

RECORD OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP ON
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2020 AT 4:00 PM (REMOTE VIA ZOOM).
STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN
CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: Suzanne Federspiel (Chair), David Pearlman (Vice Chair), Helen Charlupski, Susan Wolf Ditkoff, Andreas Liu, Jennifer Monopoli, Mariah Nobrega, and Barbara Scotto. Also present: James Marini and Robin Coyne.
Others present: Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Field Director Dorothy Presser.

Ms. Federspiel called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

a. Consent Agenda

Dr. Marini spoke in support of awarding a Brookline High School Diploma to Donald W. Park.

ACTION 20-107

On a motion of Dr. Liu and seconded by Mr. Pearlman the School Committee VOTED (by roll call), with 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention (Ms. Nobrega abstained; Ms. Monopoli and Ms. Scotto were not present for the vote) to approve the following items:

a. Consent Agenda

- i. Past Record: August 12, 2020 School Committee Meeting
- ii. Past Record: August 10, 2020 School Committee Meeting
- iii. Award a Brookline High School Diploma to Donald W. Park (Attachment A)

2. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF 2020-2021 GOALS/PRIORITIES

a. School Committee Roles and Responsibilities/Meeting Norms

Dr. Marini introduced MASC Field Director Dorothy Presser. The School Committee members introduced themselves and explained why they joined the School Committee. Ms. Presser provided a presentation (Attachment B) that focused on the following: 1) School Committee goals, 2) School Committee and Superintendent roles and responsibilities, and 3) operating protocols. School Committee discussion focused on the following: the role of Site Councils and School Improvement Plans; the process for setting and aligning goals; communication with stakeholders; community engagement; suggestions to make meetings more efficient and effective; workload expectations for the next superintendent, staff, and School Committee members; and the role of Subcommittees and Task Forces. School Committee members suggested scheduling time (before the end of September to discuss 1) operating protocols for effective and efficient meetings and 2) a first draft of 2020-2021 School Committee goals (that align with District and Subcommittee goals). Ms. Presser offered her assistance.

3. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

4. PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

By unanimous roll call vote at 7:30 PM, the School Committee entered into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General laws chapter 30A section 21(a) for the following purposes:

Purpose 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Brookline Educators Union (BEU) (Unit A, Unit B, and Paraprofessionals) because the Chair declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body.

Purpose 7, to review and approve executive session minutes from the following meetings: August 6, 2020; August 10, 2020; and August 12, 2020. Ms. Federspiel announced that the meeting will not reconvene in open session at the end of the Executive Session. By unanimous roll call vote at 9:00 PM, the School Committee reconvened in public session for the purpose of adjournment.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Federspiel adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin E. Coyne, Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee



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Town Hall
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Brookline, Massachusetts 02445
617.730.2401

V. James Marini, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent

TO: School Committee
FROM: Dr. Jim Marini, Interim Superintendent
DATE: September 1, 2020
RE: Brookline High School Diploma: Donald W. Park

I am pleased to recommend that the Brookline School Committee award a Brookline High School diploma to Donald W. Park, Class of 1969.

Mr. Park approached me in early July with his request. I have reviewed the supporting documents that accompanied his request and make this recommendation to you without reservation.

Mr. Park attended Lincoln School and then Brookline High School for two years. A tumultuous family situation caused him to make a decision that he regrets to this day: he dropped out of high school in 1967.

He credits the discipline and rigor of the United States Navy with transforming his life. He enlisted in 1969 and rose to be a commissioned officer with four Navy Achievement Medals and one Navy Commendation Medal over the course of a distinguished 26-year career.

Mr. Park earned his General Educational Development (GED) certificate earned in 1977 and his Bachelor of Business Administration in 1996. As part of his request, he also shared several letters of support from former Brookline classmates, as well as letters of commendation and other supporting documentation from the U.S. Navy.

Despite his admirable career achievements, the lack of a BHS diploma distresses Mr. Park to this day. In my opinion he has more than earned his BHS diploma and I urge you to act favorably on this request.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Brookline School Committee Workshop

September 3, 2020

Student Achievement





Student Achievement Focus
Goals
Monitoring
Self-governance
Professional Development

