Getting Real and Sustained Improvements in Schools

Program **Evaluation** Team

Our guiding mission…

"…to build the capacity of school leaders to make informed decisions using evidence that improves programs and services for all students."

What is improvement?

Improvement Science Defined

A systematic approach to making changes that draws on the efforts of everyone to collectively learn their way into stronger system performance and better outcomes for students.

Principles of Improvement

Improvement occurs through application when you…

1. Know why you need to improve
2. Have a feedback mechanism to tell you if the improvement is happening
3. Develop an effective change that will result in improvement
4. Test a change before attempting to implement
5. Know when and how to make the change permanent

Deming: Theory of Profound Knowledge

- Best known improvement guru
- Japan post WWII
- United States post WWII
- Automotive crisis late 1970s
- The theory of profound knowledge

Improvement Model

AIM

What are we trying to accomplish?

MEASURE

How will we know if a change is an improvement?

CHANGE

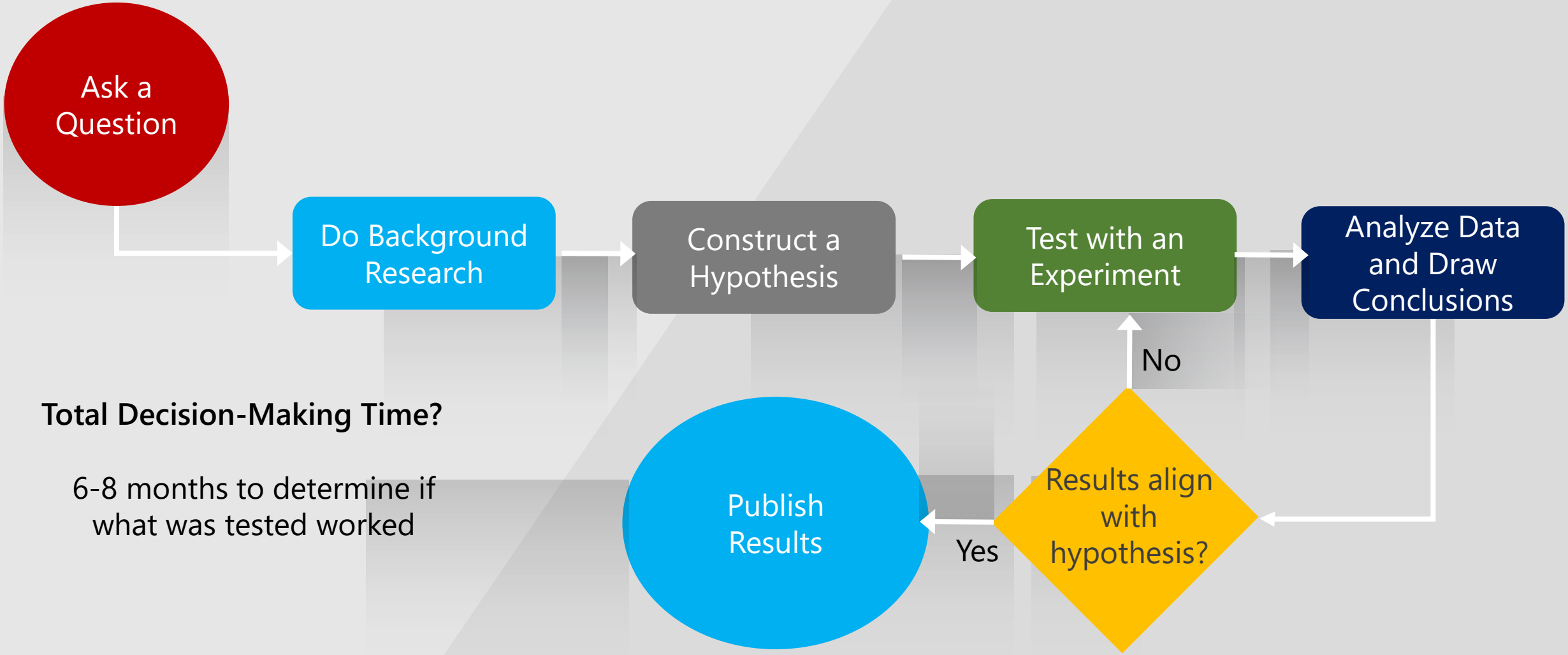
What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

Why education needs an improvement approach?

Effort and attitude are never a substitute for learning.

Consider the way we make decisions about what works in education…



Total Decision-Making Time?

