The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation 2nd International Conference:

School Library Development in Rural China: Getting the Basics Right

Model libraries:

Concept, implementation & expectations

James Henri	Peter Warning
International Association of School Librarianship	University of Hong Kong

Content

- ML concept
- Role of MLs
- Process & effects of MLs
- Status of SLs
- Importance of leadership
- Outcomes

Model library (ML) concept

ML is a school library that:

- Uses best library practices
- Is children centred
- Explores new ways of doing things
- Demonstrates commitment to reading
- Can reach out to other communities

Roles MLs

MLs are 'agents of change'. They influence:

- Patterns of reading behavior <u>within</u> the school

- Perception of reading <u>within</u> the school

- Perceptions of reading <u>outside</u> the school

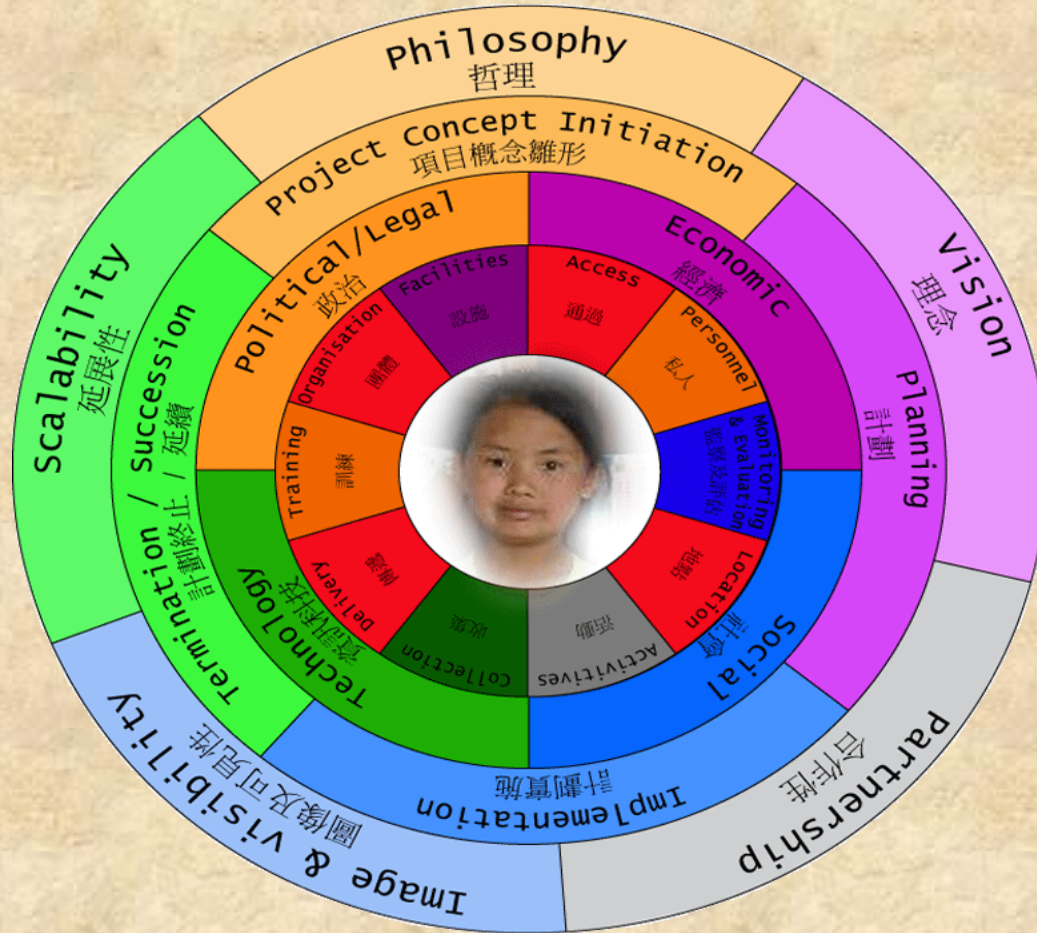- Patterns of reading behavior <u>in other</u> schools

Roles of MLs

MLs are designed to support the goals of the CY-SFF reading projects, ie to:

- Encourage reading for pleasure by children

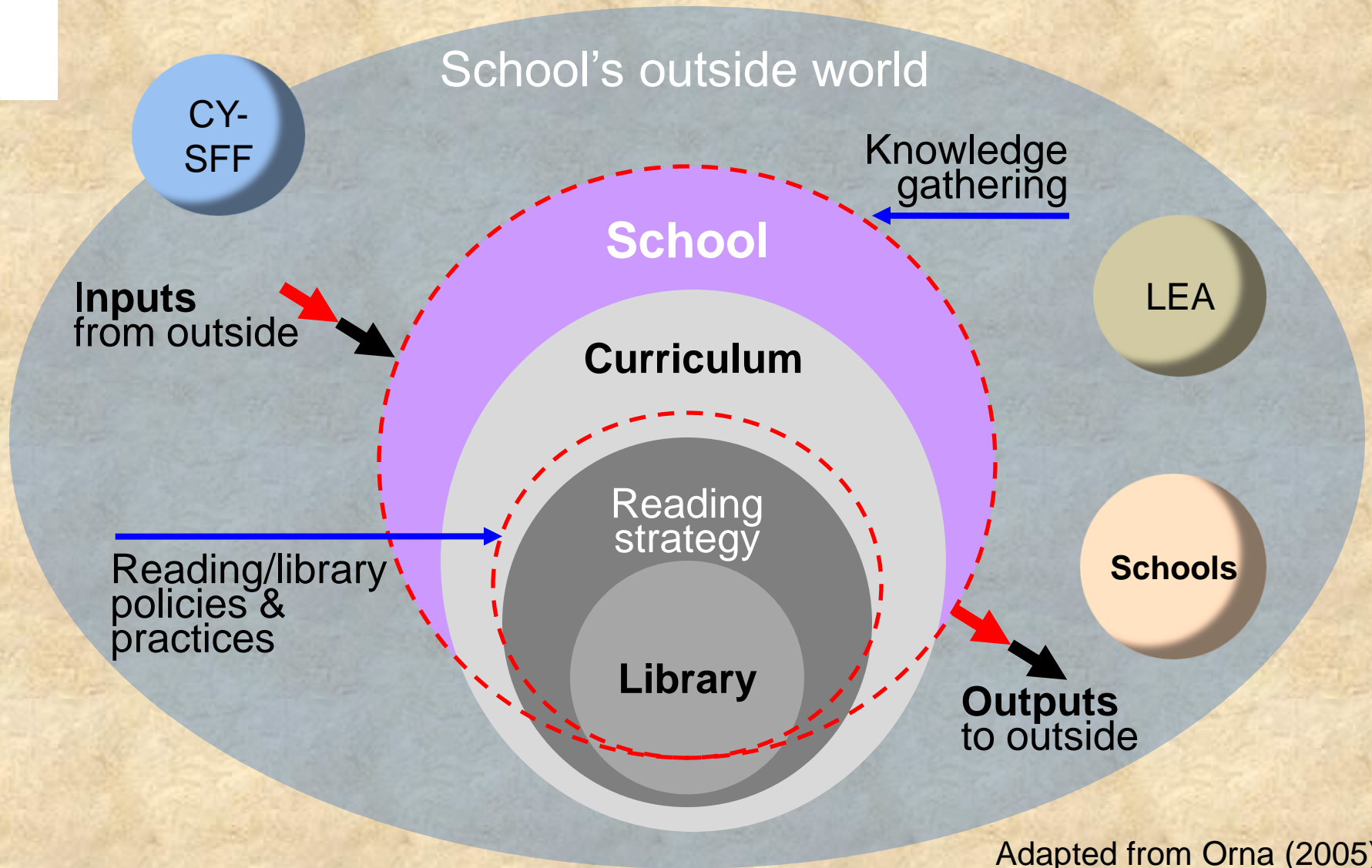- Influence local attitudes towards reading for pleasure
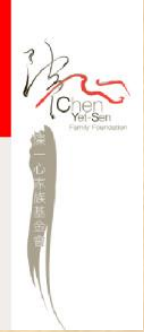
The Reading Mandala

Process & effects of MLs

School's outside world

CY-SFF

Knowledge gathering

School

Inputs from outside

LEA

Curriculum

Reading strategy

Reading/library policies & practices

Schools
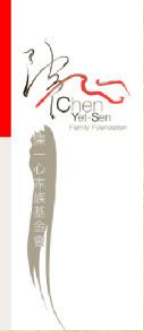
Library

Outputs to outside

Adapted from Orna (2005)