Effective
School
Committees



Vision

Accountability

Data

Relationships

Collaboration

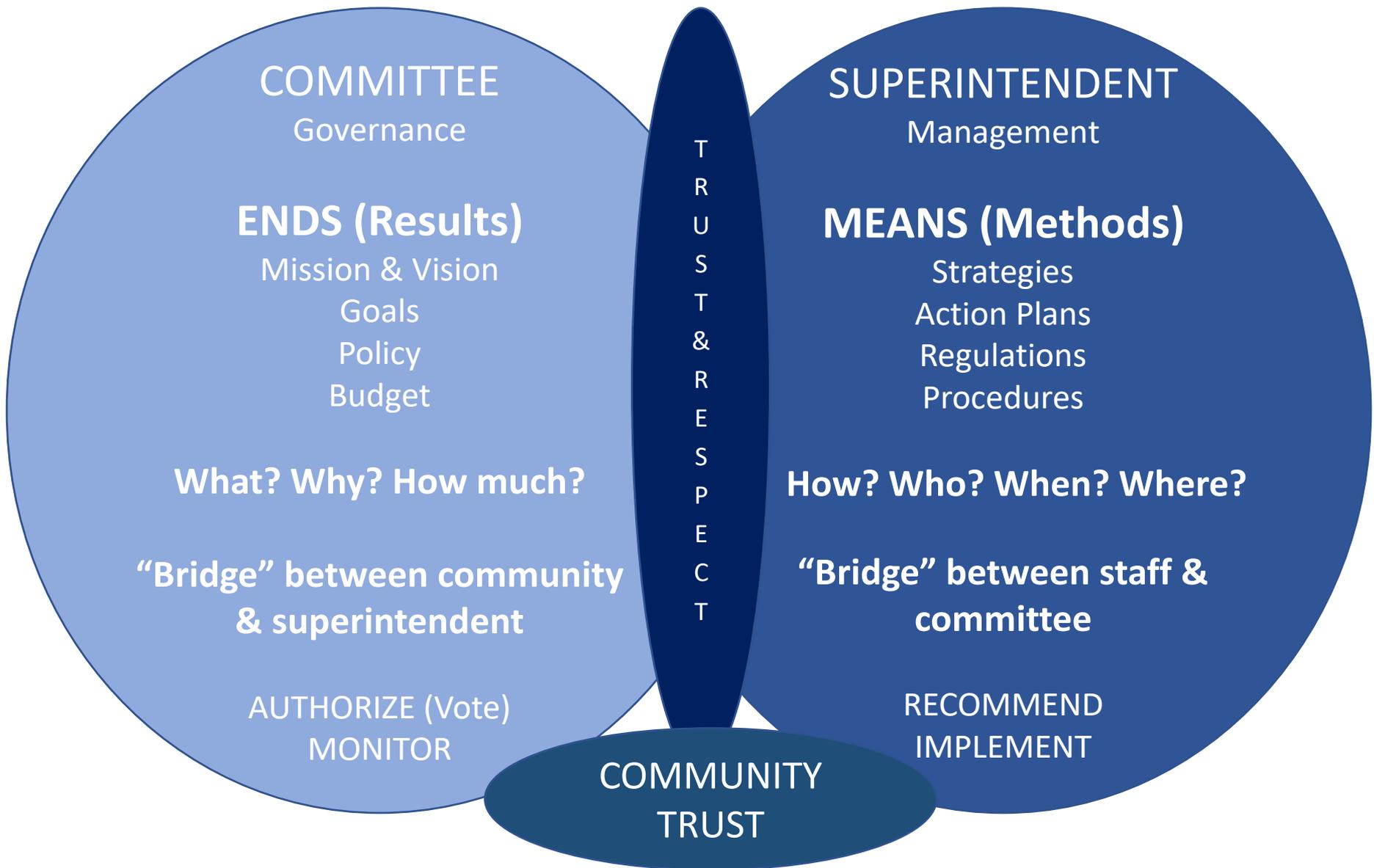
Trust

Respect

Effective School Committees



Understanding & Respect for Roles



Understanding & Respect for Roles

COMMITTEE

Power exercised through official action at properly posted meeting

Govern through policy

Financial resources

Engage the community

Sustain SC/Superintendent

Relationship

Employer of Record

T
E
A
M

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

No individual authority

No greater power than any other qualified voter

Contribute to & communicate vision & goals

