



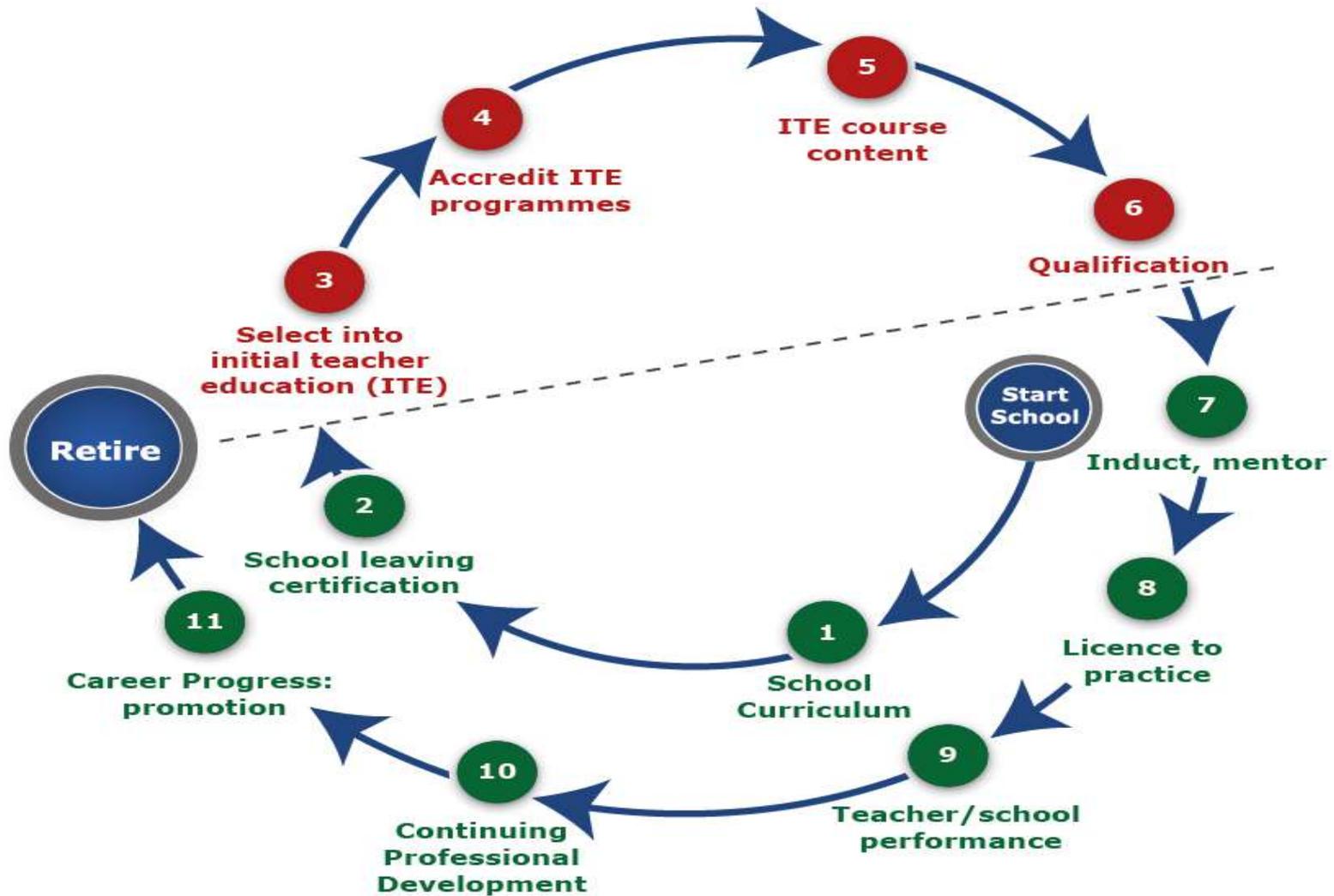
Priorities for Teacher Development

What can corporate donors do?

