



# Targeted Support for Continuous Improvement in Special Education

## CCSS Implementation Consortium

August 5, 2019

# Who We Are

Arun Ramanathan, CEO



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Educational Programs

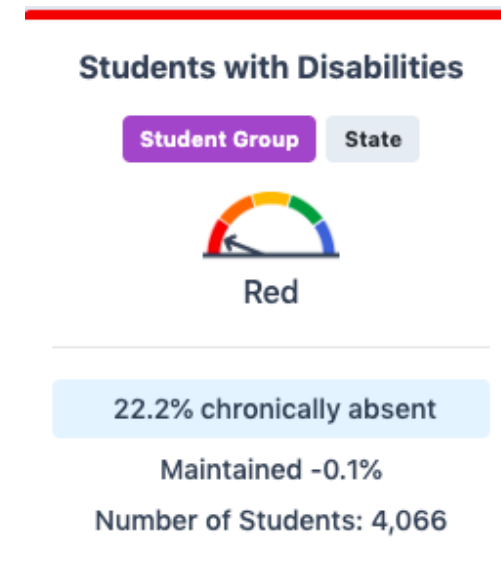
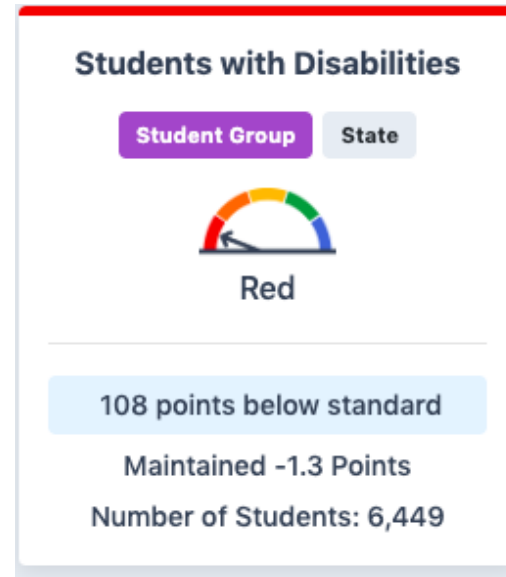
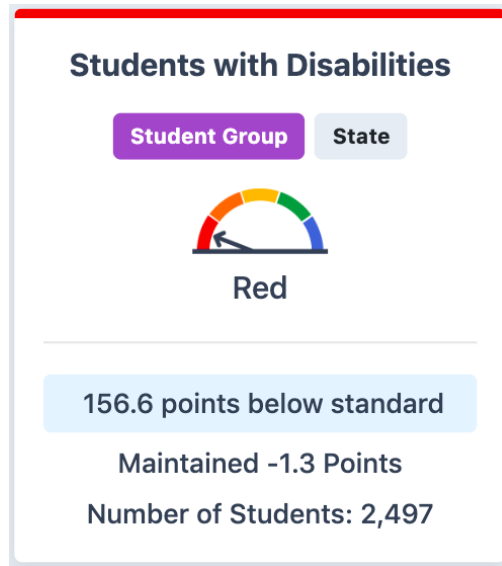


