The provision of professional development in ICT

A New Zealand perspective

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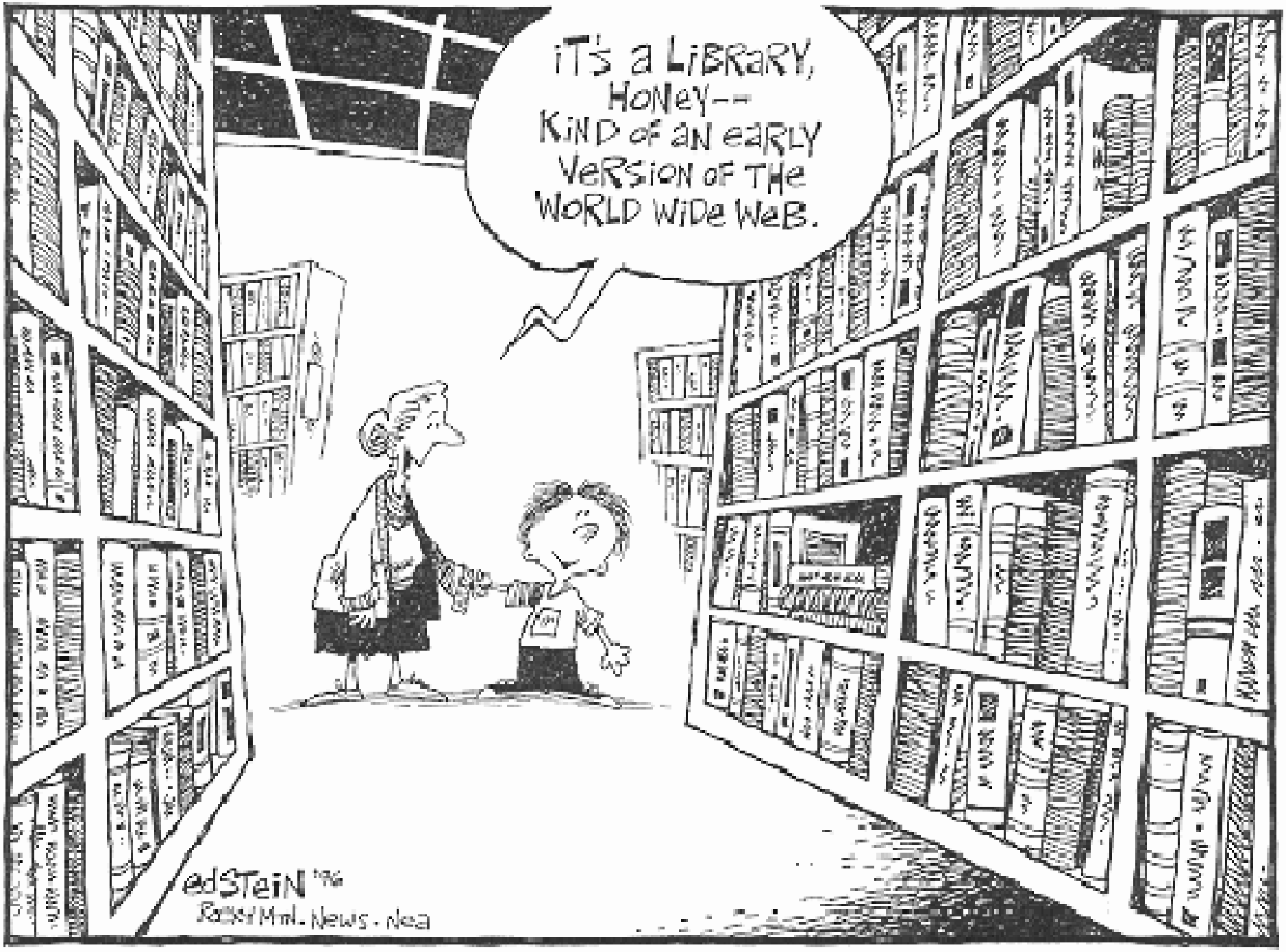
Background

- For the last two decades individual New Zealand Schools and central government agencies have increased their investments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

WHY?