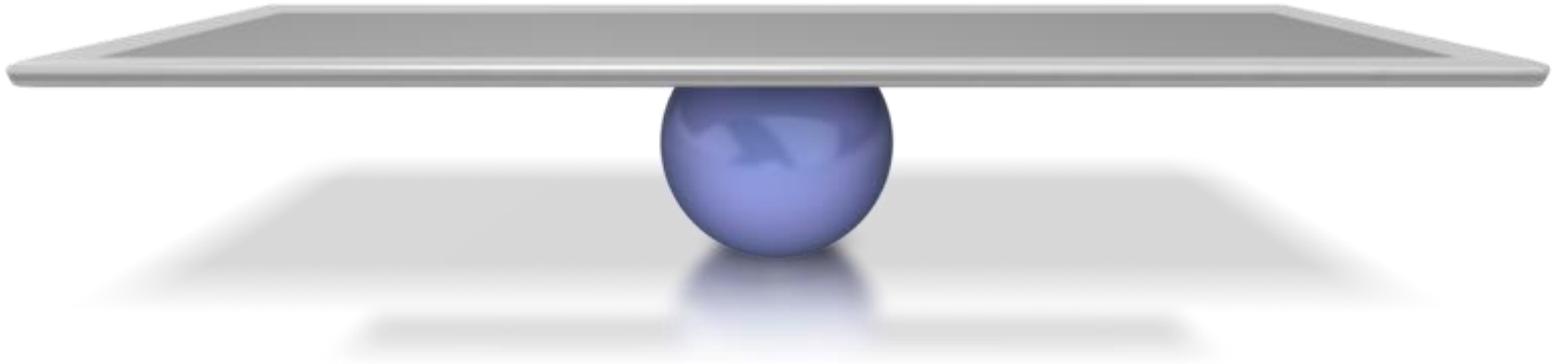
Ask critical questions

Support committee decisions

Be dedicated to the work on behalf of students

Balanced Governance

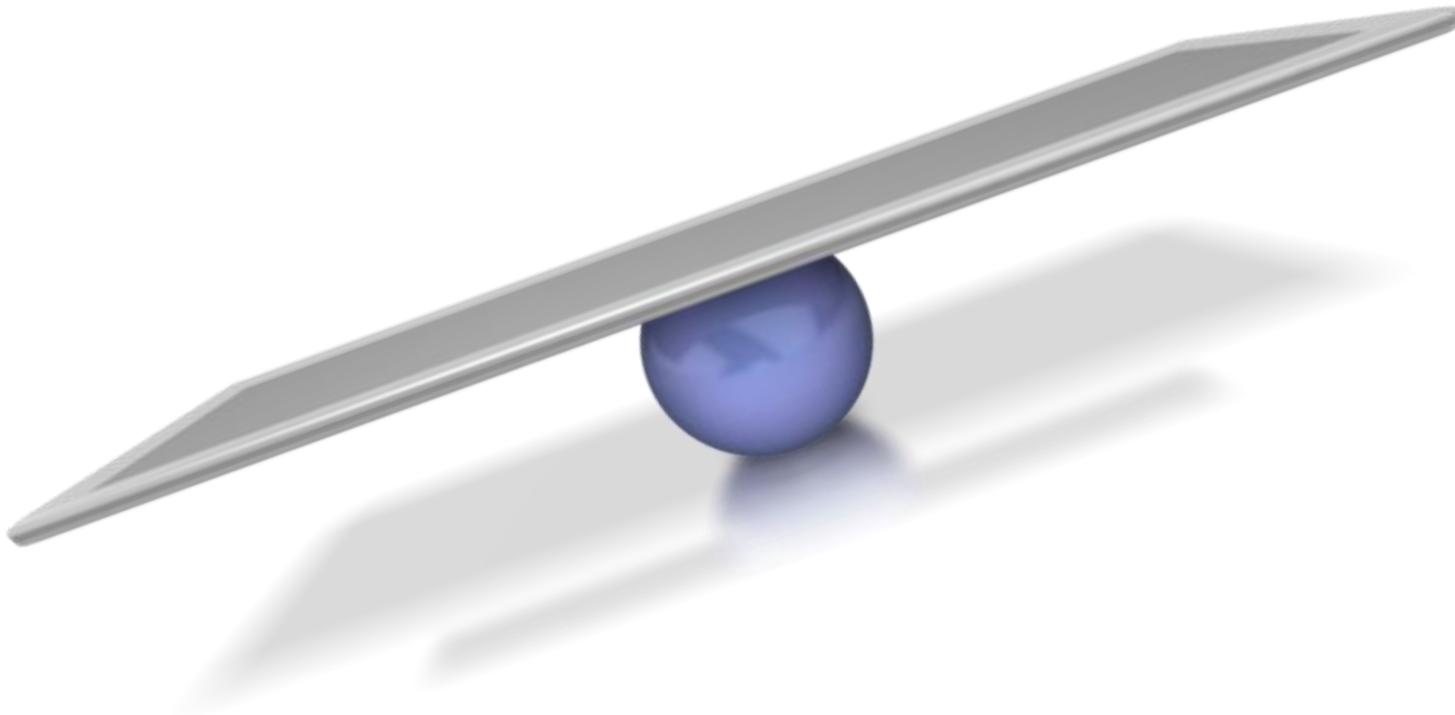
Uninformed
Delegation



Balanced Governance

Uninformed
Delegation

Micro-
management



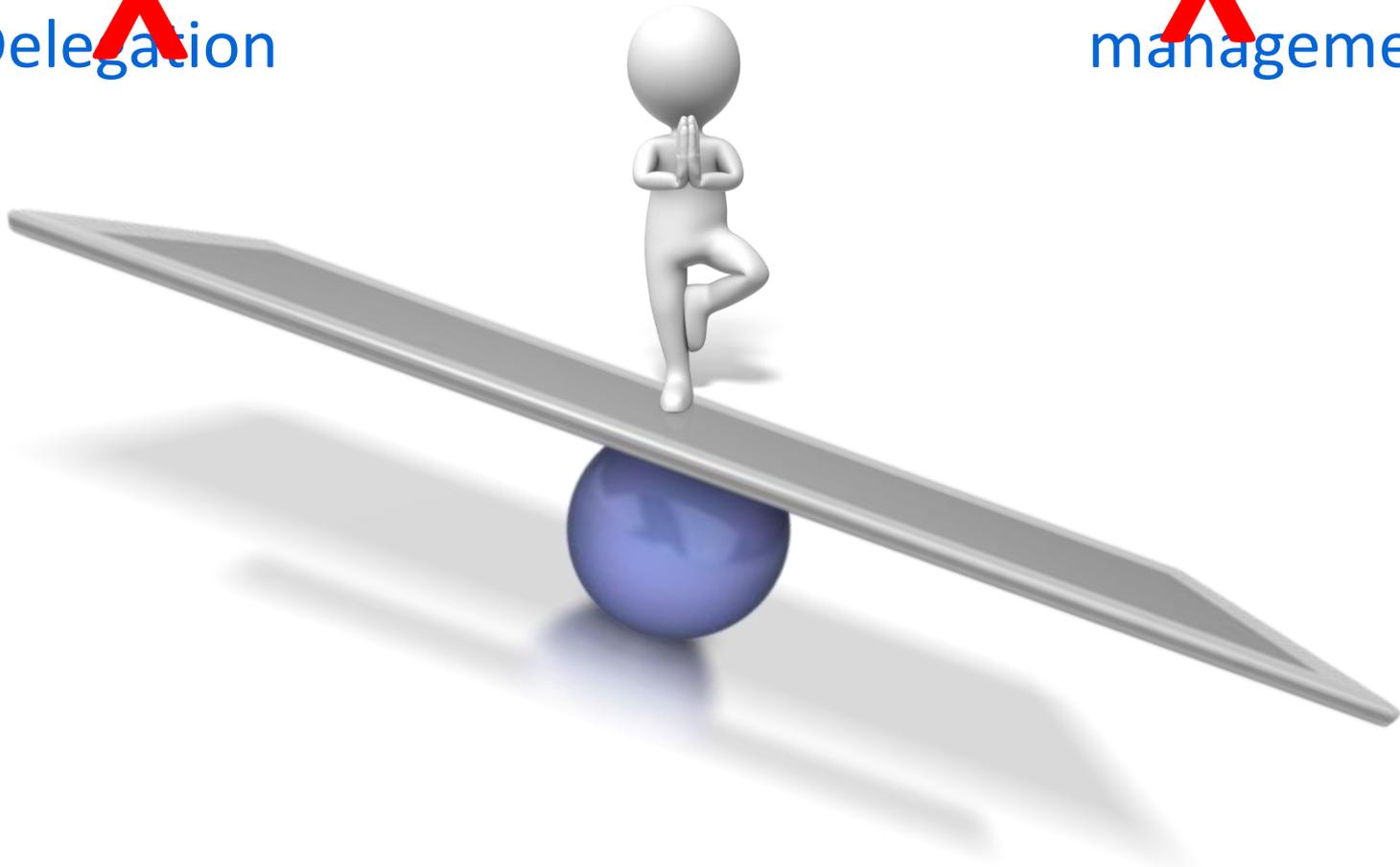
Balanced Governance

Uninformed
Delegation



Informed
Oversight

Micro-
management



Effective Governance Teams

- Understanding and respect for different, yet complementary roles
- Agreement on how to operate and communicate
- Focus on policy, district goals
- Willingness to devote the time needed to do the job well
- Efficient, business-like meetings
- Frequent informal conversations (i.e., workshops)
- Presence of trust and mutual respect





Respect for Roles Enhances Relationships

- Good working relationship engenders confidence of staff and community.
- No progress if in conflict.
- Superintendent changes are costly, disruptive, hinder progress.
- Don't take relationship for granted – nurture it.

Municipal Legislature for Schools

➤ Establish Educational Goals



➤ Enact Policies



➤ Approve & Monitor Budget



➤ Hire & Evaluate Superintendent
(And certain other positions)



➤ Employer of Record on
Collective Bargaining
Agreements

Why Set Goals?