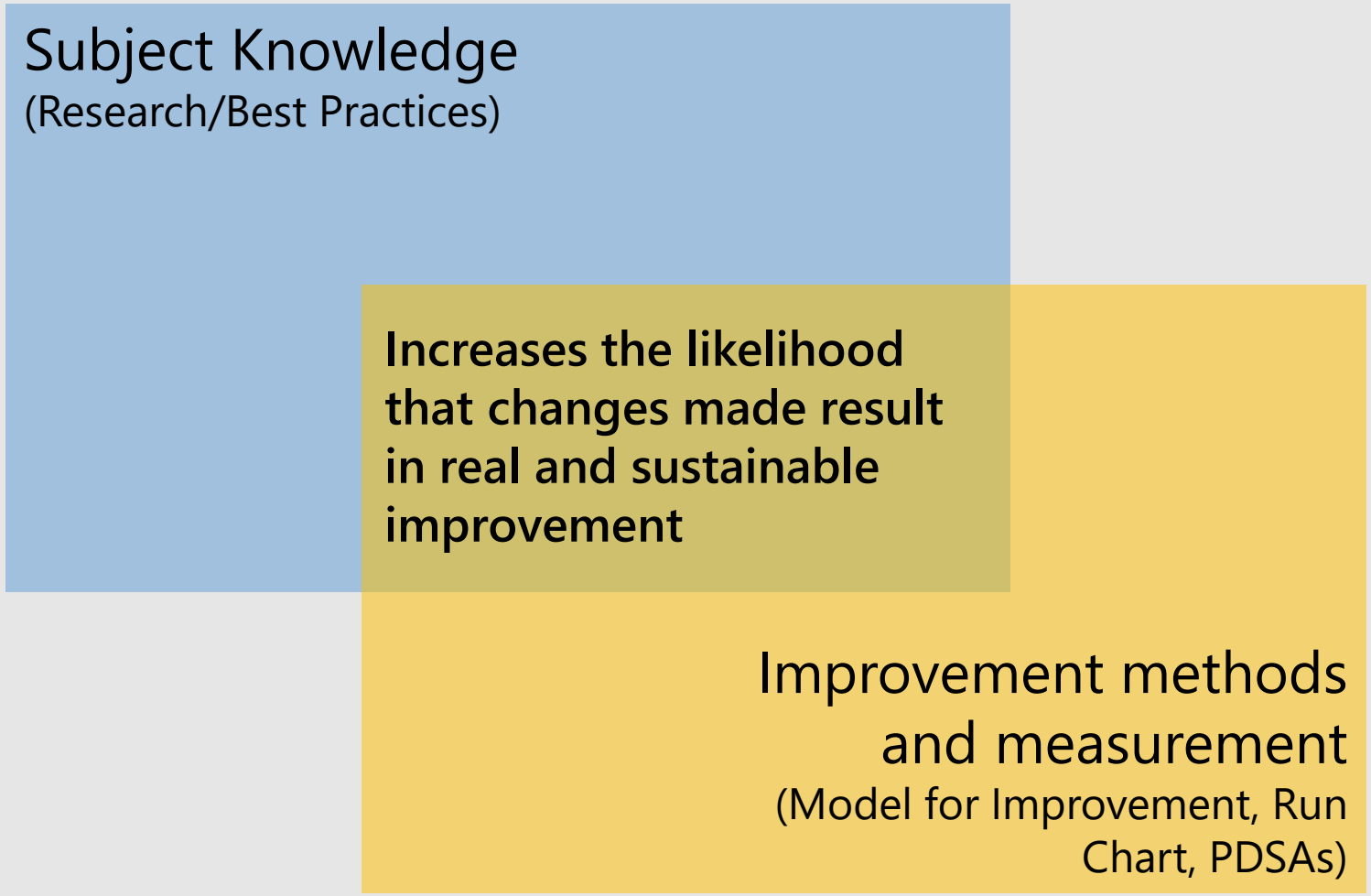
6-8 months to determine if what was tested worked

Keep in mind…

- The aim of educational research is primarily for publishing, not improvement.
- Schools have to implement research in a real-world, messy, & chaotic context, not laboratories.
- We lack an evidence-based way to learn during testing & implementation that is just as rigorous as our method for determining the best practice.

Knowledge of Improvement

Improvement combines **subject matter knowledge** with **improvement methods** to develop effective changes for improvement



What does improvement typically look like in education?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What if there was a better way?