- There is an ongoing belief these investments will enable educational institutions to participate fully in increasingly digitally-rich, globally-connected learning environments.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PD Critical

Local schools and national government agencies recognise there a critical link between

1. the ICT knowledge, competence and confidence of teachers in the use of ICT AND

2. institutional capacity and capability to fully engage learners in ICT supported learning environments.

Central Provision

- Initial professional development offered followed conventional models and modes of provision.

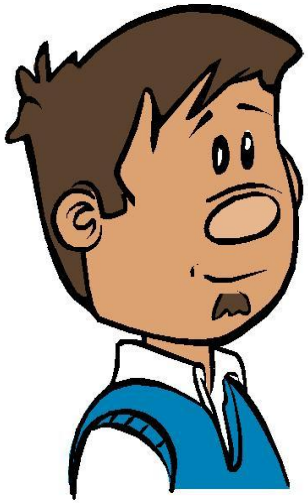
- In essence a nationally perceived need, ***educators lack of personal ICT skills and the associated theoretical knowledge to effectively use ICT in the learning environments created***, was centrally addressed. Through the provision of

1. Scheduled professional development events, within a defined timeframe, and facilitated by external bodies.
2. Provision of expert advisory services

Deficit Model

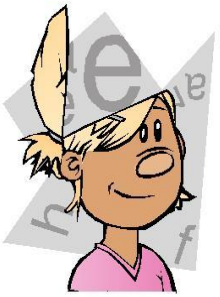
External

Identified Content Prescribed



Expert

Teaching Deficiencies Addressed



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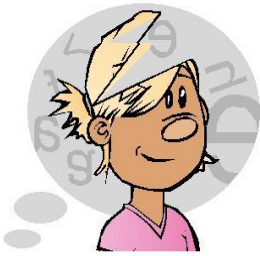

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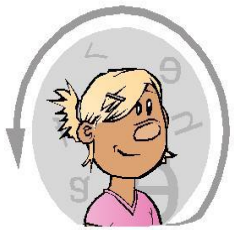