Goal setting is the process by which a school committee exercises leadership



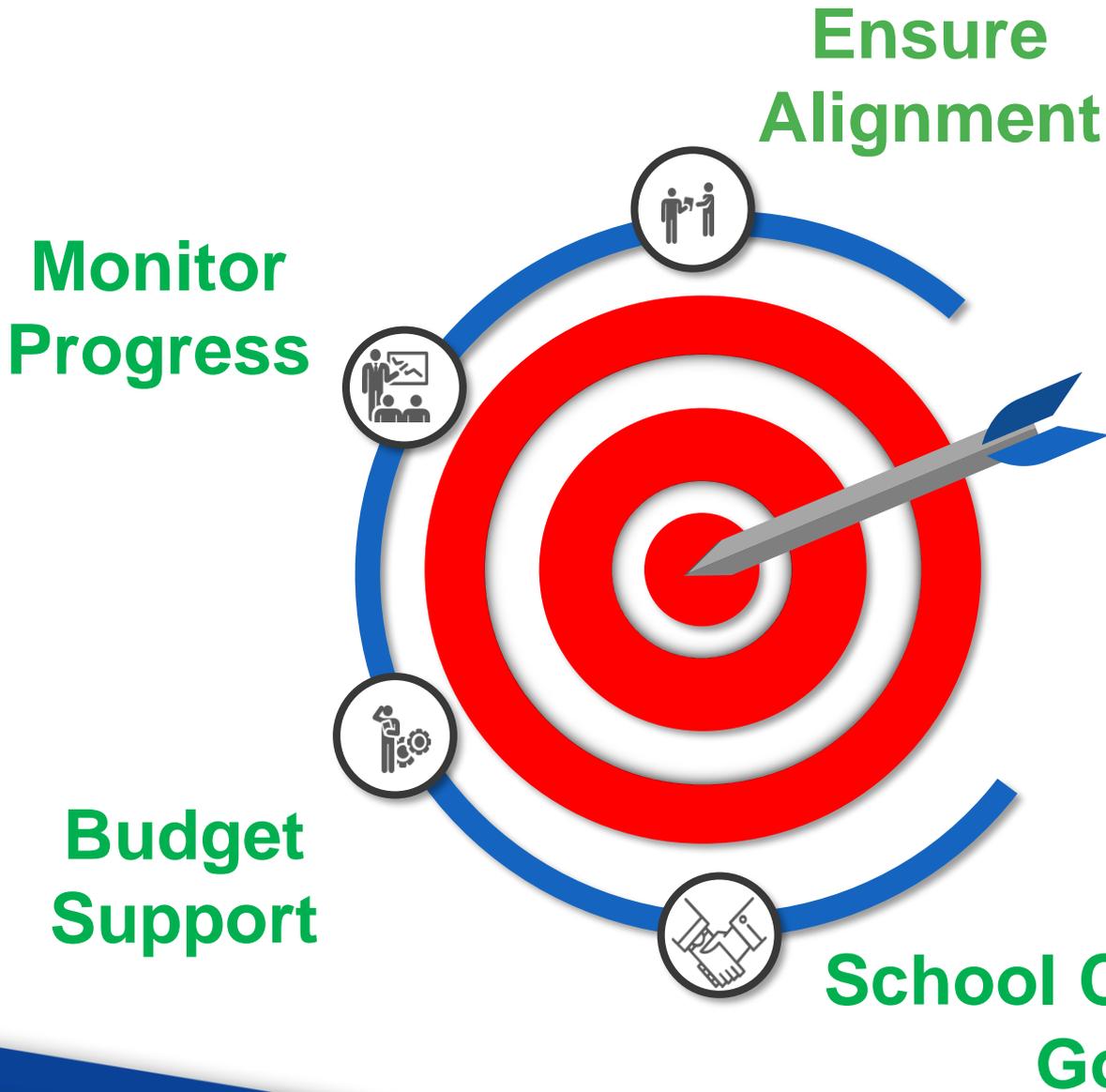
If the committee doesn't set goals, special interest groups will



Setting goals enables the committee and superintendent to keep the district on a continuous improvement track