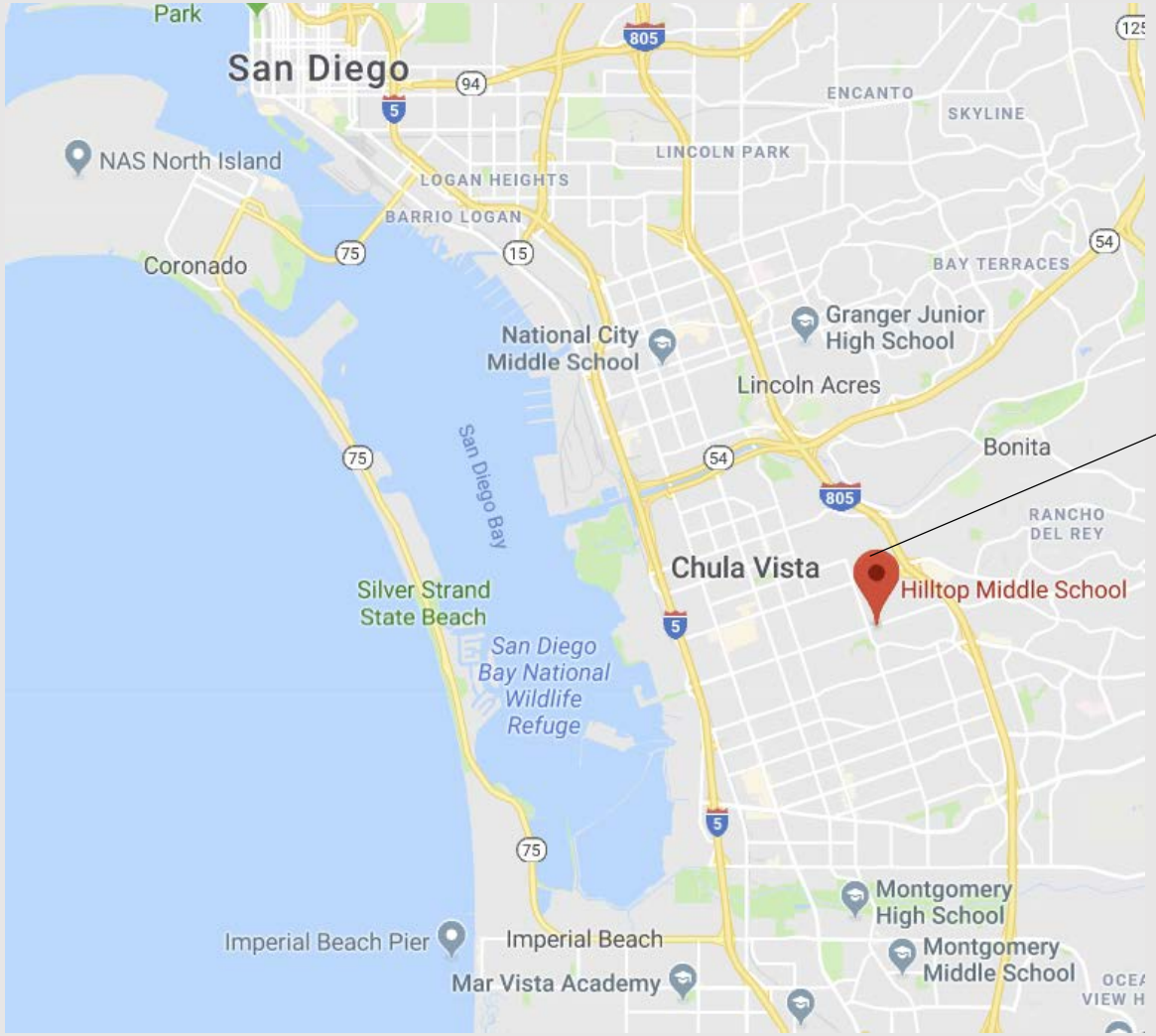
Improvement Activity

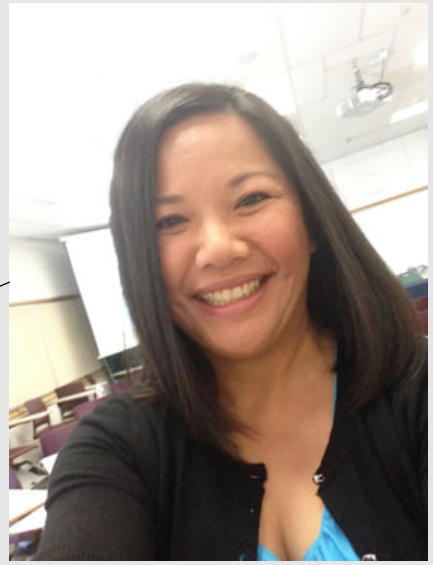
Coin Experiment: Debrief

- What did you learn from your initial tests? What did you do with that learning?
- Why is it important to get a stable process first?
- How is this different than the way we typically go about trying to make improvements?

One School's Improvement Journey

Our Journey Begins...





Rhea spends an average of 25 hours of her work week on discipline issues.

Our Journey Begins…

Loss of instructional time is among the most preventable reasons why students perform poorly academically. According to UCLA IDEA, students in high poverty schools loose nearly *18 minutes of instructional time per period* compared to 12 minutes in low poverty schools. This difference reflects approximately 30 more instructional minutes lost per day in a high poverty school (Rogers, Mirra, Seltzer, & Jun, 2014).

Understanding the Problem

- Identifying the problem is the most critical part of the improvement process because it establishes the **foundation** for all the other improvement work.
- To identify the problem, you must have a deep understanding of the **system** and the **processes** that produce the problem.
- The people within the system may contribute to the problem, but the root cause exists in **work processes**.

Conduct Empathy Interviews

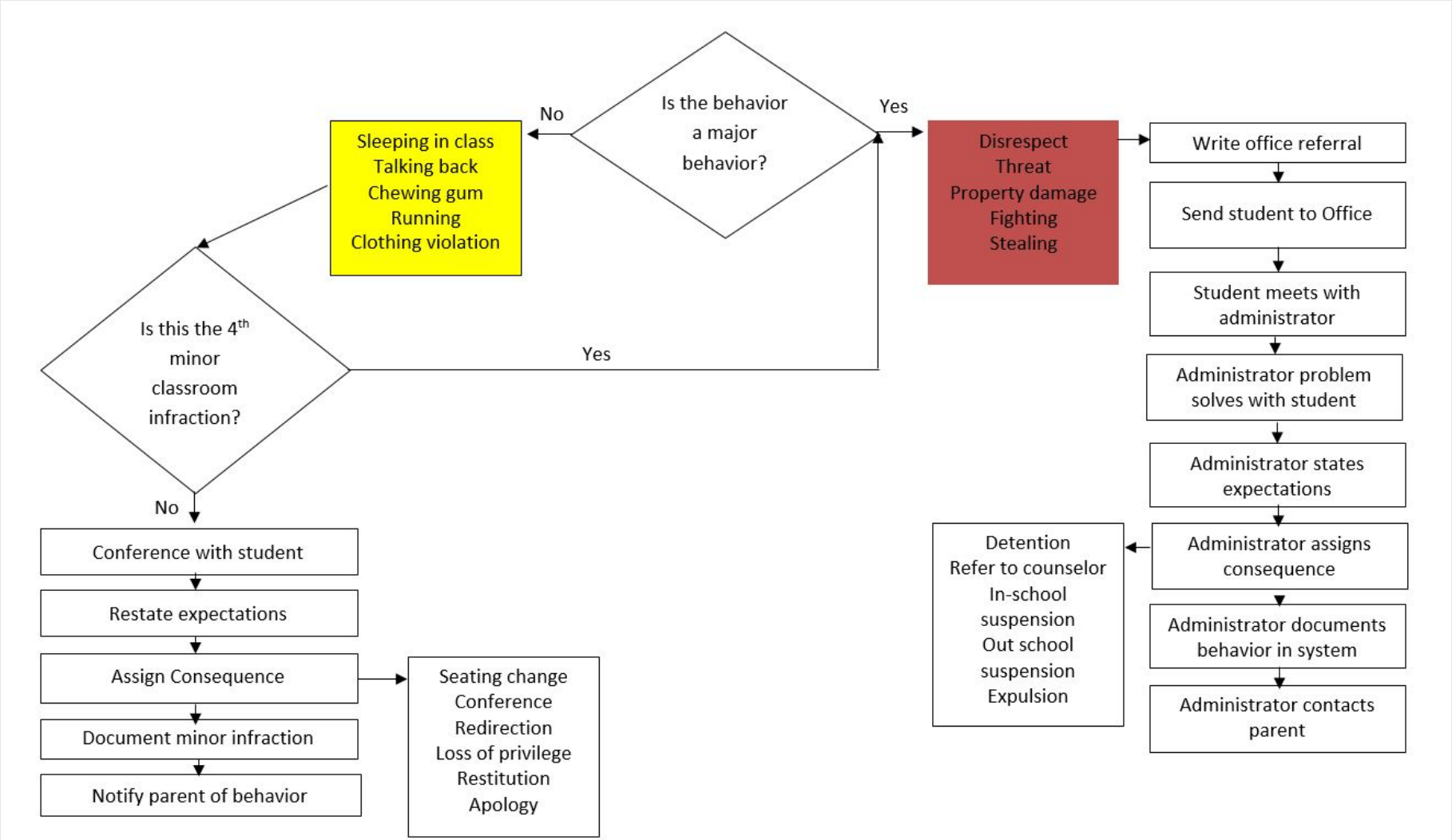
Reasons…

“I don’t know why I’m here.”