**Triologue and Capitec Forum
22 August 2019**



SA in a vicious cycle





Recent research indicates that on entry around half of student teachers tested across 3 campuses in a pilot test in 2017 and 7 campuses in 2018 were unable to achieve 50% on a primary school maths test

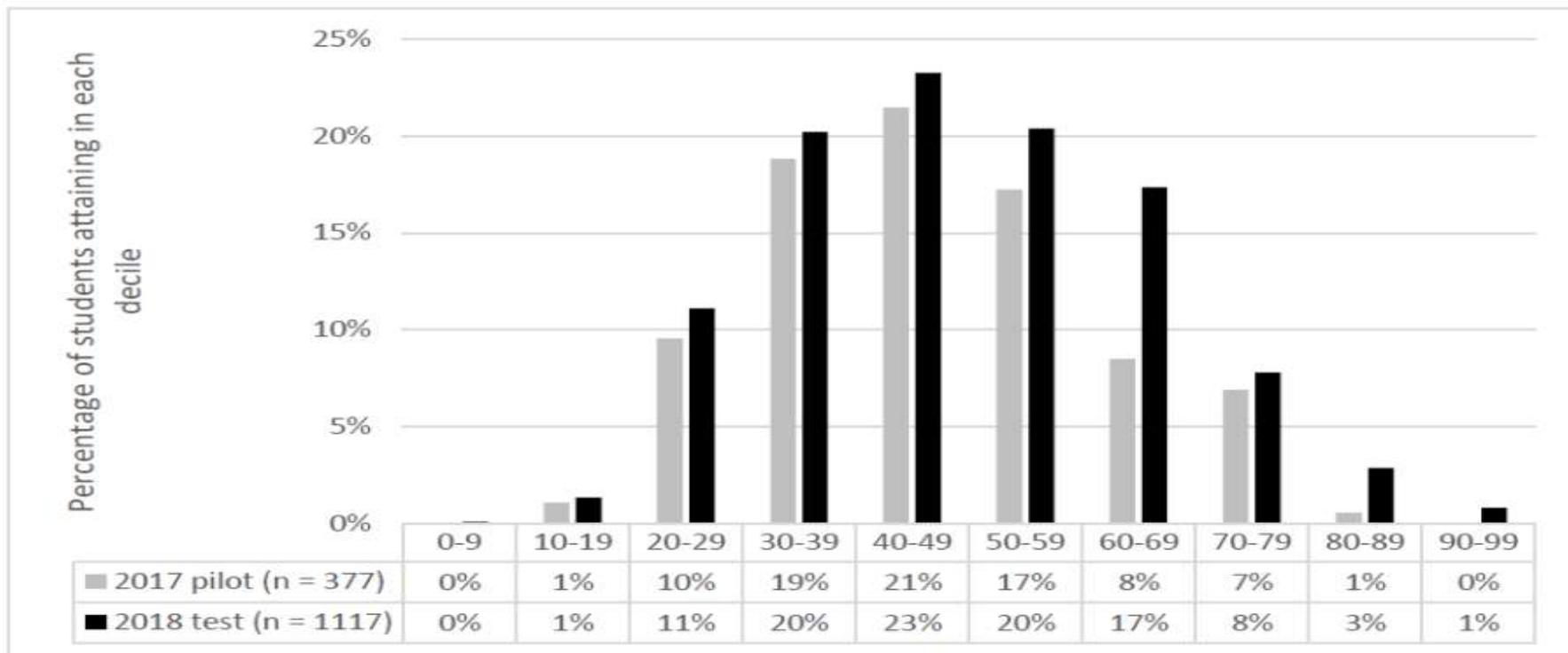


Figure 1: Distribution of attainment per decile in 2017 pilot and 2018 test

How much maths do they learn in 4 years?

These students did particularly poorly on items involving fractions, decimals, ratio and proportion (rational numbers), topics which underlie pretty much all of high mathematics

But the really startling finding is that, after 4 years of study, final year students at three of these universities had made very little progress on learning these most fundamental concepts, with the large majority still performing around 40% and less