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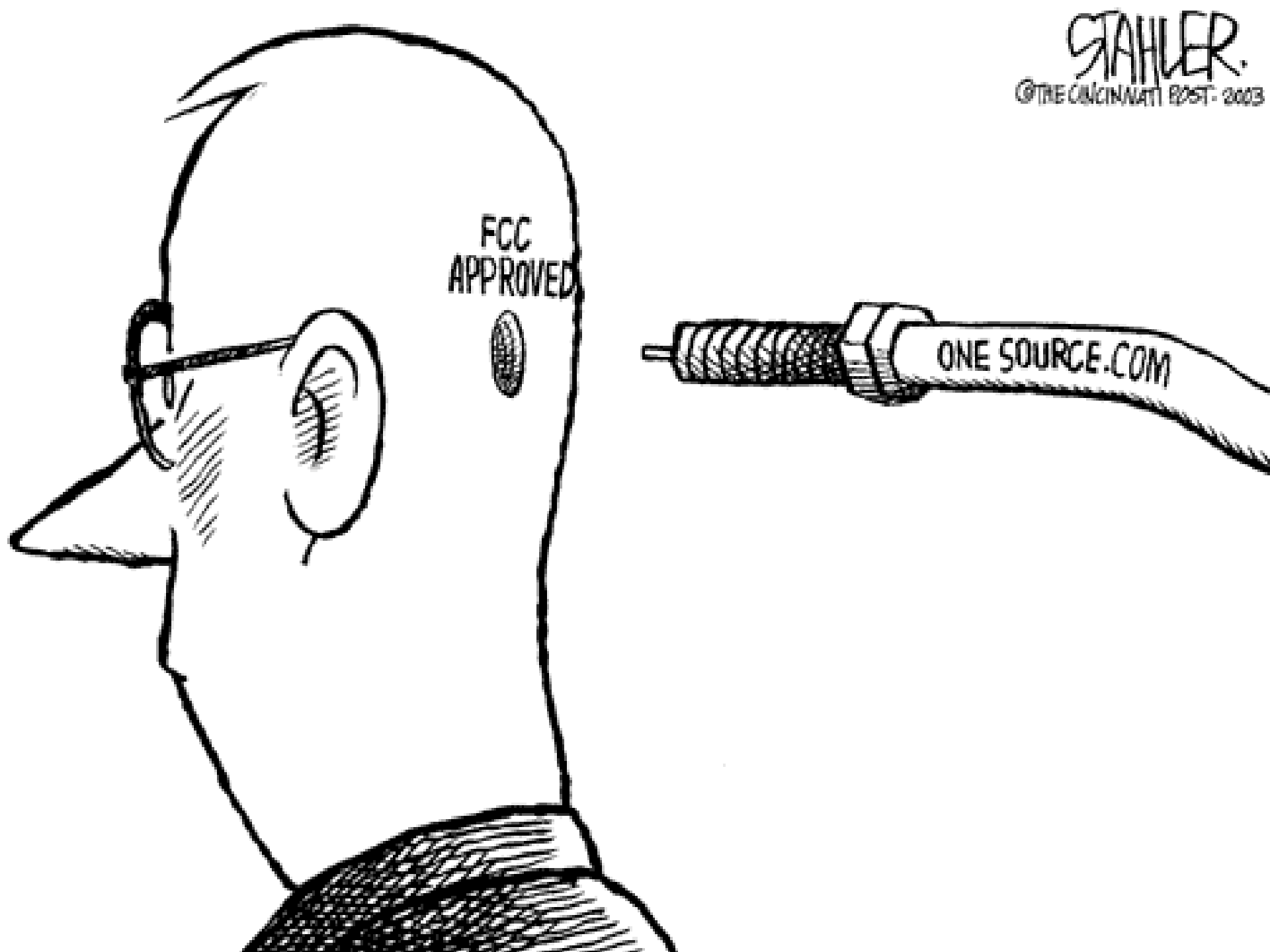
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Anticipation

Application

Aftermath

Competence to Capability

There is a natural association between;

