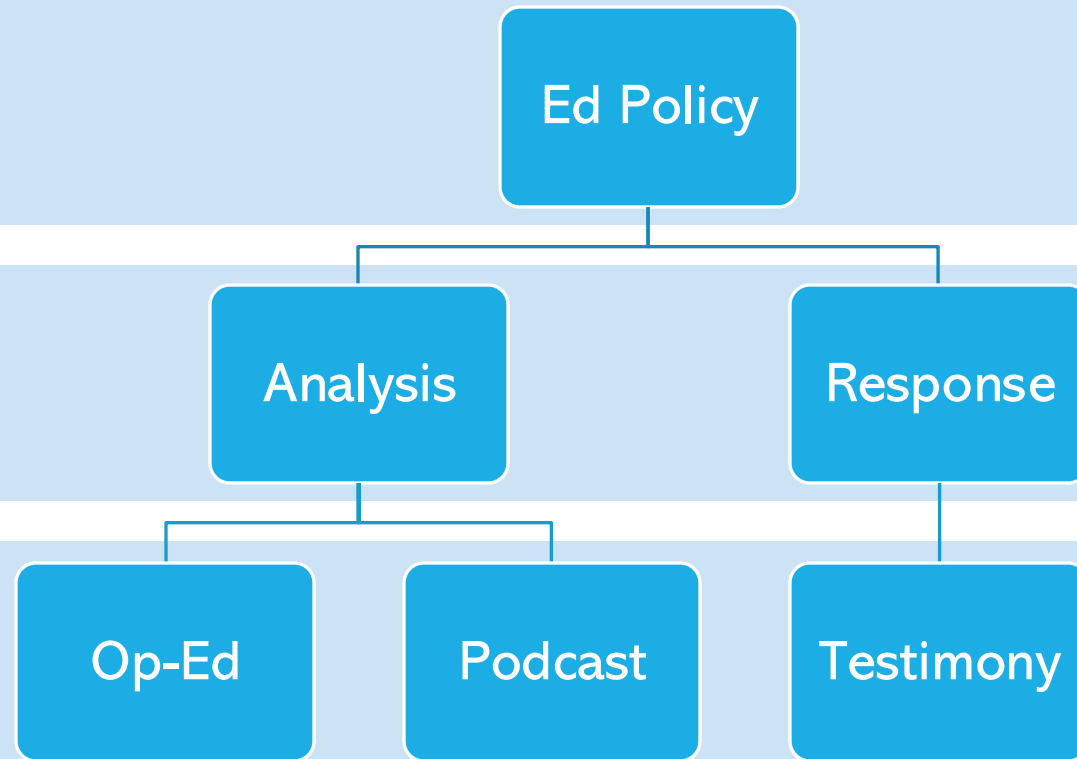
Response

Projects

Op-Ed

Podcast

Testimony



Competencies and Specialized Knowledge for Advocacy

- Ability to articulate a vision of what equitable and just education should look like
- Ability to communicate with diverse audiences (e. g., policymakers, media)
- Ability to identify and define problems
- Ability to conduct research to address problems
- Ability to propose policy solutions
- Working with and alongside communities

(Aydarova, et al., 2022b; Cartone, 2017; Gen & Wright, 2020)

Formal Training Opportunities for Teachers and Teacher Educators on Policy and Advocacy



2024 SUMMER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE ✕

**Become A Key Advocate
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July 15-17 | Washington, DC

Finding Your Voice, Finding Your Story

AAPT/AIP Master Teacher Policy Fellowship

6-13 JULY 2019

Washington, DC

This fellowship will bring together a dozen **K-12 classroom teachers of physics and physical science** to Washington, DC to develop and revise their own plans for effecting change in policy that relates to physical science education.

Prior and current K-12 classroom teachers of physics and physical science with evidence of leadership are encouraged to apply.

See <https://www.aapt.org/k12/> for further details.