“Dress code violation”

“Chewing gum in class”

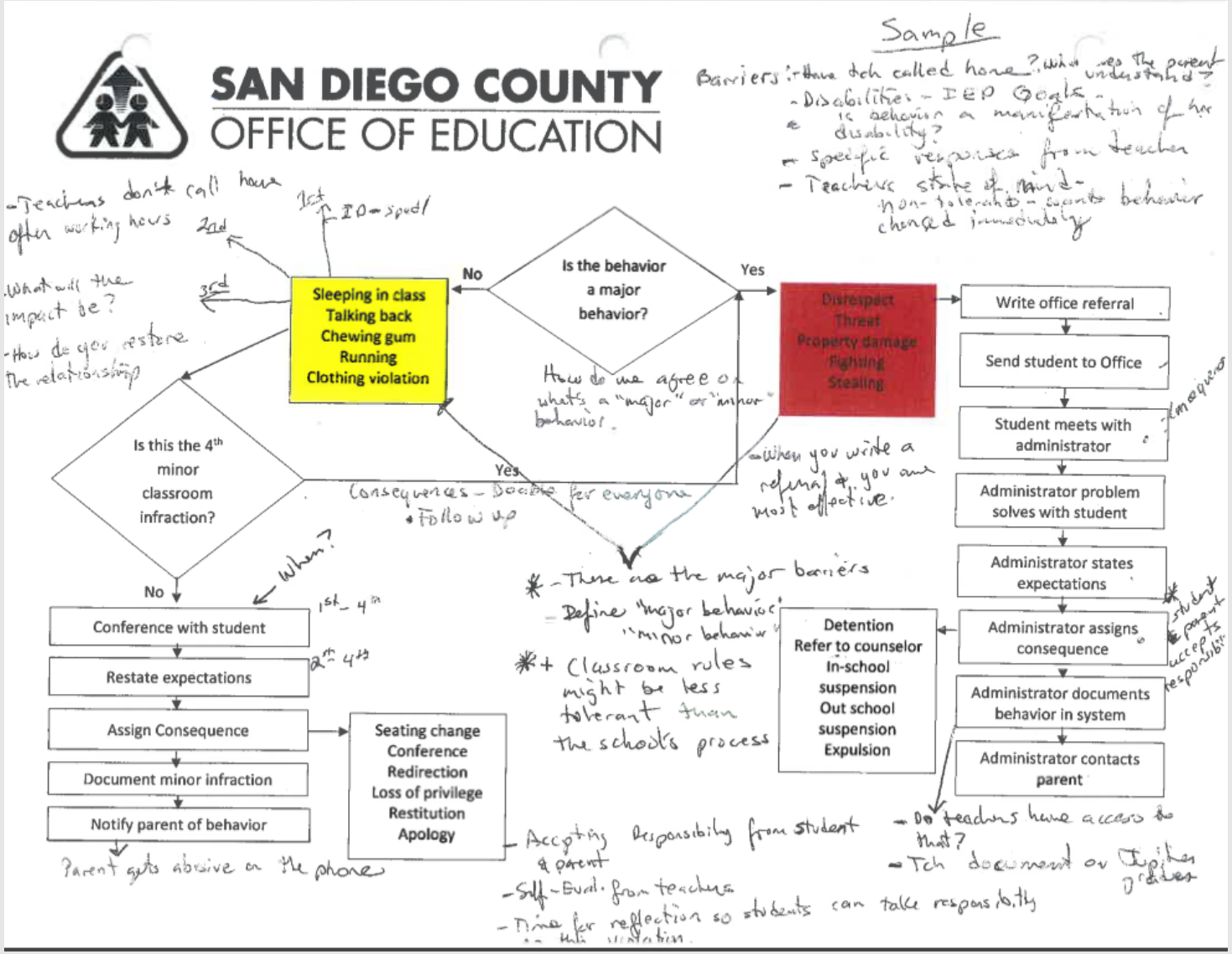
Map Out Key Processes



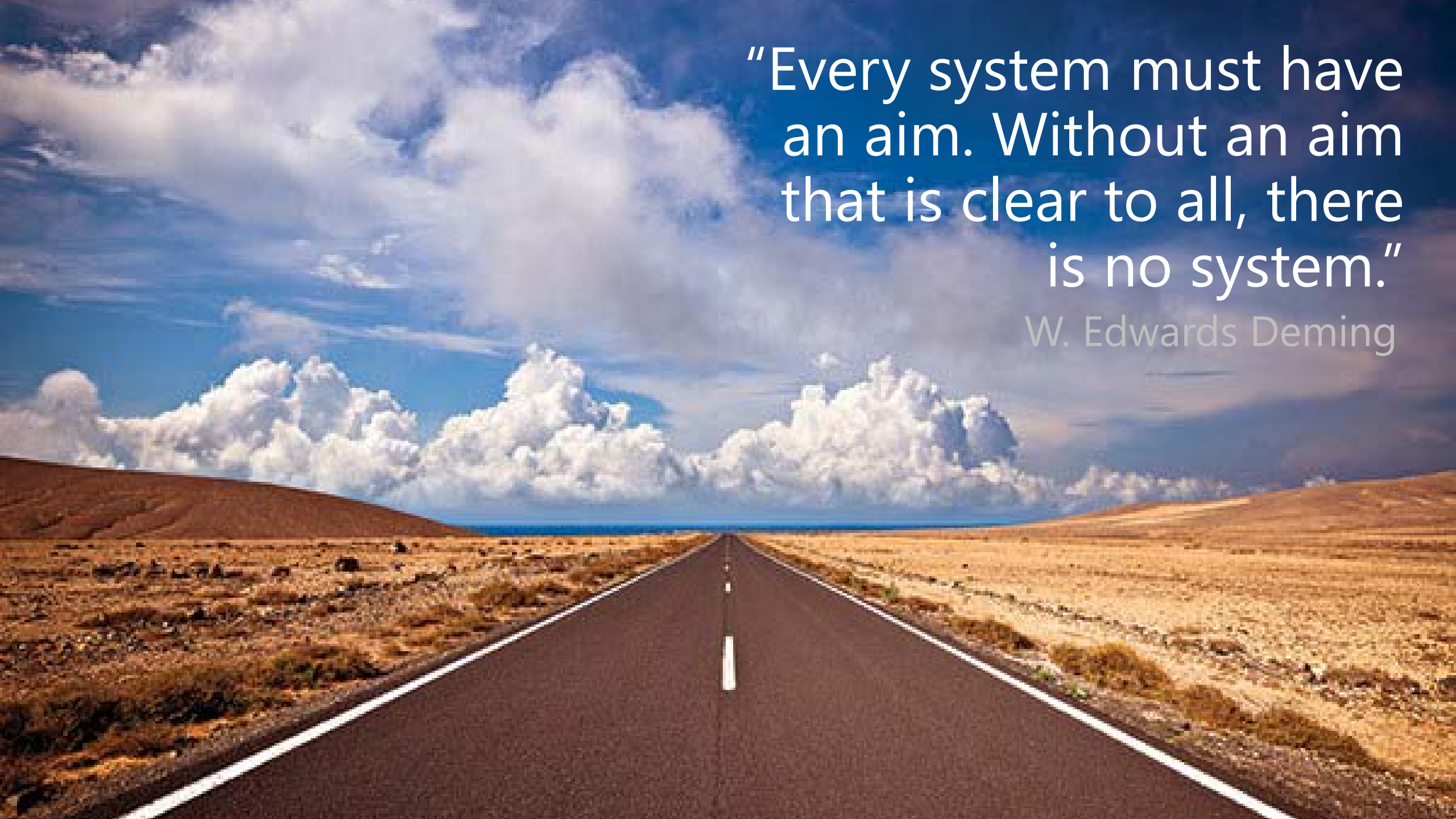
Identify Root Causes in the Processes

What prevents this process for working?

What major barriers do you encounter?



The **aim** is what the improvement effort is trying to accomplish.

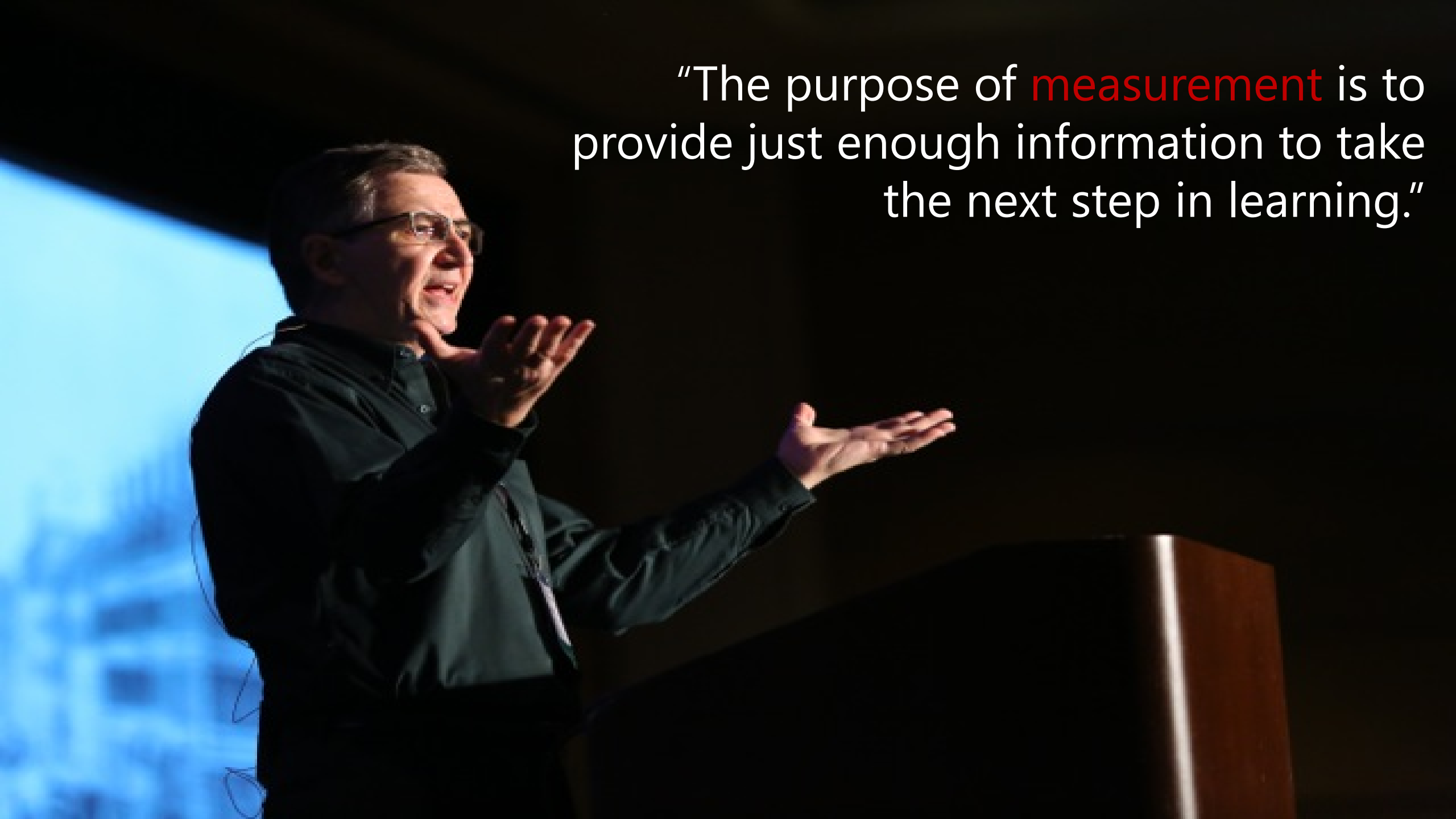

“Every system must have an aim. Without an aim that is clear to all, there is no system.”
W. Edwards Deming

Establish an Aim

The student discipline team's goal for reducing the loss of instructional time due to ODRs is **30 percent** from baseline by March 2018.

Measurement: Why it is Necessary

1. Measurement lets us know if a particular innovation should be kept, changed or rejected
2. Measurement helps in understanding causes.
3. Measurement helps to clarify aims.

