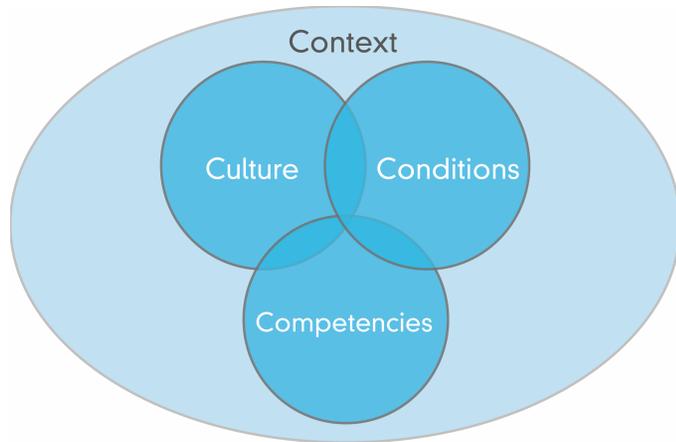# The Four C's of Adult Learning

What is your **vision** and **theory of action** for adult learning? When supporting adult learning, it is critical to ground the work in a clear vision (where do you want to go) and theory of action (if we do this…. then this will result).

A careful consideration of the 4 C's—Context, Culture, Conditions, and Competencies—can assist in the design process. All 4 of these dimensions should be engaged in order to design and achieve powerful, effective, and sustainable adult learning.

What is the current **context** of the school or system? Within what larger systems is this work embedded and what are their demands and expectations? What other initiatives might be competing with or complimenting the adult learning structures? Who are your allies in this work?

How will each school's unique **culture** impact implementation? How will the system bridge any potential cultural disconnects between the larger, district adult learning expectations, and site-based ones? What is the schools or system's history of peer-led professional development focused on reflection, collaboration and inquiry? *What message is being sent by endorsing a structured approach to adult learning?*

What **conditions** or structures are in place to support successful adult learning? What might schools/teachers need in addition? When/How do teachers have opportunities to look at student work and teacher tasks with their colleagues to collaboratively identify learning gaps? What are the recurring, predictable patterns of adult collaborative time in the school or district?

What **competencies,** the repertoire of skills, knowledge and understandings, might need to be developed in order to ensure effective adult learning time? What strengths are teachers bringing to the table? What do teachers know about their students' learning that makes them curious about how they're designing instruction? How do teachers draw connections between what they see in student performance and the instructional practices that they use?

Adapted from the 4 C's Framework, Wagner, et al., 2006