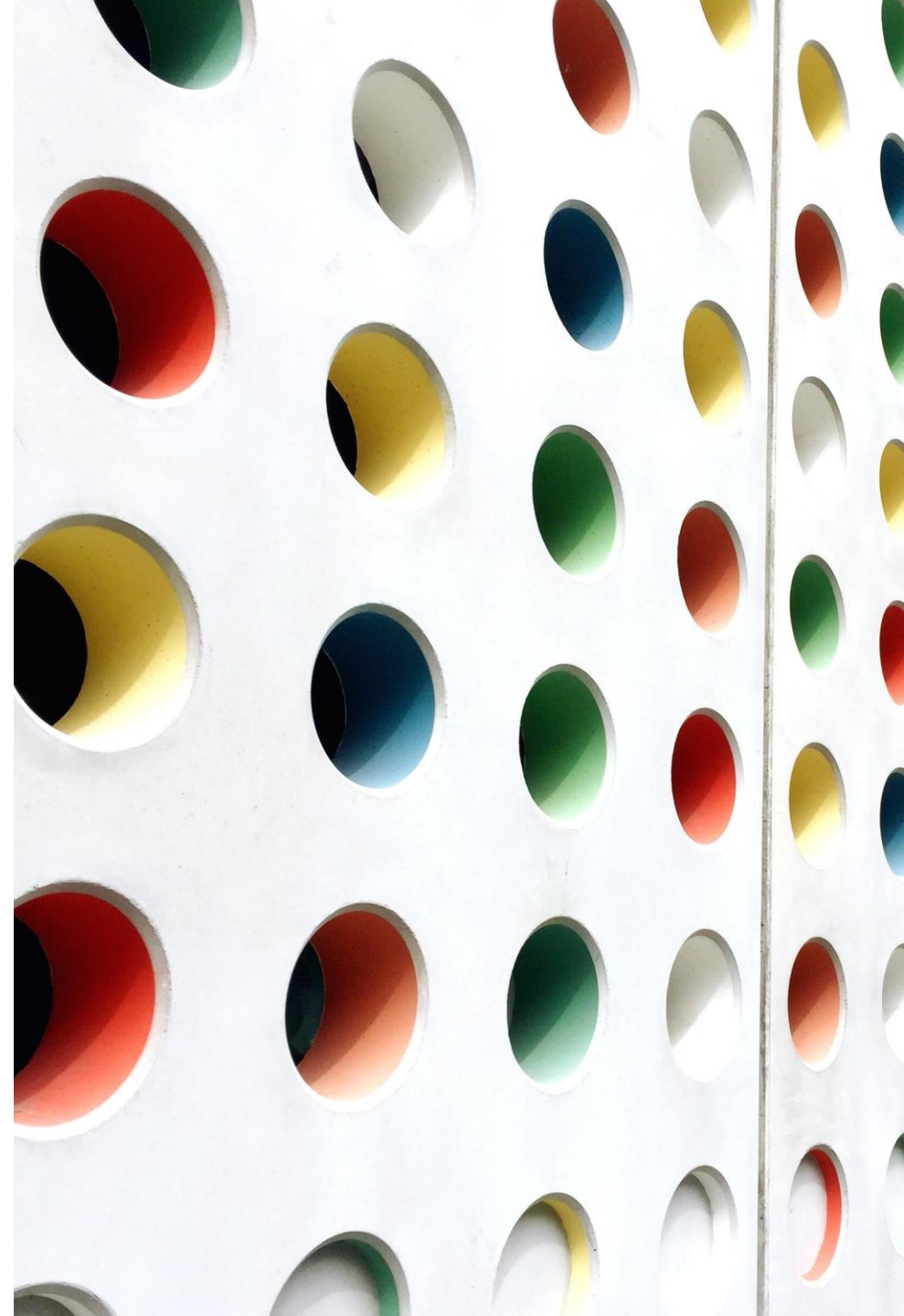


Reimagining Middle Schools

BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2 (9/8/22)



Welcome New Members

I am _____ (*what I would like to be called*)

In this Steering Committee, I bring the perspective of _____
(*examples: A Tyee family member; a mother of Black students; a middle school science teacher who cares deeply about our multilingual students; a central office administrator who is passionate about equity and student well-being*)



Roadmap

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

- ✓ Team Forming and Norming
- ✓ Understanding our “WHY”
 - *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* Chapter 1
 - Project Goal
 - Current Data

WHERE WE'RE GOING

- Today: Continue Team Building and Build Shared Understanding
 - *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* Chapter 2
 - Understand Project Methodology and Timeline
 - Begin Phase 1: Empathize