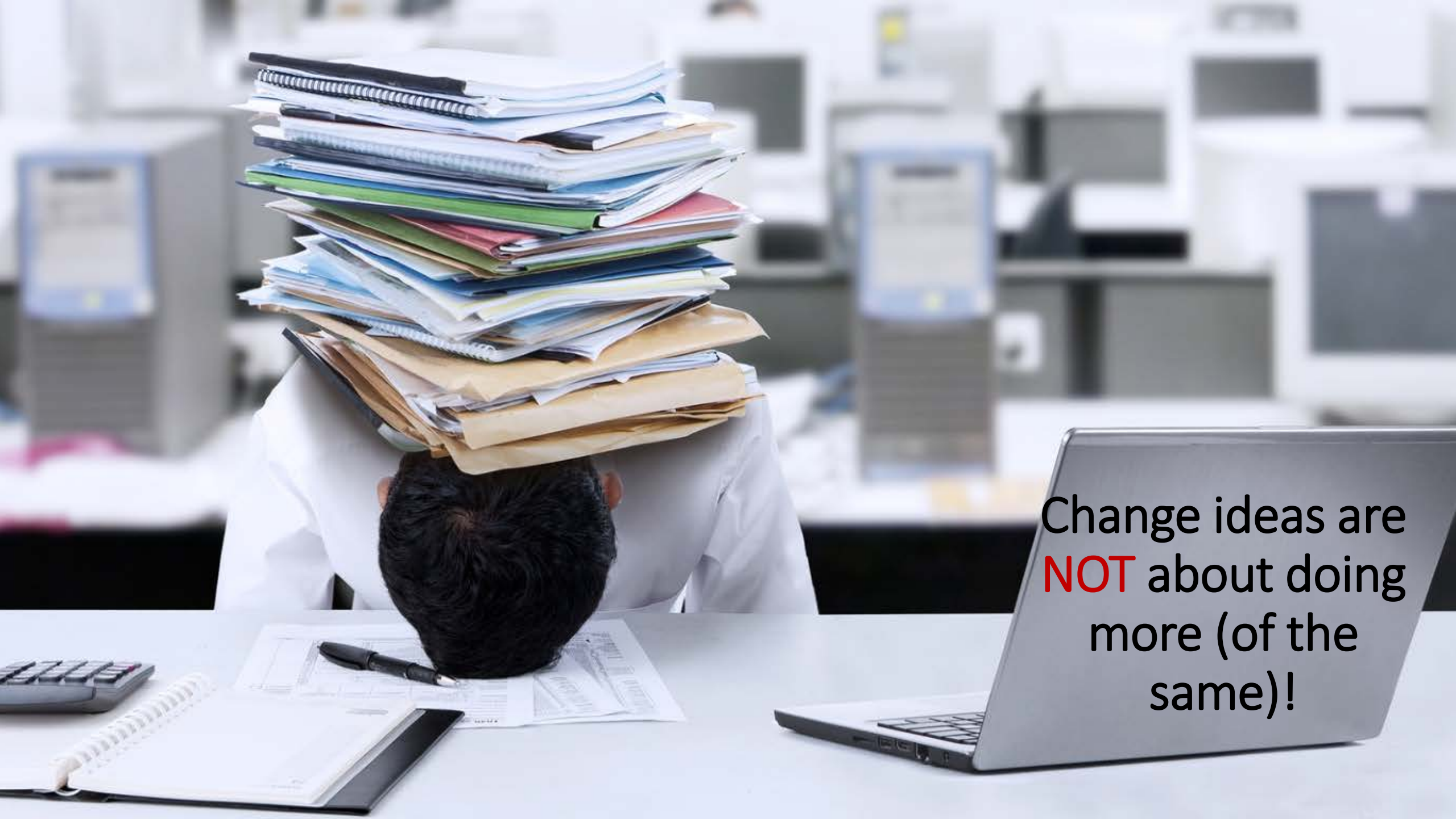

"The purpose of measurement is to provide just enough information to take the next step in learning."

Develop a Family of Measures

Concept	Outcome	Process	Balancing
Reduce Lost Instructional Time	The # of office discipline referrals.	Loss of Instructional Time due to ODRs. Calculated as the length of time between student admission and discharge for ODR. All suspensions are calculated as the number of days suspended.	Staff turnover

Develop a Family of Measures

Concept	Outcome	Process	Balancing
Reduce Lost Instructional Time	*My result…what I'm trying to accomplish.*	*How I'll know if the system is performing in a way that allows me to accomplish my outcome.*	*What is affected by focusing on this outcome?*


Change ideas are
NOT about doing
more (of the
same)!

When we use the word “changes” we mean:

Changes as practices that result in alterations to how work gets done.

Changes must be actionable, not conceptual

Conceptual

Actionable

Change

Help student to become self-regulated

Have student set goals

1:1 conversation protocol where teachers help students identify a goal, anticipate barriers and obstacles, and plan how to overcome them

Change Idea

- Standardized referral process that distinguishes referable offenses into two categories: classroom managed offenses and administratively managed offenses.
- Classroom expectations/management plan for substitute teachers (handout placed in sub folder).
- Daily whole school threat assessment (red day, yellow day, green day).
- Check-in/Check-out (Parent contact script)