Two rational number items

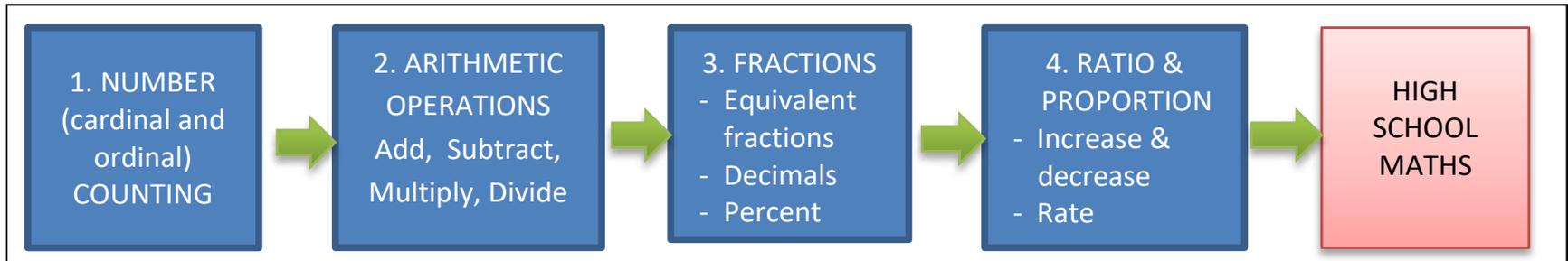
18 out of 600 computers were broken.
What percentage of the computers
were broken?

$$3,052 \times 1000 =$$

The Limits of CPD

Even where CPD programmes are effective, it is well to recognise the limits of what can be achieved working with teachers who are busy people with many family and other out-of-school commitments and are often past the age of active learning

Consider the task of improving the mathematical knowledge of Grade 6 teachers, currently around stage 2:



To get them from where they are to the end of stage 4, where they are able to exhibit a flexible understanding of proportional reasoning, will take more than a couple of afternoons of CPD after school.

What can in-service training (CPD) achieve?

Over the past 3 decades the public sector and corporate and international donors have been pouring money into CPD with the aim of improving teachers knowledge and skills.

In 2014 for example the DBE budgeted over R1bn for CPD while the private sector contributed at least an equal amount.

Unfortunately, these efforts are generally not evaluated



The Impact of CPD

Where evaluations do occur the results are generally not encouraging

For example, an evaluation of a two-year part-time Advanced Certificate for Teaching (ACT) programme concluded that:

... some teachers did shift their beliefs about teaching mathematics and literacy, but overall there was no extensive measurable learning over two years



How to make CPD more effective

More encouraging are findings from extensive pilot programmes aimed at assisting early grade teachers to teach reading in Gauteng, KZN, NW and MP.

This research and development approach to establishing the effectiveness of CPD programmes needs to be supported

Failure to assess the impact of initiatives costing millions of rand each leads to a lot of wastage and seemingly little learning.

It follows that, in order to optimise lessons learned and stem the wastage of funds on ineffective programmes, no major CPD initiative should be funded without a rigorous evaluation.



Research Conclusions on CPD

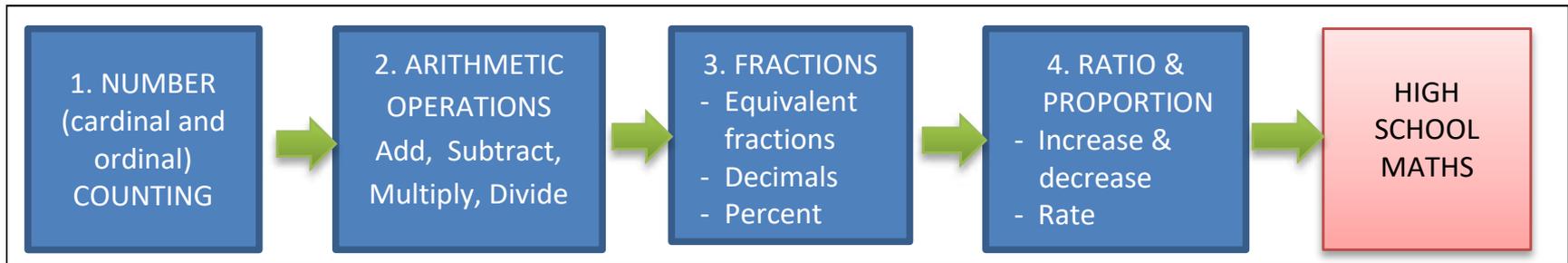
- Training in the form of short workshops has little effect on teaching practice
- Should last at least for several days, must be subject-matter specific, and must take into account the challenges faced by the school
- Initial teacher education (ITE) and CPD two serve distinct purposes and are not interchangeable:
 - ITE provides teachers with a solid base of the foundation knowledge and skills for teaching
 - CPD allows them to update their knowledge and skills, and to adapt these to changes in the teaching environment



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Thank you!