Opportunities to Learn – Inservice Programs



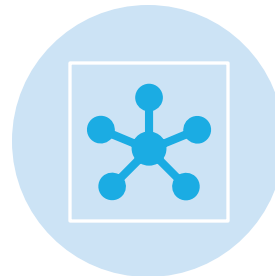
Teacher-led
unconferences focused
on policy issues



Collaborative mentoring
around key policies



Coalition building with
other organizations and
groups active in policy
contexts



Concept and network
mapping

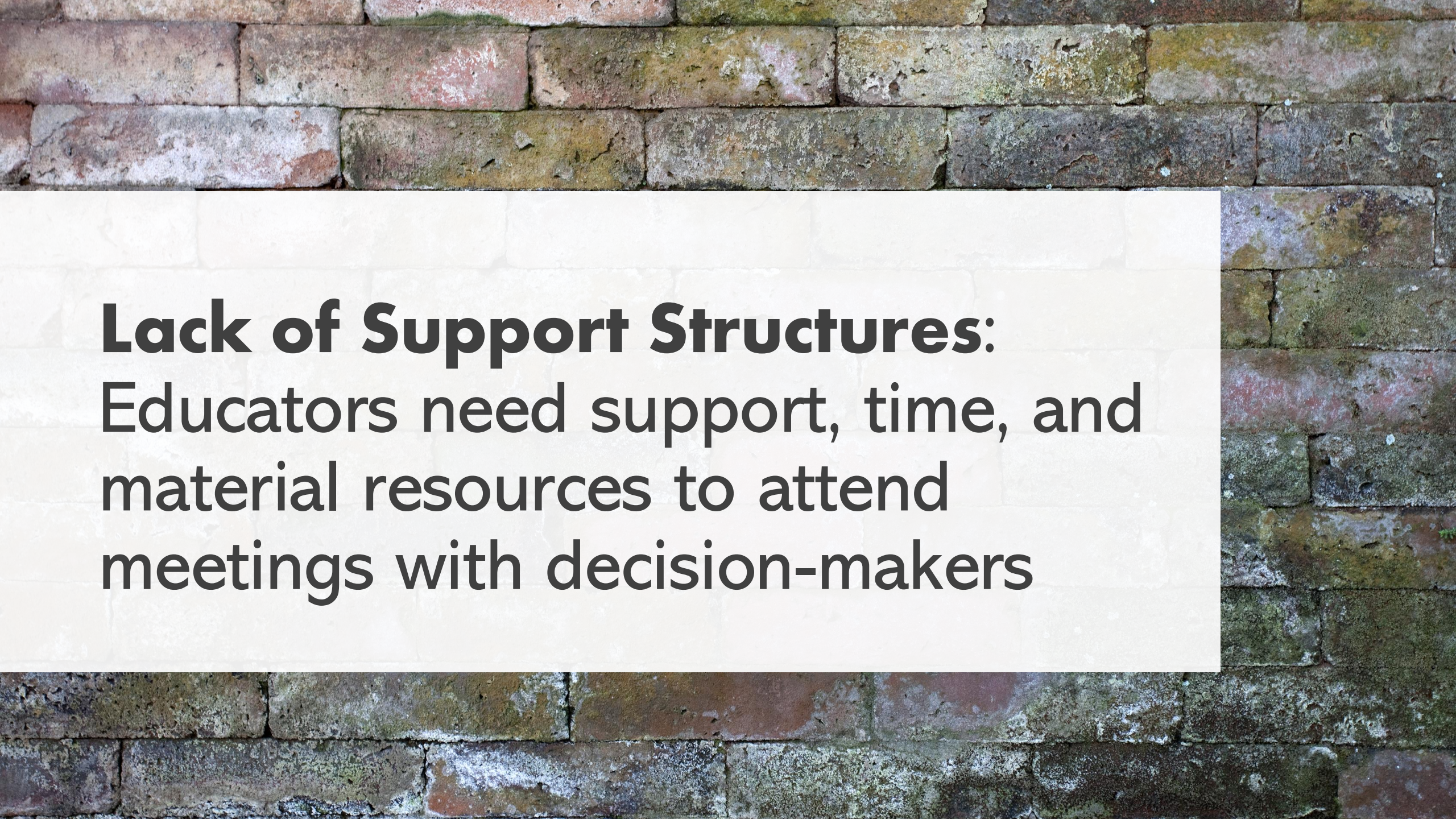
(Hara & Good, 2023)

Policy Fellowship Programs hold monthly meetings where teachers learn about policymaking and meet decisionmakers

“A goal [is] to familiarize us with the people with some power and how to get in touch with them, because they usually end with, ‘Here's my email and phone number. Feel free to reach out to me.’” [Teacher, Policy Fellow, Interview 2023]