CY-SFF reading project goals

- Establish MLs in all project areas
- Provide ongoing support <u>until self-sufficiency is attained</u>
- MLs provide support to other schools
- Other school libraries raise standards towards that of MLs
- Attitudes to reading are changed within the community

MLs as exemplars

MLs should demonstrate:

- What can be done
- How things can be done
- Different ways of doing things
- Customized solutions to local problems
- How to be successful

Mutual obligations

CY-SFF

ML schools

Obligations are identified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Obligations: CY-SFF

CY-SFF Provide:

- Material support - eg books, up to 10 titles per student & up to 1 magazine title per 10 teachers

- Training - general & customized
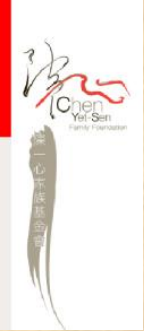
- Advice – on request & unsolicited
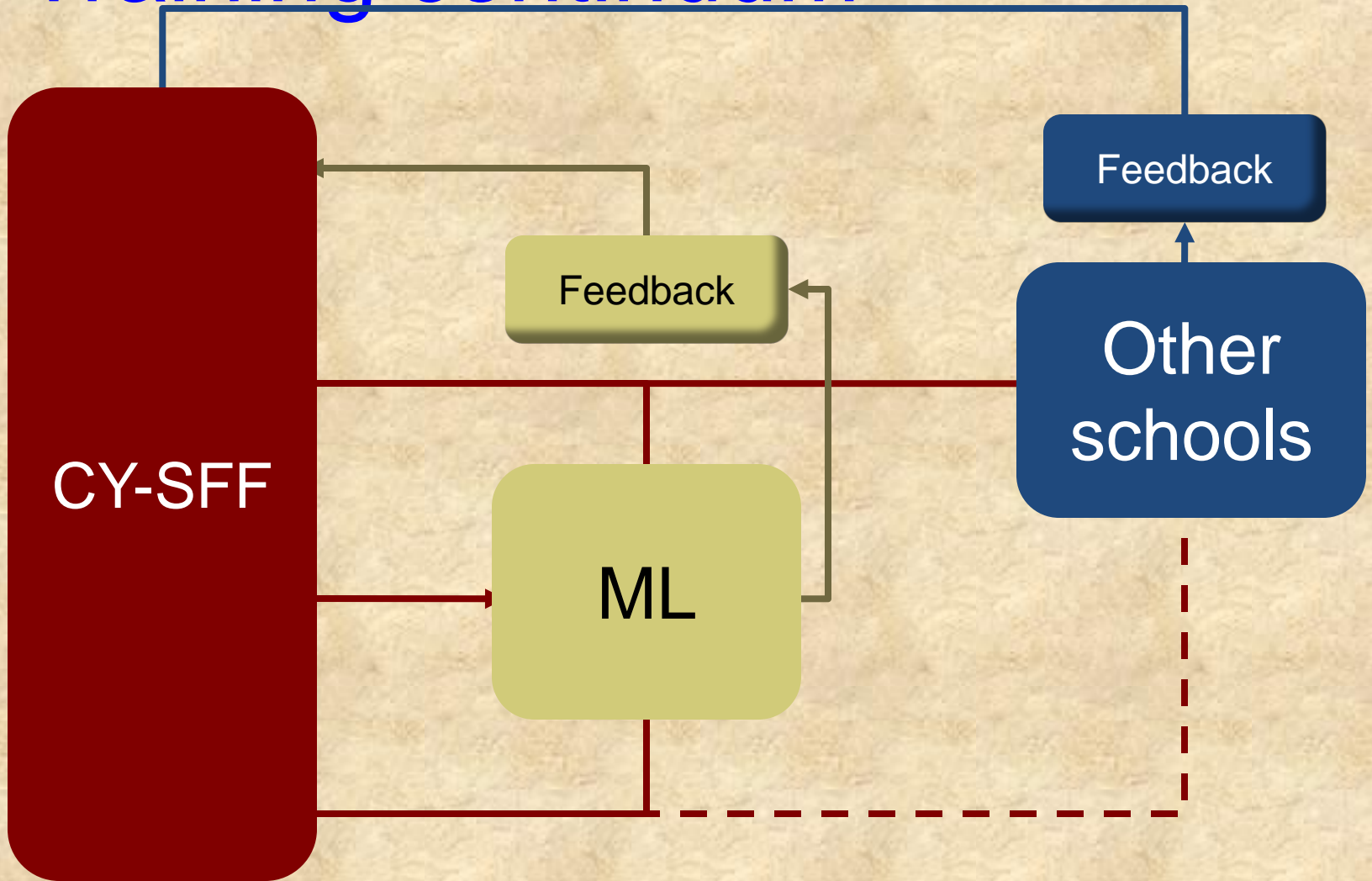
Obligations: CY-SFF - Training