# Special Education Outcomes on the CA Dashboard

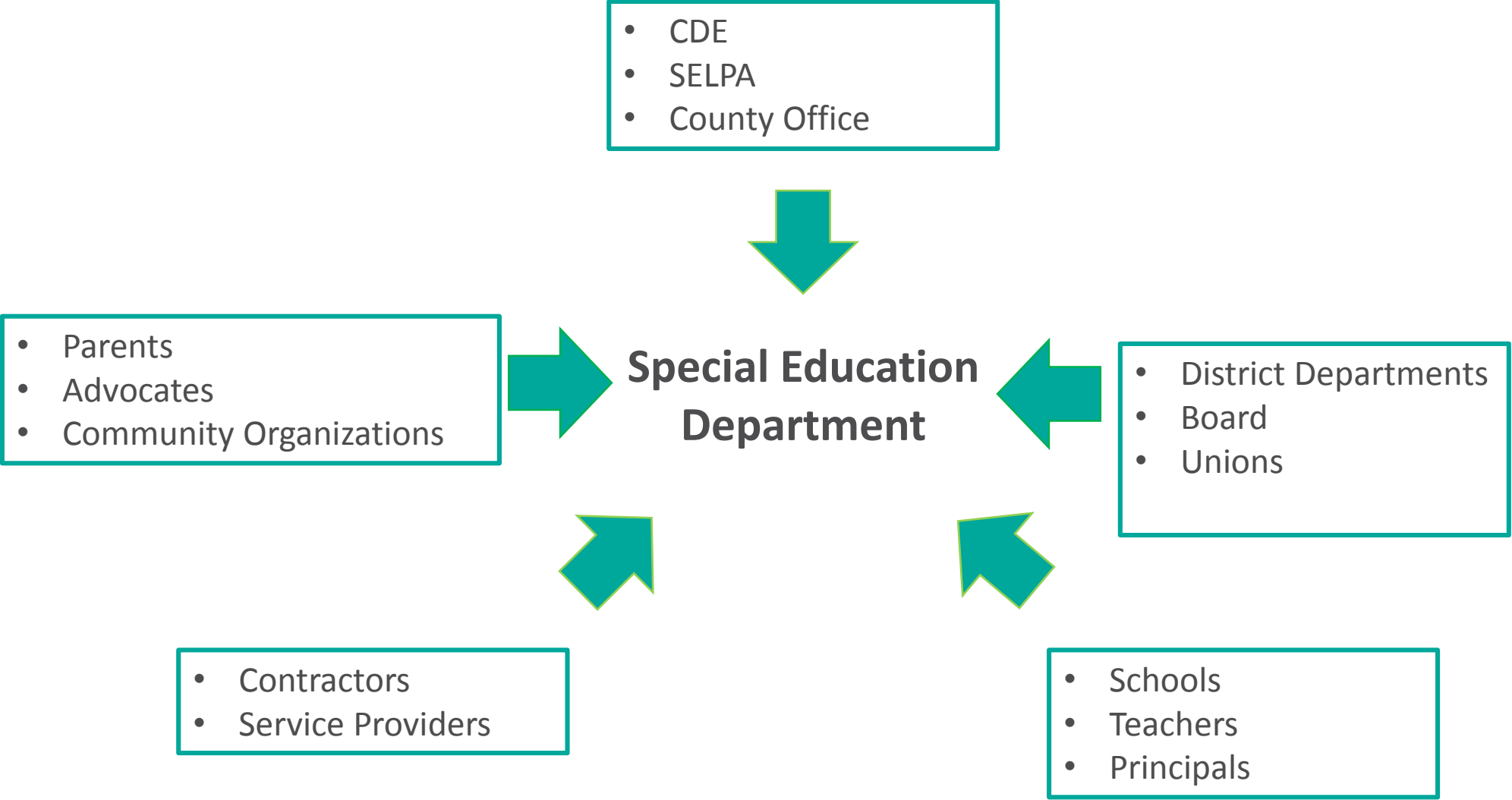
English Language  
Arts

Math

Chronic Absenteeism



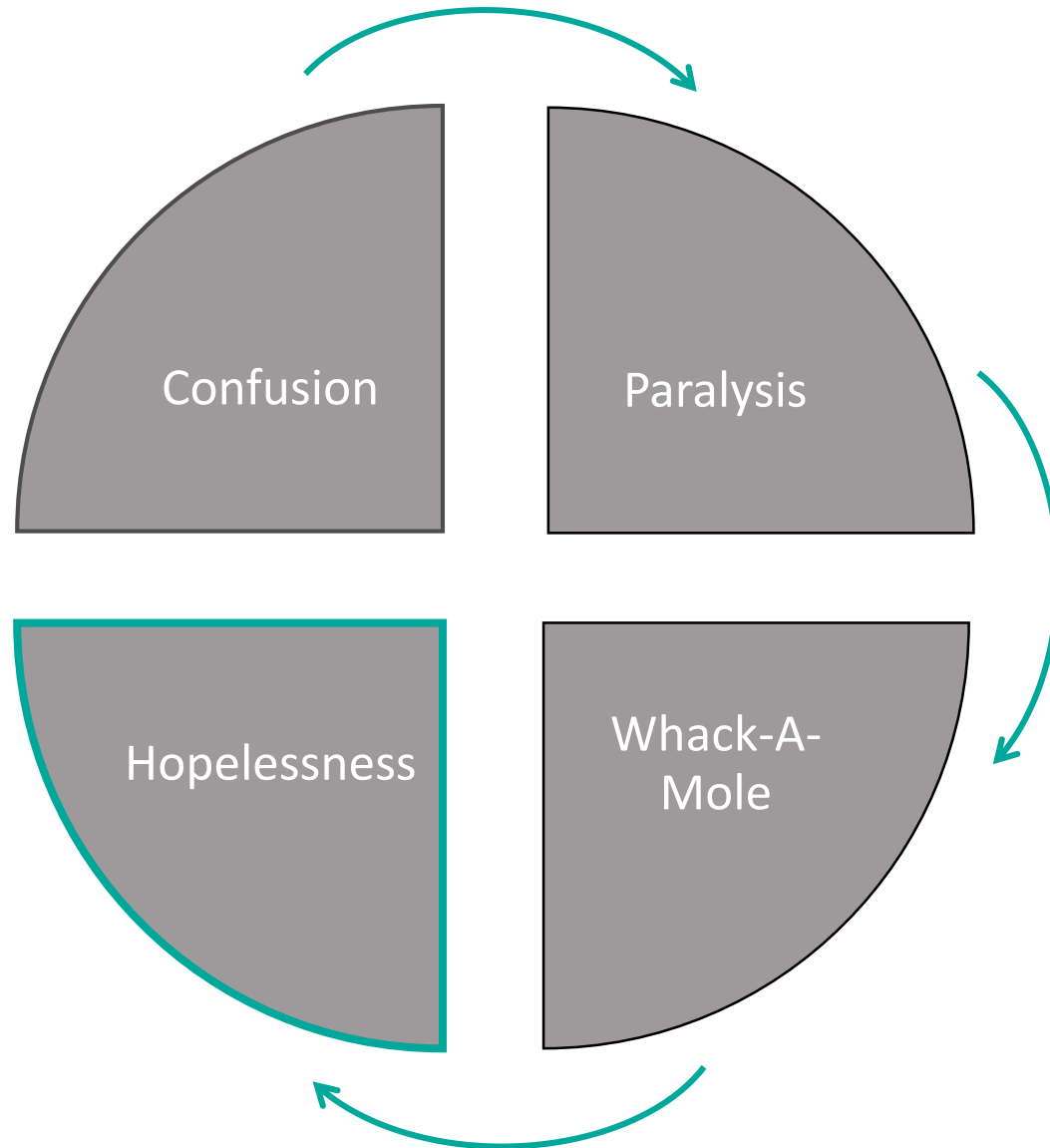
# Special Education Landscape



# Special Education Dashboard Indicator Overload

- Academic outcomes
- Suspension and Expulsion
- Attendance
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**
- **Disproportionality**
- **Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**
- **ChildFind**
- **Hours of related services**
- **Overidentification**
- **IEP Timelines**
- **# of credentialed special education teachers**

# Special Education Improvement Overload



# Compliance

- IEP Timelines
- Service Provision
- Due Process
- Many more!