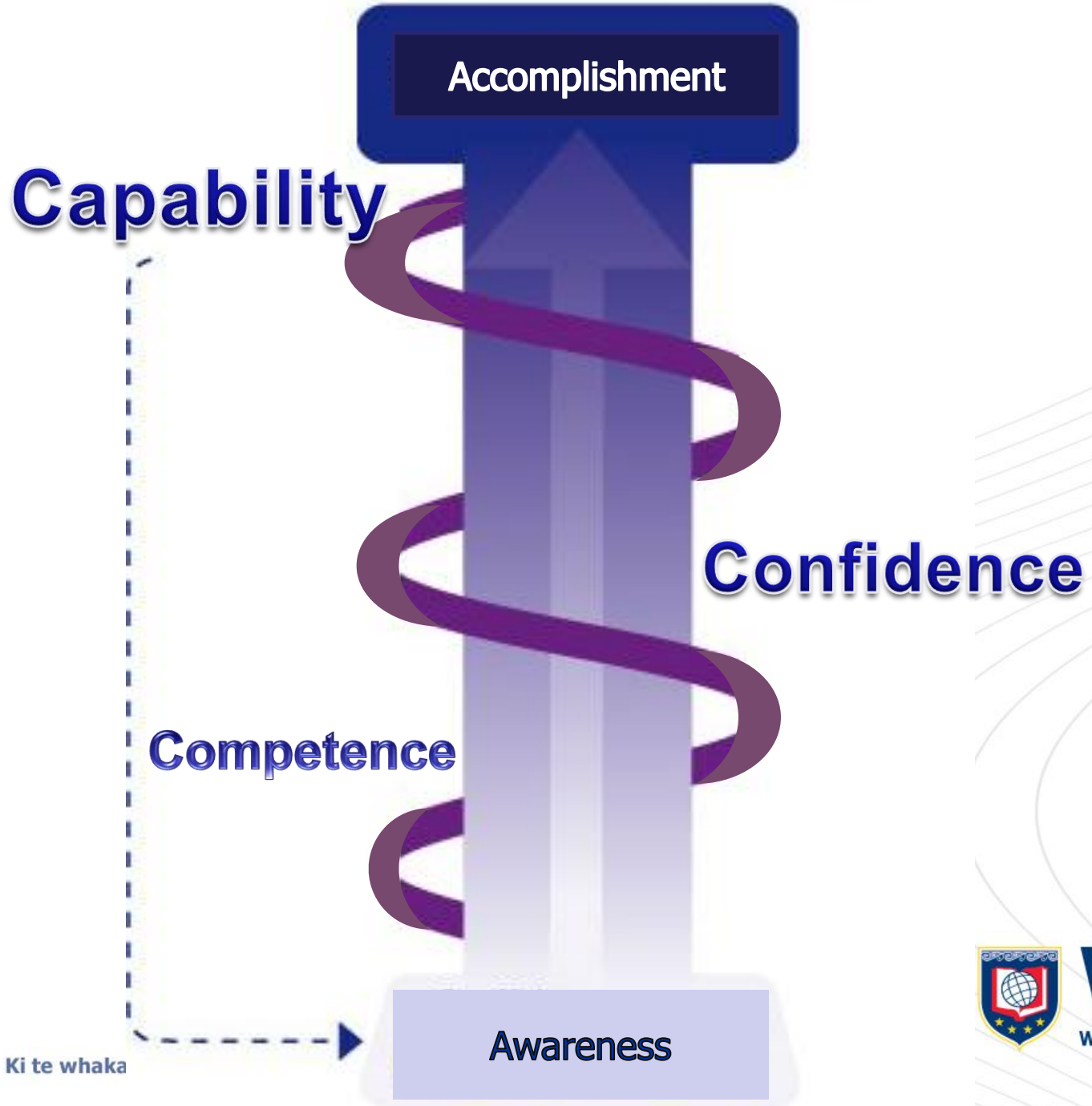
- Teachers acquiring skills (are competent)
- Deploying these skills in their professional practice (are confident)
- Know the use of ICT is beneficial to themselves as professionals and to their learners (are capable).

PD Structure

1. Competencies (How): Practical activities offered on ‘how’ to competently operate various ICTs.

2. Deployment (When): Activities, enhanced by authentic examples, designed to show ‘when’ ICTs can be successfully integrated into learning activities.

3. Theory (Why)**:** Activities, enhanced by applied research, structured to illustrate ‘why’ using ICT in classrooms is beneficial.



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Local Provision

- In the early 1980s educational reforms devolved a number of operational responsibilities from central agencies to self-governing Boards.