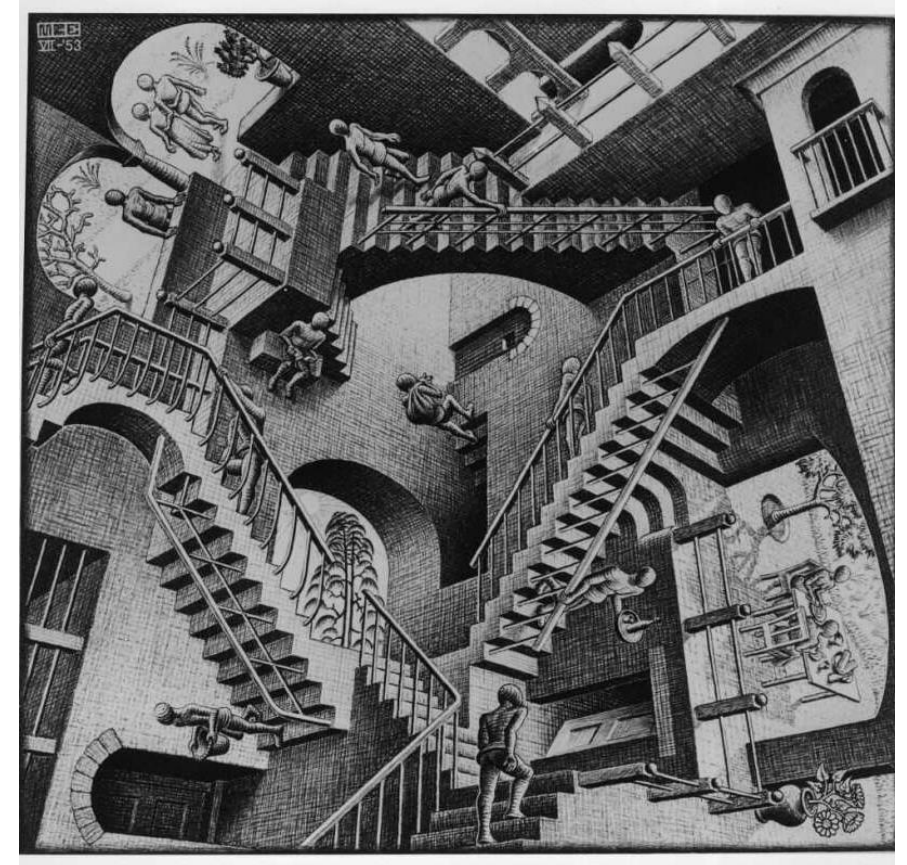
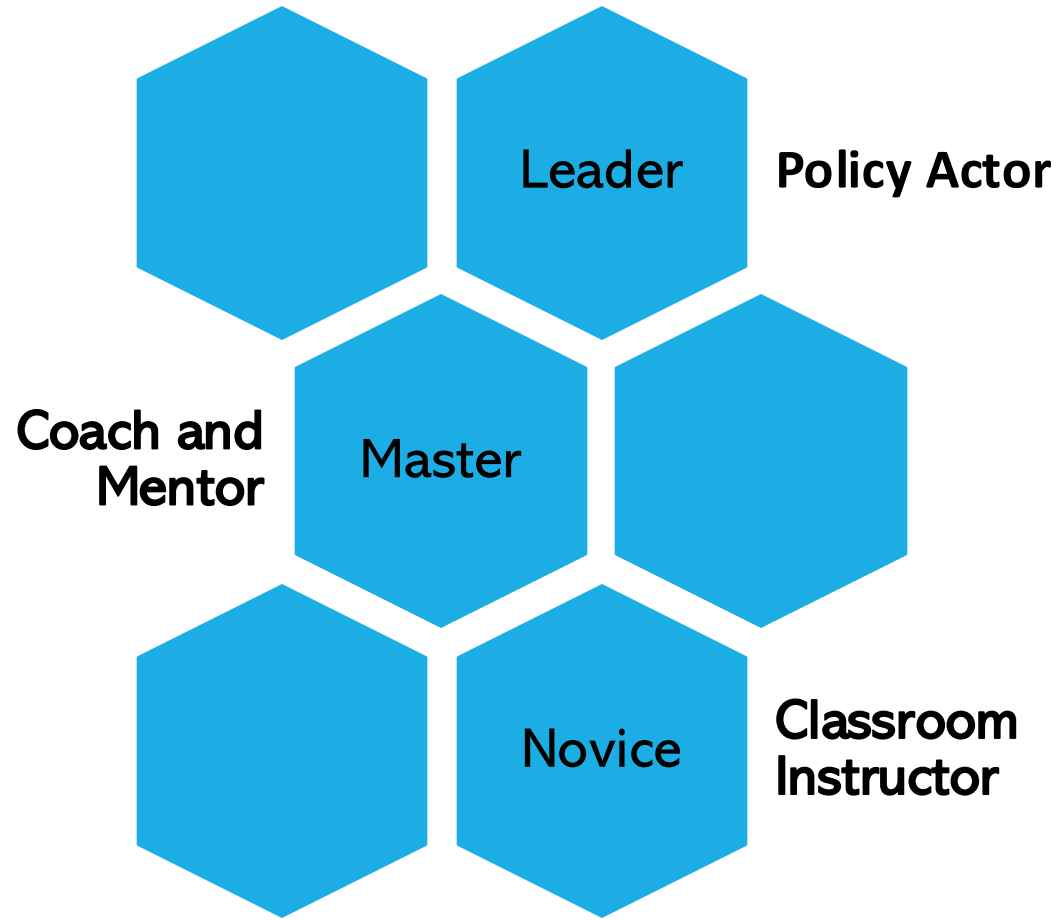