CY-SFF Provide:

- Standard training for all schools in projects – 3 sessions X full-day
- Customized training for MLs
- Hands-on in-residence training

Training continuum

CY-SFF

ML

Feedback

Other schools

Feedback

Obligations: ML school

- Develop & initiate reading policies

- Encourage access to books

- Initiate reading activities

- Document & reflect on activities
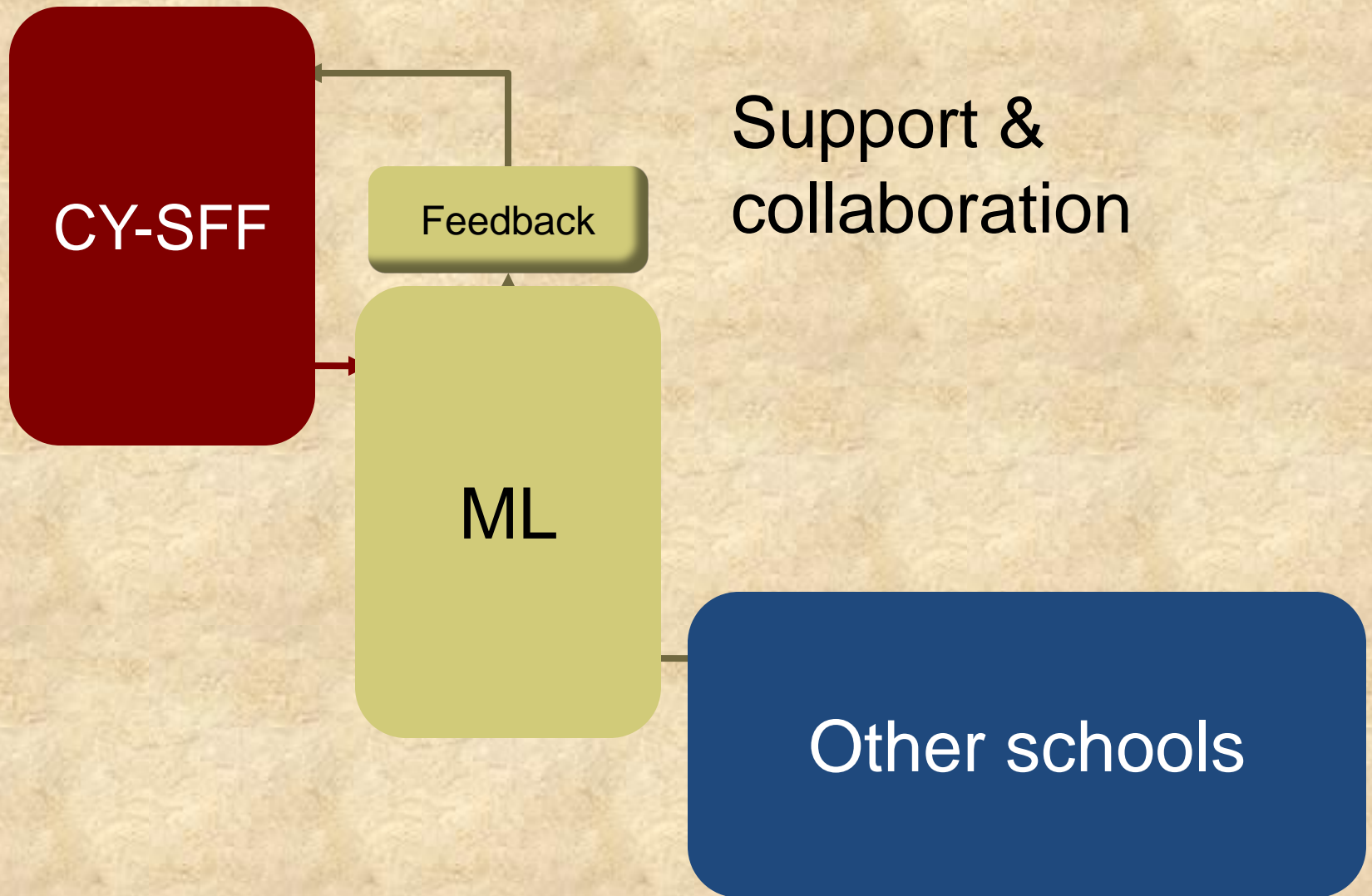
- Move towards self-sufficiency
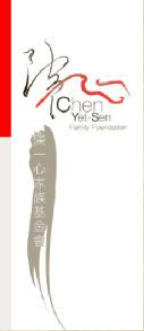
Obligations: ML school