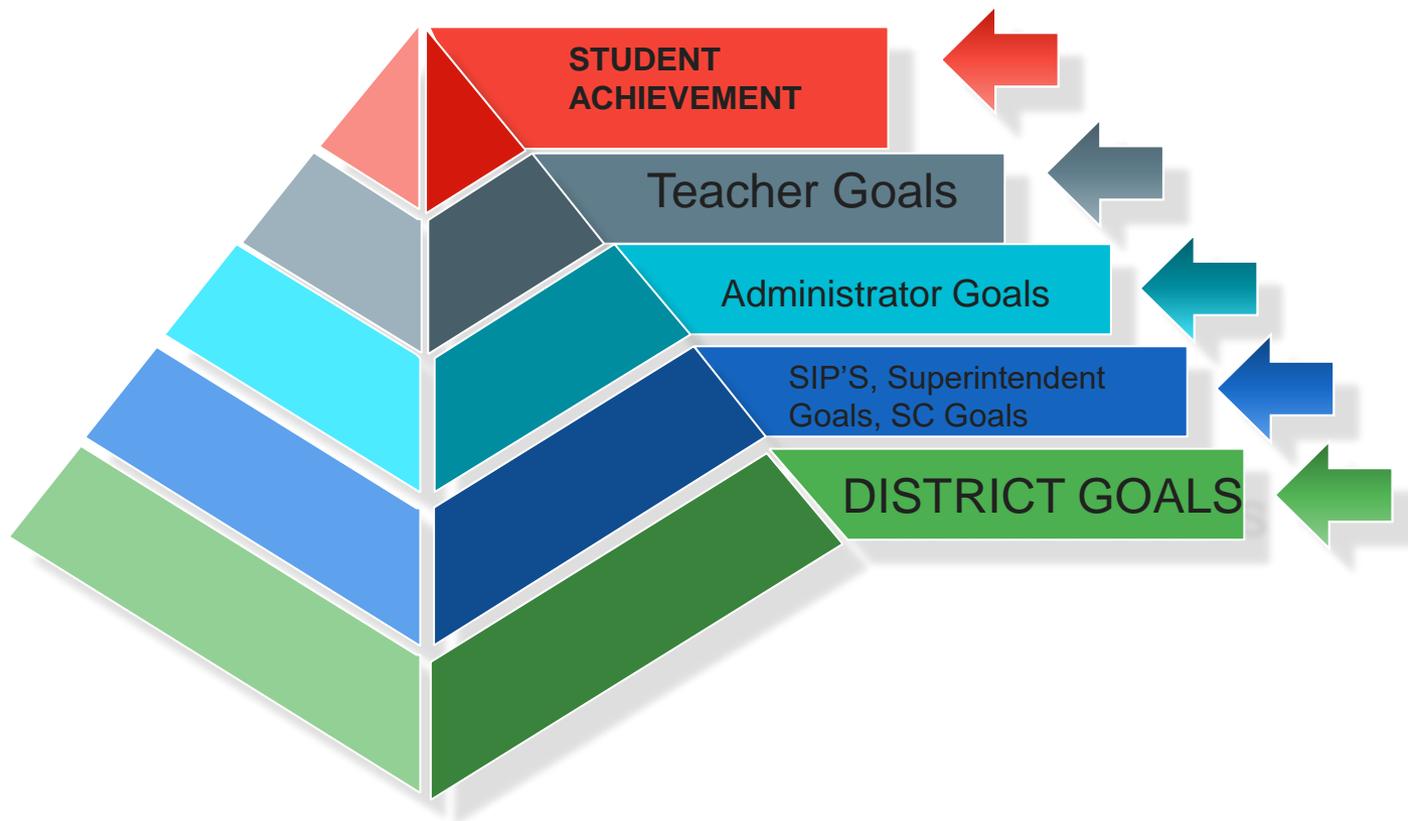


Goals let employees and the community know where the district is headed



Goals Frame & Structure Work

Goal Alignment



Operating Protocols



Operating Protocols

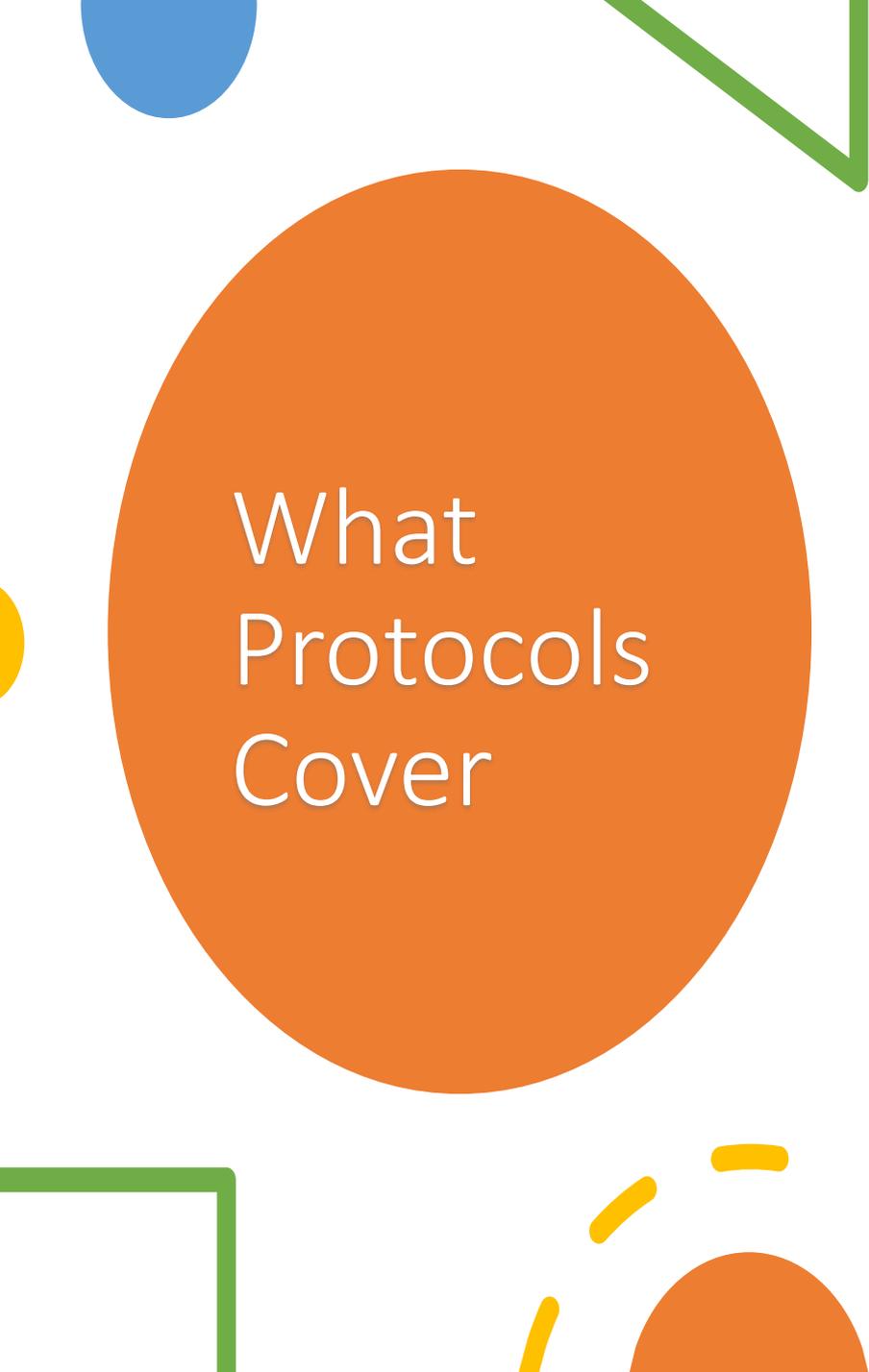
- A set of ground rules created, maintained