# Performance

- MTSS
- UDL
- Standards Aligned Instruction
- Inclusion

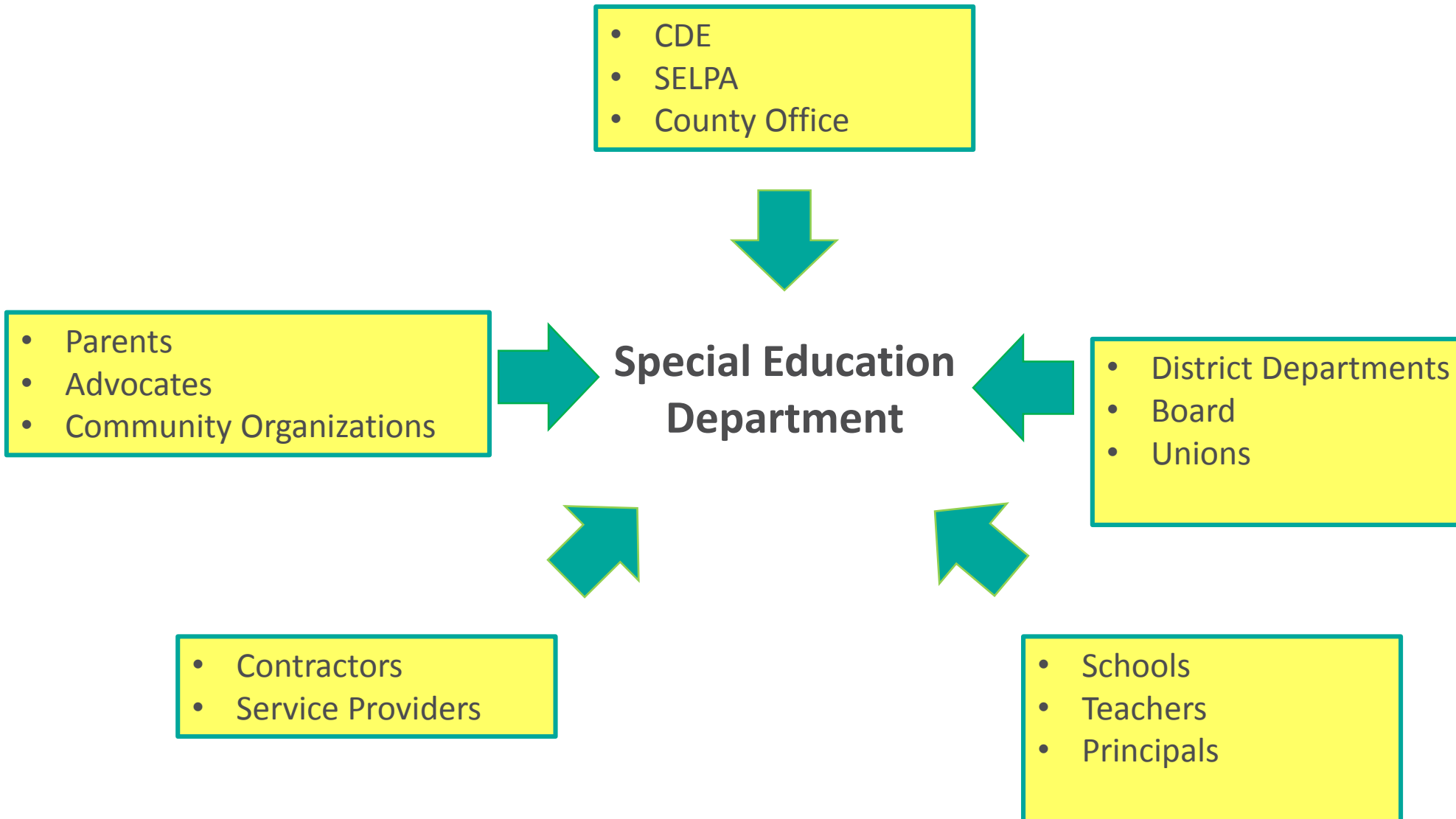
How do we hold onto these two elements simultaneously?

# District A: High Compliance Needs

- Out of compliance with IEP timelines, not meeting numbers of service hours on IEPs
- High turnover in special education administration and teachers
- 100% of related service providers are outside contractors; poor tracking of services provided
- Minimal ownership of special education by school principals
- High levels of external scrutiny and a self-defeating compliance loop