- Provide support for other schools

- Act as an exemplar

- Be a risk taker – initiate new activities, services etc

- Document & share results of initiatives

Library support continuum
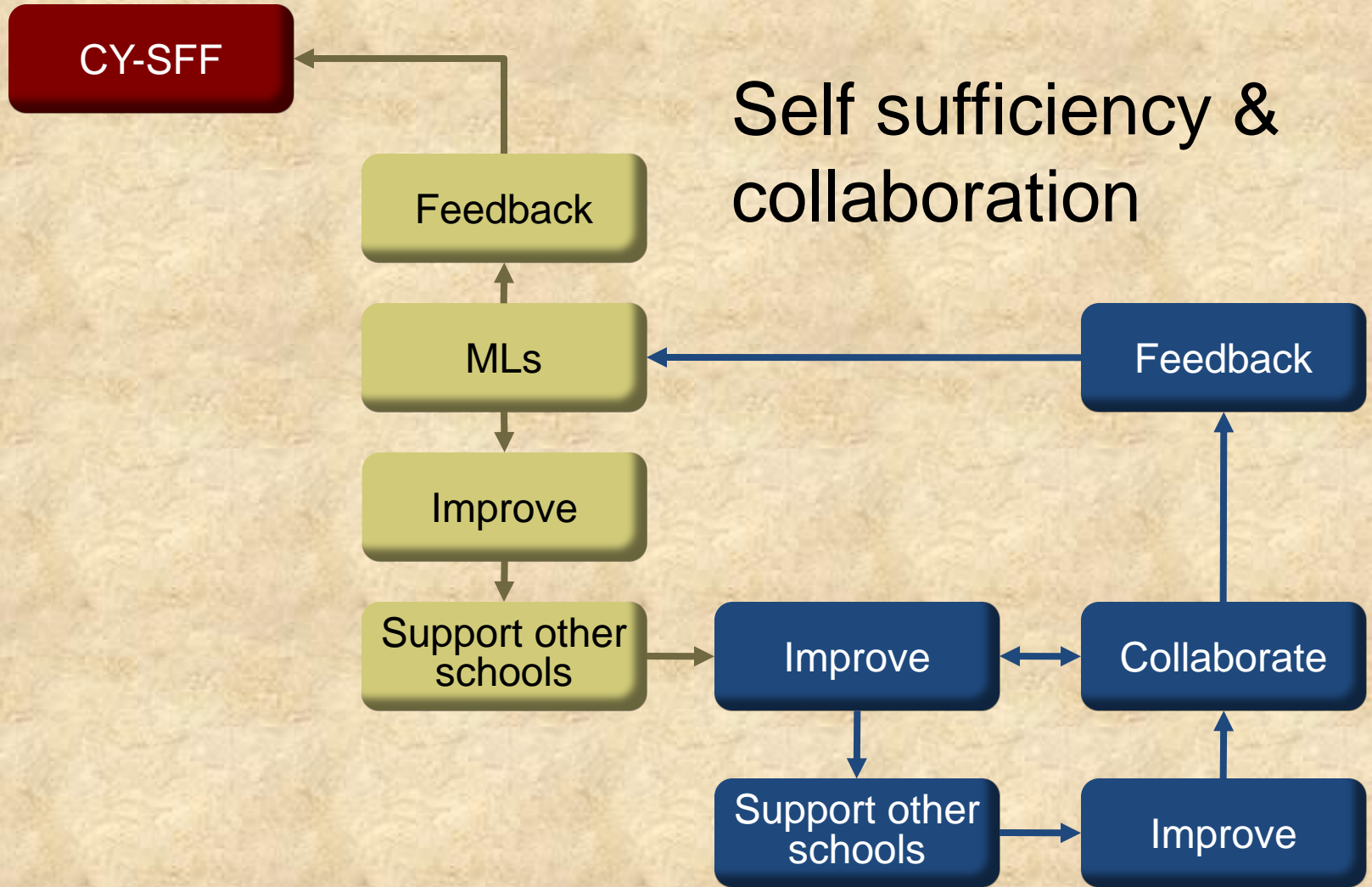
CY-SFF

Feedback

ML

Support & collaboration

Other schools

Library support continuum

CY-SFF

Feedback

MLs

Improve

Support other schools

Self sufficiency & collaboration

Feedback

Improve ↔ Collaborate

Support other schools → Improve

Criteria for identifying MLs

Evidence of:

- Encouraging reading
- Facilitating access to books
- Creating a welcoming environment
- Commitment to reading
- Creativity
- Risk taking

Criteria for identifying MLs

- Student's artwork in library
- Library in suitable room
- Simple reading activities
- Classes scheduled in library
- 'Book pop'
- Principals & teachers as reading exemplars
- etc

Criteria for identifying MLs

Which would you choose as a ML?

School 1	Books kept secure & clean
School 2	Books worn through use & some lost

School 3	Capable person chosen as librarian
School 4	Unsuitable person chosen as librarian

Criteria for identifying MLs

School 5	Library does not change
School 6	Librarian takes on advice from experts

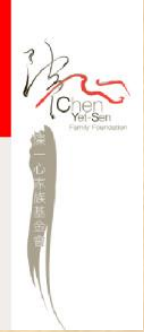| School 7	Principal directs librarian
School 8	Principal listens to librarian

Challenges

- Staff changes
- Librarians without solutions - reliance on CY-SFF
- Deeply held attitudes, eg protection of books more important than use; it's a privilege to visit the library etc
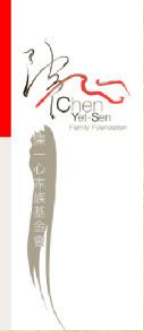- Fear of failure

Successes

- School organizing summer reading projects
- Library being moved to a better room
- Designing displays for books