Relationships with Decision-Makers

The background is a close-up photograph of a brick wall. The bricks are in various shades of red, brown, and grey, with some showing signs of weathering and moss. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text.

Lack of Support Structures:
Educators need support, time, and
material resources to attend
meetings with decision-makers

Support Through Teacher Career Ladders

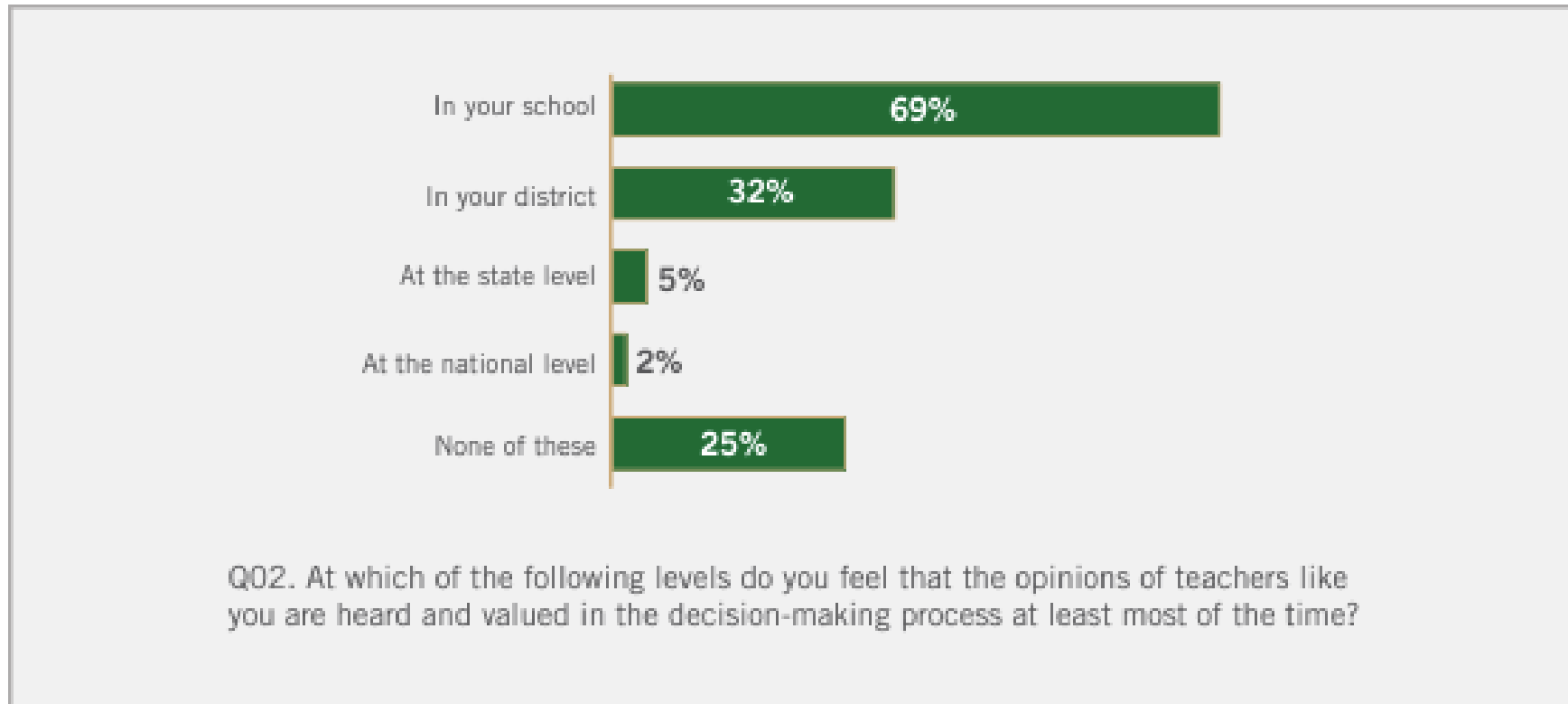




Lack of Inclusion of Educator Voices:
Educators need opportunities to raise
their voices and engage in dialogue
with decision-makers

Percentage of Teachers Who Feel the Opinions of “Teachers like me” Are Heard and Valued at Each Level

Base: Total Respondents.



Source: Scholastic & Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013



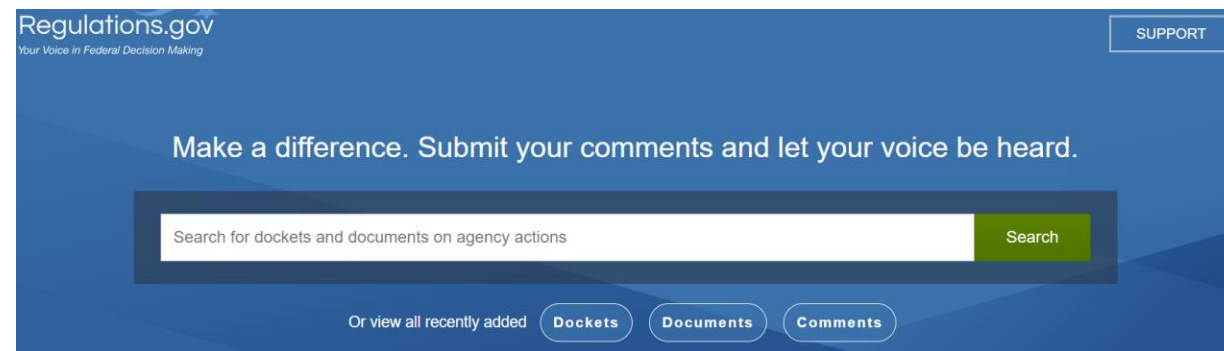