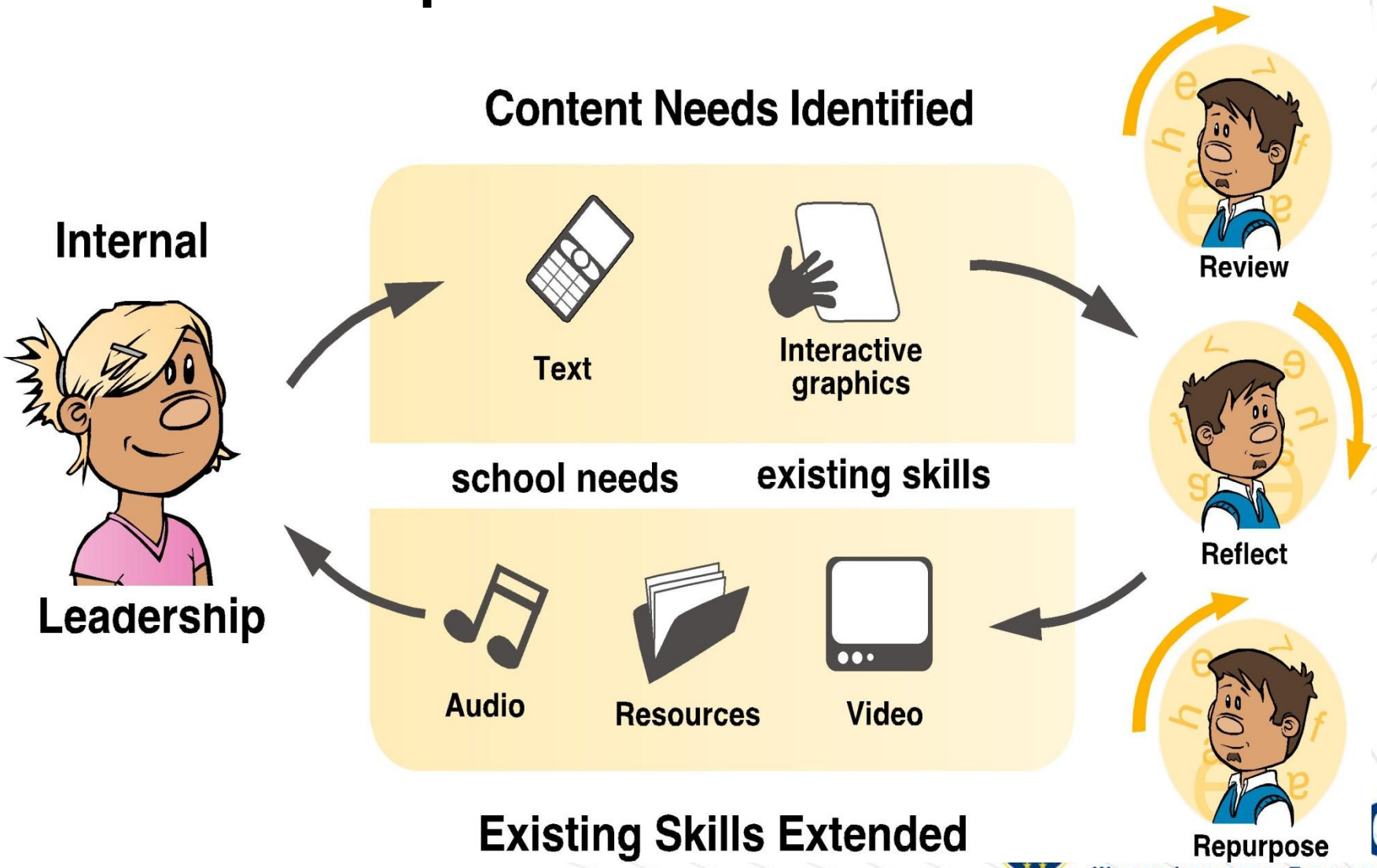
- In line with this a pilot PD model Information Technology Professional Development (ICT PD) initiative was introduced.

- The ICT PD model encouraged groups of schools (clusters) to reflect upon the potential impact and influence of ICTs and identify why, when and how ICTs would be integrated within their current practice.

Empowerment Model

- The 'empowerment' model is based upon
  - Local institutions have an identified vision for the introduction and integration of ICT in their learning environments
  - They identify the ICT competencies required and the pedagogical approach to be followed to implement this vision.