85%

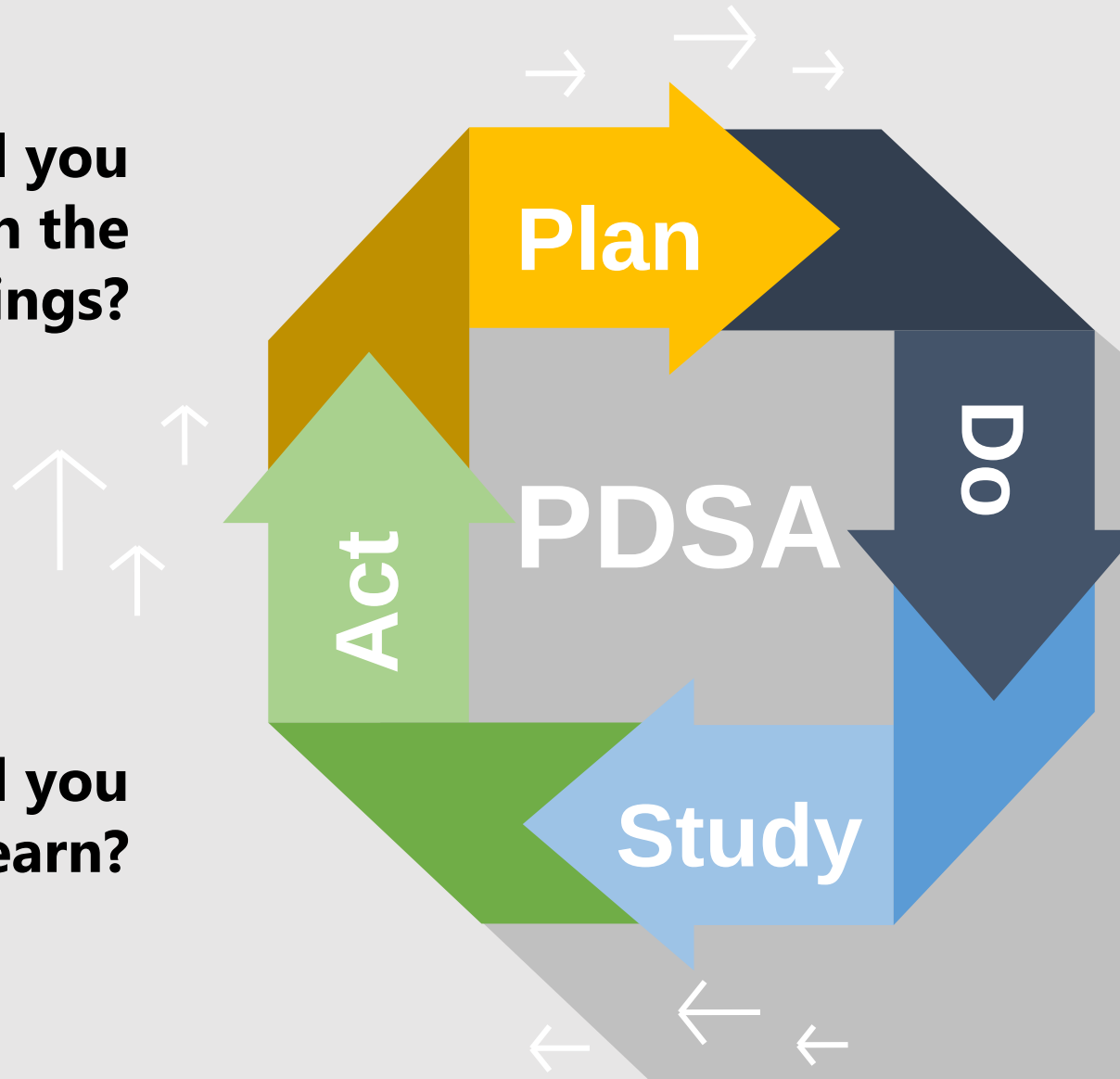
of ideas fail when put into practice

Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle

Step 4

How will you act on the learnings?

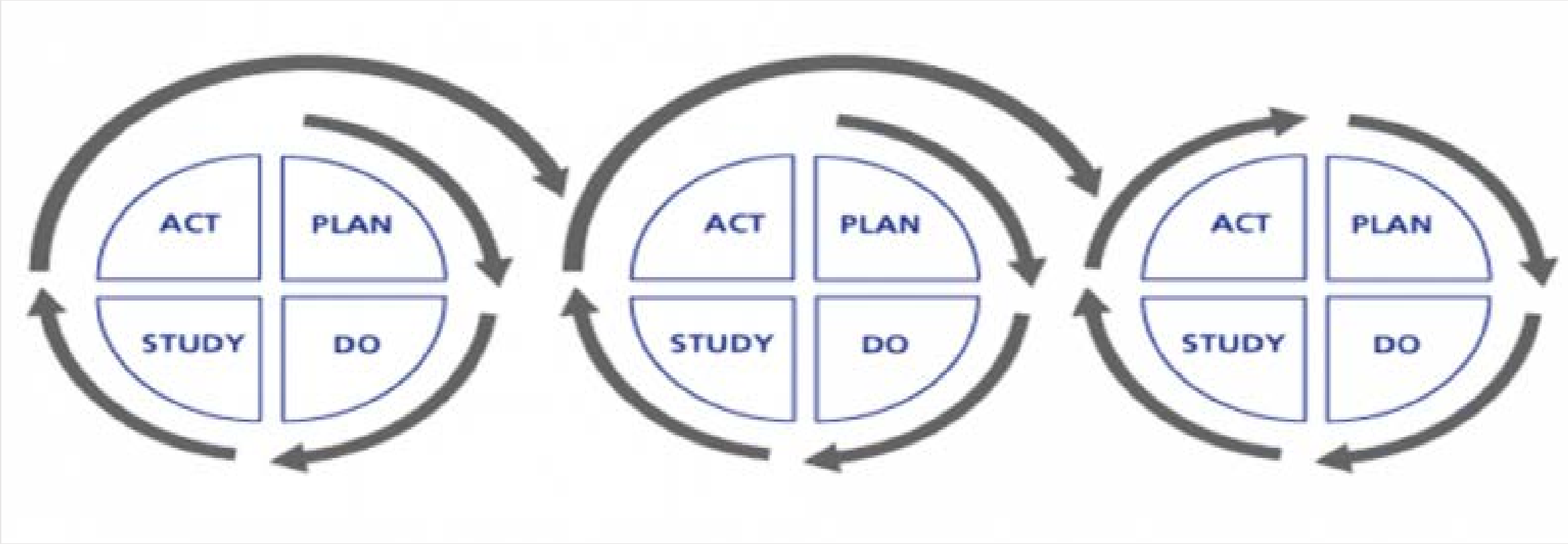
What do you want to learn?