International Summit on the Teaching Profession

How odd it is that teachers would be afraid to speak up at a conference centered on the teaching profession.

For the rest of the Summit, chief country delegates, secretaries and ministers of education, union leaders, and educational researchers sat at the discussion tables. All other delegates sat around the perimeter of the room or in an overflow room observing the proceedings. As teachers in attendance, we found ourselves in the observer seats. (Aponti & Bandi, 2015)

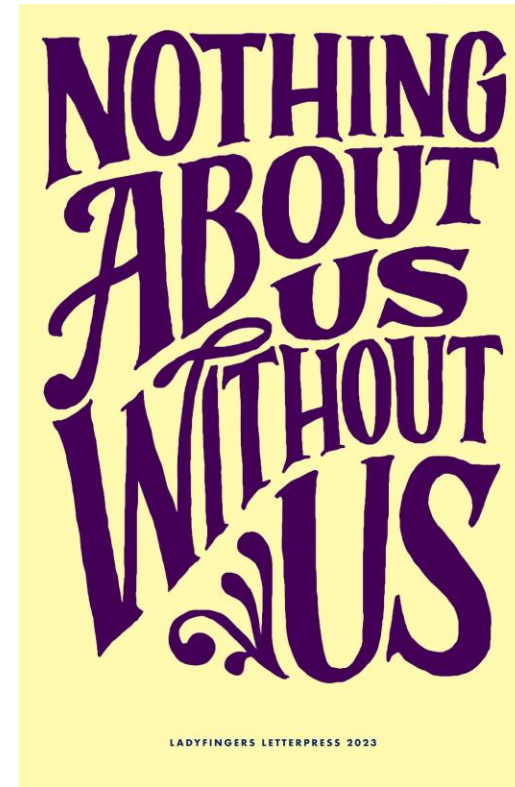
Including Educators' Voices

Working Groups
Advisory Boards
Advisory Councils
Requests for Comment



Including Educators' Voices

Negotiated rulemaking is the process through which a government agency meets with policy stakeholders to discuss and negotiate the language of a forthcoming proposed regulation (Natow, 2023, p. 1).