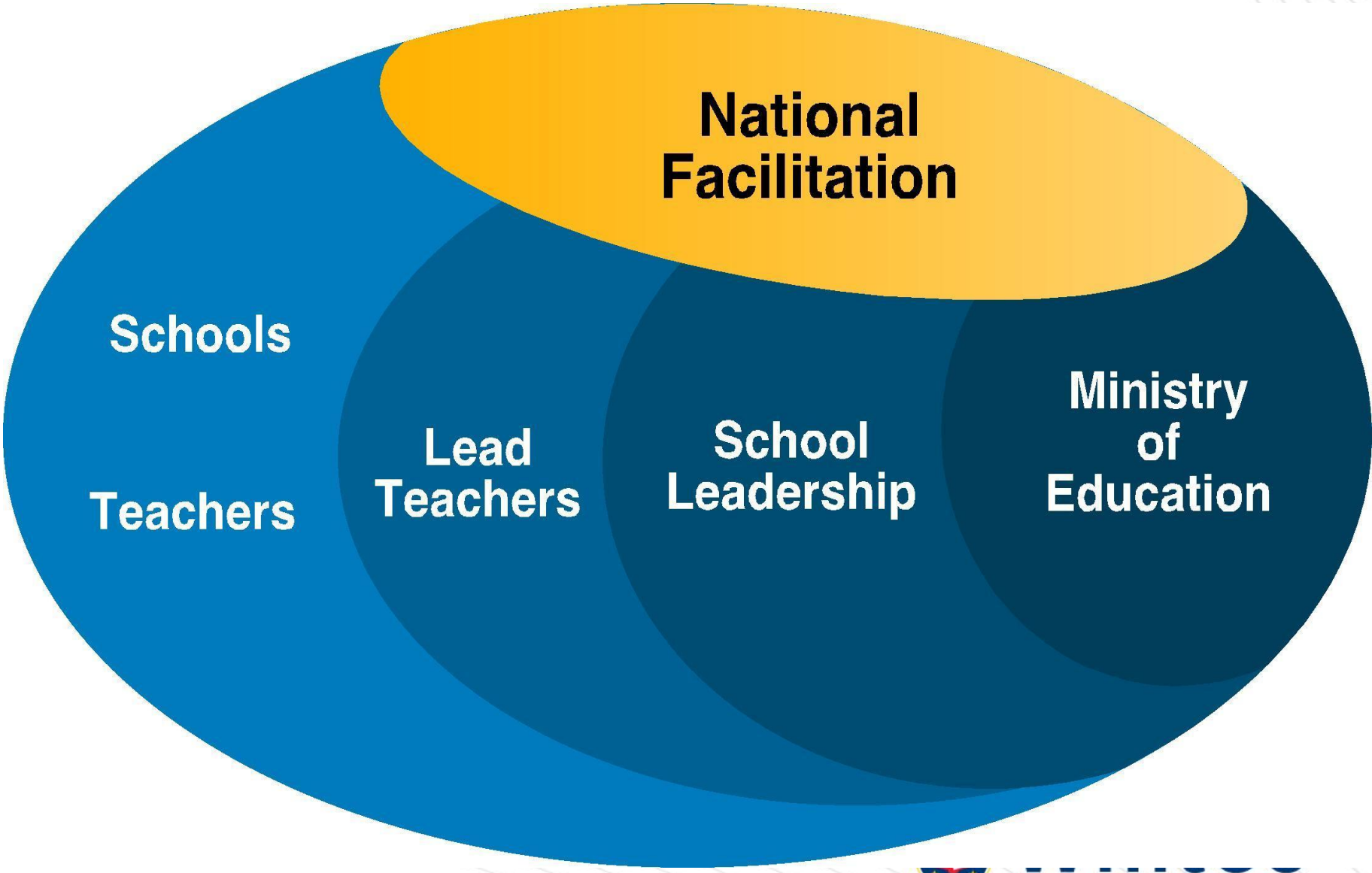
Empowerment Model



Inherent Risks

- Identified risks inherent in the innovative shift from a deficit to an empowerment approaches are

1. Who undertakes the task of identifying and the appropriate PD to meet the institutions specific needs.
2. Who is responsible for the effective design and efficient delivery of professional development.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The Future?

To assist in the identification of appropriate PD a number of educational agencies have developed self-review frameworks/Assessment Matrices based on the concept of benchmarking.

- These Matrices /Frameworks provide an iterative tool to:
  - identify and address the ICT learning needs of staff.
  - ensure quality support is provided for all participants at all stages of development, and
  - review, monitor and evaluate specific ICT initiatives undertaken and practices employed for effectiveness.