# Special Education Landscape: District A



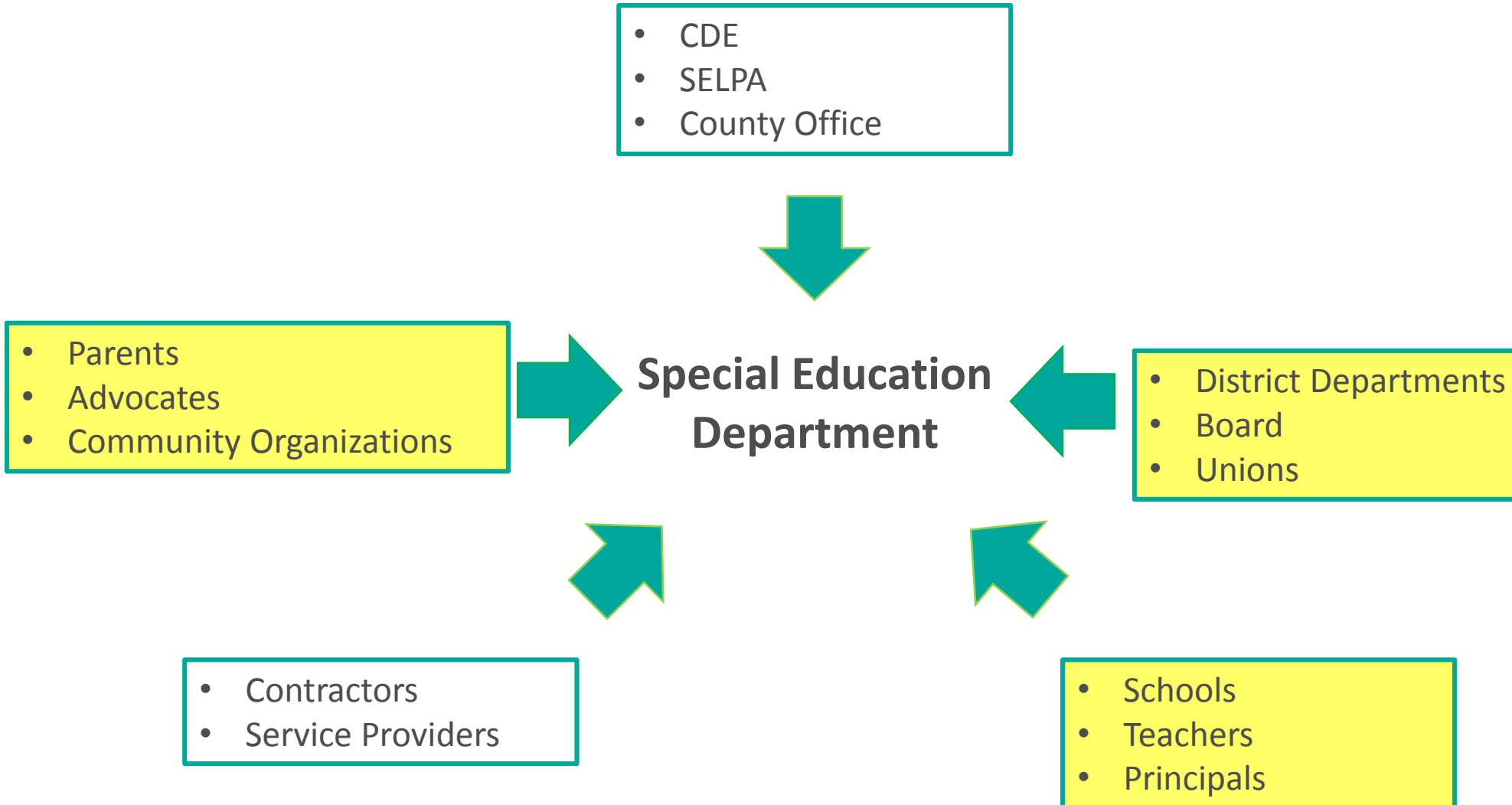
# Targeted Supports to District A

- Developed a highly collaborative relationship with CDE, County Offices, SELPA, and other support providers to understand specific district demands
- Built relationships and trust with key individuals: Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Director of Special Education, Program Specialists, Principals
- Provided specific expertise and knowledge to address areas of non-compliance: developing Policy and Procedure Manuals, developing service tracking systems, support with ESY, behavioral support classrooms

# District B

- New superintendent and a special education director under significant scrutiny by Board, parents, and external entities
- Low levels of inclusion in the least restrictive environment contributing to poor academic outcomes for students with disabilities
- General education and special education were siloed
- Special education department lacked some basic structures, such as a policy and procedures manual
- Board and District leadership were leading improvement efforts-- not driven by external compliance.