- Training student librarians
- Enjoyable reading activities for children

ML librarian as leader

School librarian (SL) must:

- Be a leader within the school
- Network within own school
- Be a leader within the <u>community of schools</u>
- Network among <u>other schools</u>

ML librarian as leader

SL cannot be:

- 'Left-over' teacher
- Afraid to take risks
- Burdened with other duties
- Unwilling to seek & share knowledge
- Obsessed with rules

Outcomes: material

- Improvement in standards
- Better library practices
  - Effectiveness
  - Efficiency
- More efficient use of resources
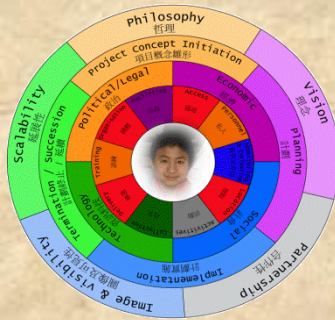- Raising of awareness

Outcomes: intangible

- Sense of purpose
- Self-confidence
- Independence
- Initiative
- Recognition

Outcomes: key

- Change of behavior – reading valued in the school
- Children's reading preferences accommodated
- Library operation based around children's behavior
- Opportunities for reading created

Networks

- Chunking achieved via connecting those who are taking leadership to assist in monitoring and mentoring new projects…not limited to schools

- Hefei schools + community centre -> childrens hospital library, community outreach via public library

Library accreditation

- Peter

- Need to point to alternative route towards the ML (IE) via accreditation and access to book fund
- Need info about the accreditation spreadsheet
- Spreadsheet needs revision to incorporate three satisfactory levels….1. OK we can commence
- 2. OK we can provide the second tier of funding
- 3. OK we can provide the third tier of funding
- But these need to be flexible since it would be expected that a very poor rural school could begin at a much lower score than the schools in Hefei