A group of people, including a man in a grey sweater and a woman in a brown sweater, are looking towards a whiteboard. The whiteboard has handwritten notes: "hotel", "alcohol", "pool", and "Shopping". In the foreground, a person in a white shirt is partially visible. In the background, two women are standing and looking towards the whiteboard. One woman is wearing a black sweater and the other is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and white pants. The setting appears to be a meeting or a classroom.

Trust Educators as Professionals

Recommendations for Policymakers

1. Seek out and listen to teachers at scale
2. Trust, support, and encourage teacher leaders' ambitions
3. Invest in teachers, particularly in solutions that strengthen practice and build leadership capacity

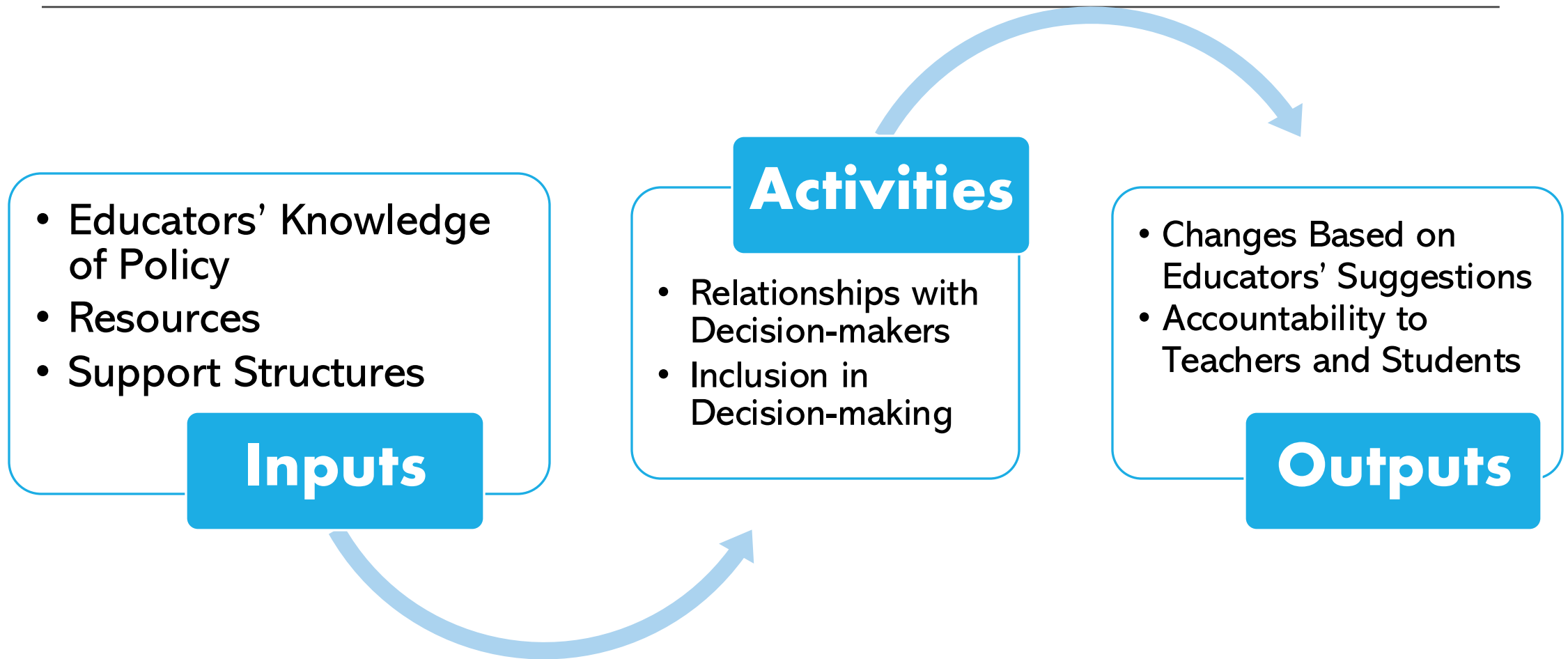
TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN UNCERTAIN TIMES:

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
BOARD-CERTIFIED TEACHERS
FOR SCHOOL, DISTRICT AND
STATE LEADERS

NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional Teaching Standards®

What is necessary for policy advocacy?





Thank you!

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