# Special Education Landscape: District B



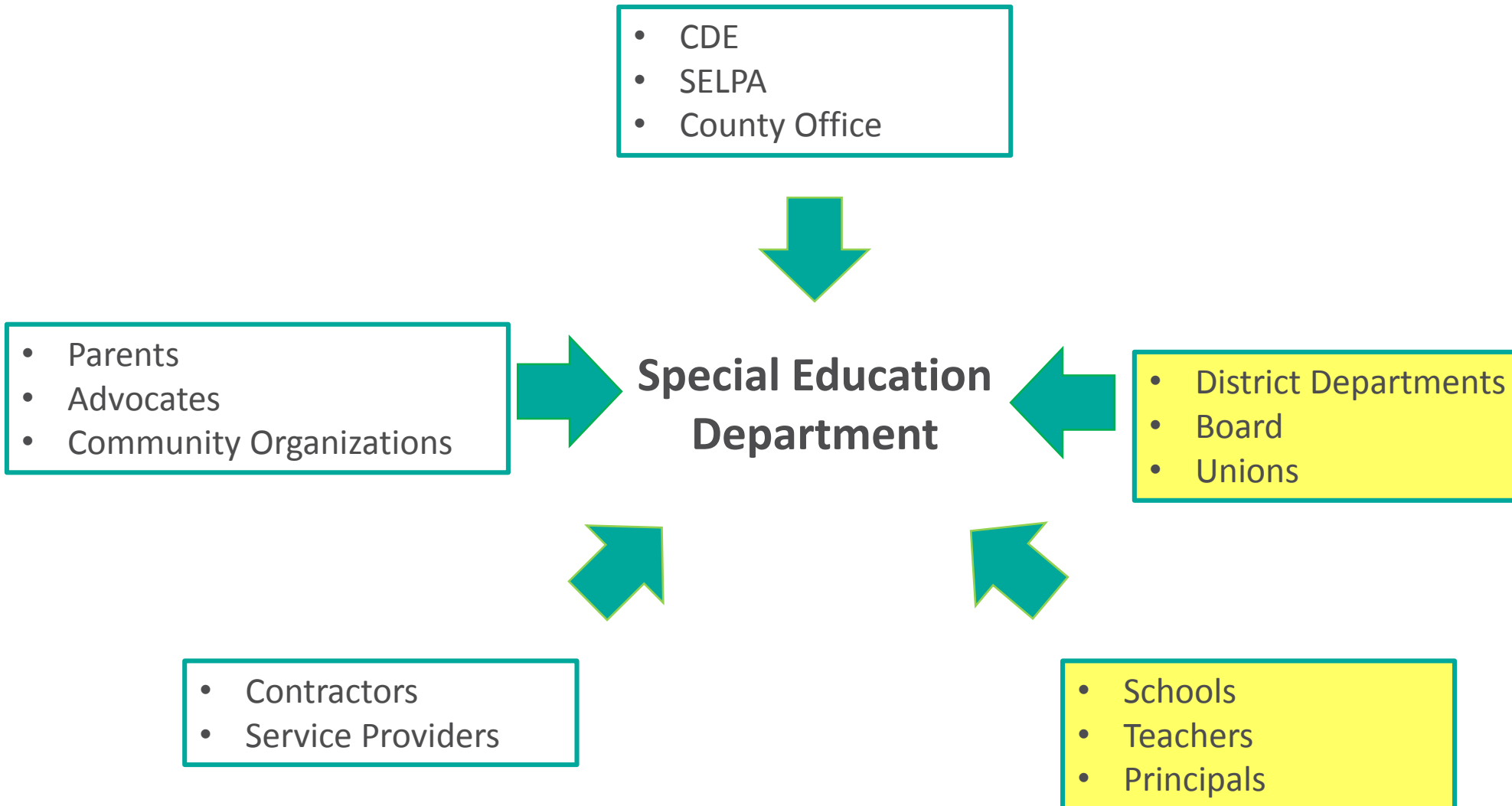
# Targeted Supported to District B

- With the support of the Chief Academic Officer, supported the district process of developing a five-year Special Education Master Plan
- Built a diverse team of district leaders, principals, teachers and parents that remained committed to the process over one year
- Held multiple focus groups with parents, teachers, service providers, and students to build consensus around content and provide feedback on drafts
- After three years, have begun to see significant increases in special education outcomes in comparison to State results for students with disabilities

# District C

- Entire district leadership committed to improvement of special education and systems integration
- Special education and general education siloed
- Special educators not included in district trainings on good instructional practices
- Needing greater instructional alignment overall in the district
- Principals “stuck” in old practices

# Special Education Landscape: District C



# District C Targeted Support

- Worked closely with TOSAs and coaches on cycles of continuous improvement (PDSA), backwards mapping, and lesson plans for standards based IEP goals, Universal Design for Learning, and processes for observation and feedback
- Embedded special education best practices related to least restrictive environment, accommodations and modification, and the continuum of services in special education within professional learning for all educators
- Developed a comprehensive instructional guide for special education teachers and are continuing to develop protocols for instructional support at the site level



# Compliance

- IEP Timelines
- Service Provision
- Due Process
- Many more!



District A

District B

District C

# Performance

- MTSS
- UDL
- Standards Aligned Instruction
- Inclusion

How do we hold onto these two elements simultaneously?

# Lessons Learned

- Root cause analyses that don't consider the special education landscape will not allow us to address the complexity of special education improvement.
- Systems reside along a continuum between needs for support to improve compliance and performance. Both goals must be balanced for true improvement that benefits students with disabilities.
- Specific special education knowledge and expertise is essential to understanding the challenges that systems face and their capacity for improvement.

# Pivot Learning

## Excellence and Equity for Students With Disabilities

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