and periodically revised by Committee members and the Superintendent
- Set of common preconditions that enable groups to work together civilly and productively
- A document that can be used for Committee self-evaluation





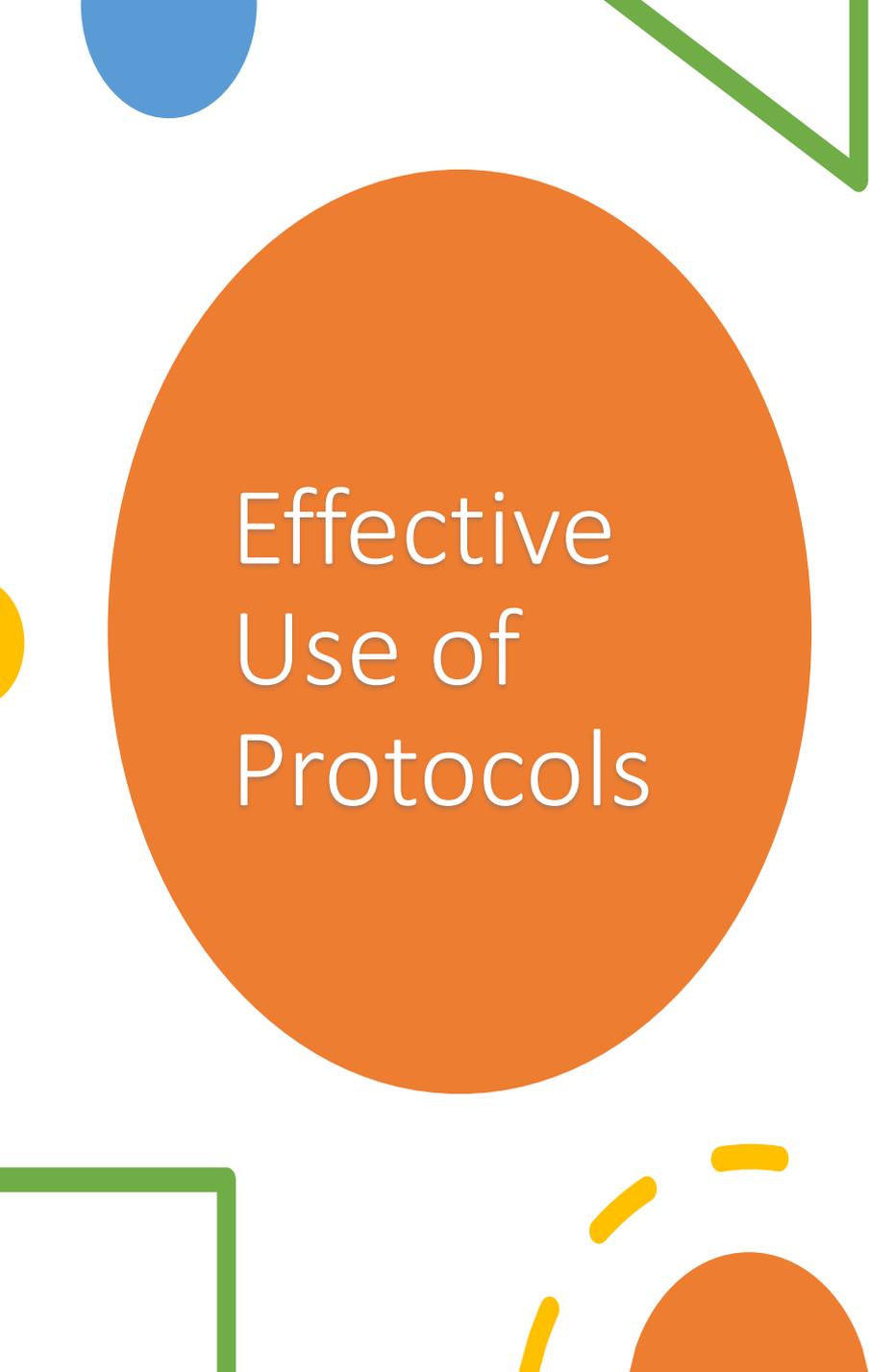
Operating Protocols are Not:

- A way to stifle dissent or disagreement
- A way to suppress free speech
- A way for the majority to control the minority
- A way to limit communication beyond the Open Meeting Law



What Protocols Cover

- Who the School Committee represents
 - How it will conduct business
 - How it will communicate
 - How it will improve
 - What are the limits of power
 - What happens when things go wrong
- 



Effective Use of Protocols

- Announce that the Committee has adopted protocols following “best practice” for effective School Committees seeking to raise student achievement.
- Post protocols on the School Committee website and have them available for those attending Committee meetings.
- Do a protocol “check-in” several times a year. Answer the question, “Are we doing what we said we would?”
- Re-examine and re-commit to the protocols after each election. Be sure that new members understand and are included in the commitments.
- Remind one another when things get off track. The Chair can be made responsible for speaking to anyone violating these commitments.



Questions and Next Steps



Thank you!

Dorothy Presser
dpresser@masc.org
617-538-2176





District Governance Support Project

What Protocols Cover

Who the Committee Represents

- The Committee will represent the needs and interests of all the students in the district.
- We will strive to represent common interests rather than factions. We will make decisions that are best for students in all cases: *all* means *all*.
- We will advocate for the [] Public Schools and public education. We readily accept our roles as ambassadors of the school systems, promoting support for public education and spreading the news of our success.

How it will do business

- The committee will conduct its business through a set agenda. Emerging items will be addressed in subsequent meetings through agenda items.
- We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a meeting that is held in public—not a public meeting, and we will make every effort to ensure that the Committee meetings are effective and efficient
- We will base our decisions upon available facts, vote our convictions, avoid bias, and uphold and support the decisions of the majority of the School Committee once a decision is made.

How members treat each other

- The Committee will debate the issues, not one another.
- We will build trusting relationships.
- We will respect staff and fellow committee members at all times.
- We will work to build trust between and among SC members and the superintendent by treating everyone with dignity and respect, even in times of disagreement

How it will communicate

- The Superintendent and the School Committee recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree that there will be no surprises. If SC members have questions or concerns, they agree to contact the Superintendent well in advance of a meeting.
- SC members will channel requests for information through the superintendent and School Committee Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.
- We will recognize a single official “voice” of the committee.

How it will improve

- The Committee will provide continuing education opportunities and support to each other.
- School Committee members agree to participate in formal training organized by the Superintendent and the School Committee chairperson.
- All new SC members will be assigned a SC mentor and will participate in a SC orientation session.
- We will model continuous learning in our roles as members of the governance team.

What are the limits of power

- It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to oversee the hiring, evaluation and handling of personnel issues; it is the responsibility of the Committee to evaluate the Superintendent’s effectiveness in these matters.
- We will recognize that authority rests only with the majority decisions of the SC and will make no independent commitments or take any independent actions that may compromise the School Committee as a whole.
- We will follow the chain of command and direct others to do the same. Personnel complaints and concerns will be directed to the superintendent.
- We will not use our positions for personal or partisan gain.

What happens when things go wrong

- Committee members will work together to clarify and restate discussions in order to strive for full understanding.
- We recognize the importance of honoring our agreed upon [operating principles] and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.
- We will maintain fidelity to these commitments and will be held accountable by our fellow School Committee members should any one of us fail to live up to these commitments. If a SC members or superintendent violates any of the above mentioned commitments in any way, he/she will be referred to the Chair.