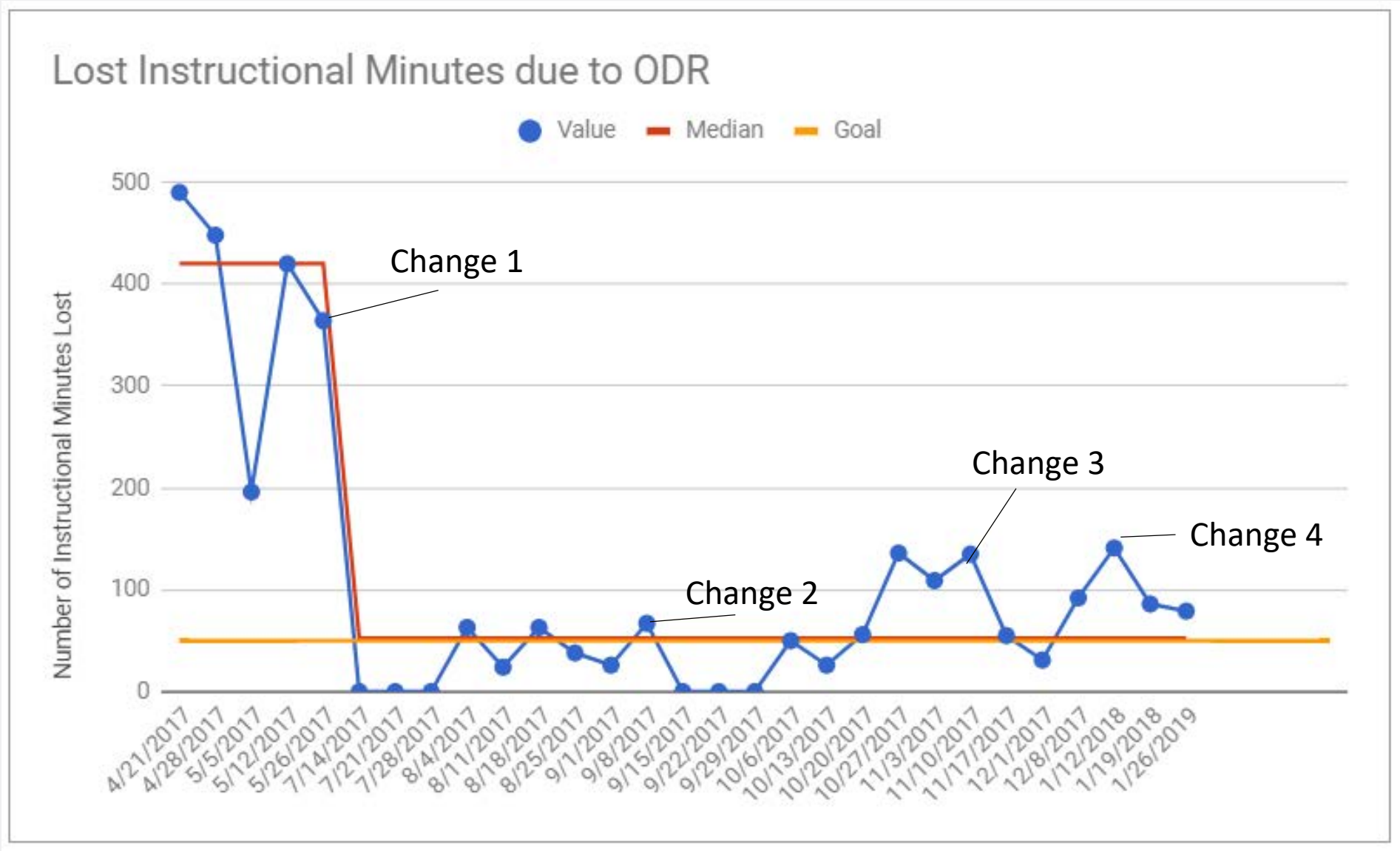
What did you learn?

How will you go about learning it?

Apply learning and retest…



Results from tests…



The Sequence of Improvement

Step 5

Spread the change rapidly and permanently

System Change

Implement the change across school

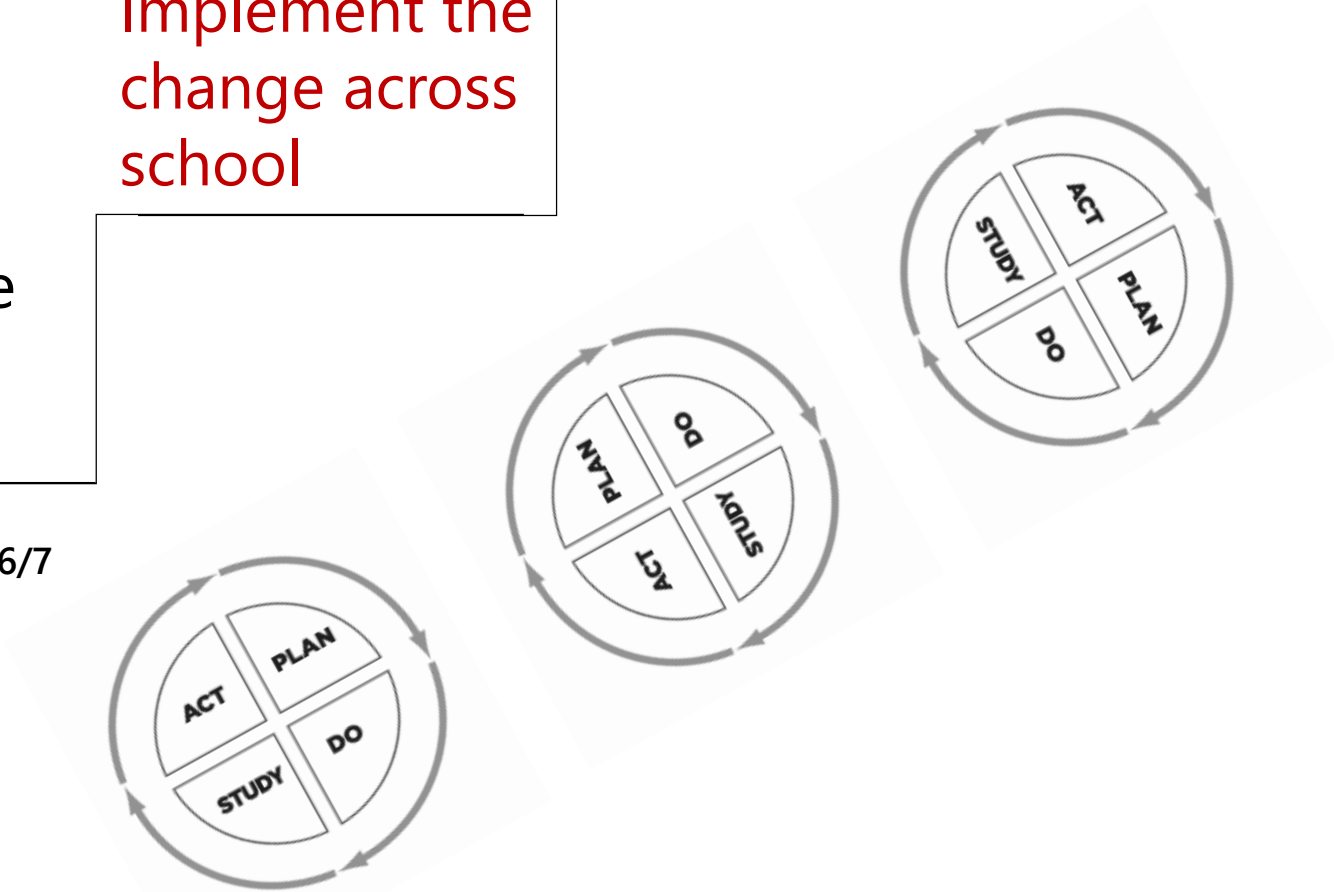
Test the change under multiple conditions

September-February 2016/7

Develop change idea

Hunch

August 2016



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