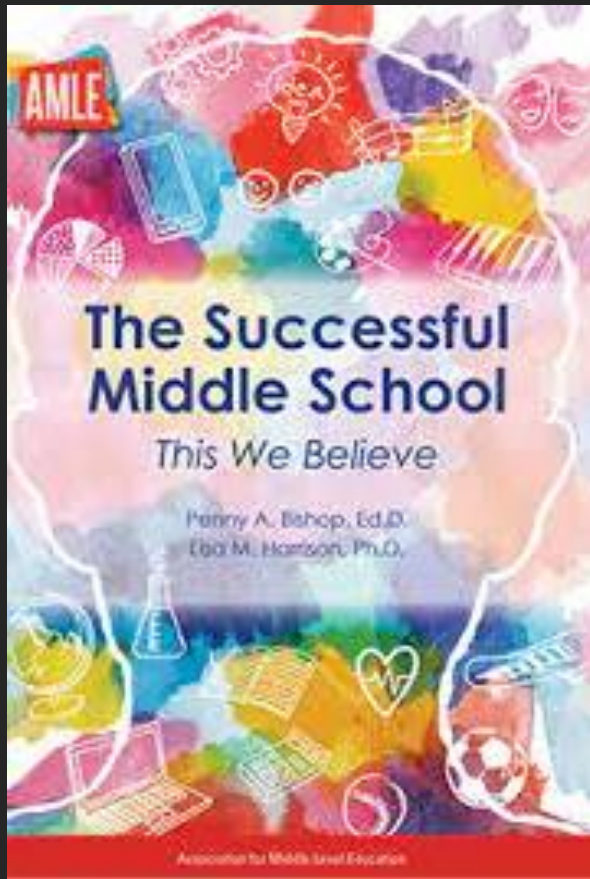
Today's Objectives

➤ Continue to:

- ❑ Build trusting relationships between committee members
- ❑ Ground our work in research by discussing Chapter 2 of *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* book
- ❑ Learn about the **design thinking process and timeline** we will use to guide our work together this year
- ❑ Practice the "**Empathize**" step of the process by thinking about a student, their experience, and what we might hope and wish for them.

Activity	Duration	Details
Inclusive Welcome	Start-4:30 PM 15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • New Members • Book Study (Chapter 2) • Norms • Roles for Today's Meeting
Purpose	5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Goal • Objectives for Today's Meeting
Content	50 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Thinking Process and Timelines • Criteria of Success • Point-Of-View Want Ad Activity
Nuts and Bolts	10 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Meeting • What is coming up: WE EMPATHIZE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Shadow a Middle School Student" • Listening Campaign • Level 2 Members
Optimistic Closing	10 min 6:00 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring deeply for the social, emotional and mental well-being of each other • Developing trusting relationships

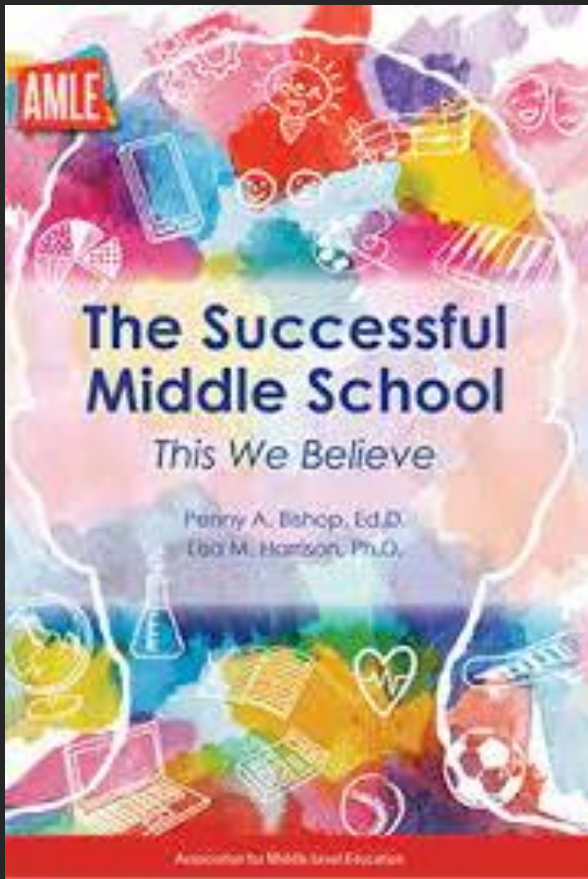
Book Study- Chapter 2



***The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* examines decades of research into the developmental nature of young adolescents and the school structures and practices that best support those needs.**

- ❑ Put your name on the top of your paper (*we will be collecting these at the end*)
- ❑ Individually look through Chapter 2 and find something that stood out
- ❑ Write it (or summarize) at the top of your paper
- ❑ Reference page number
- ❑ Wait for next steps!

Book Study- Chapter 2



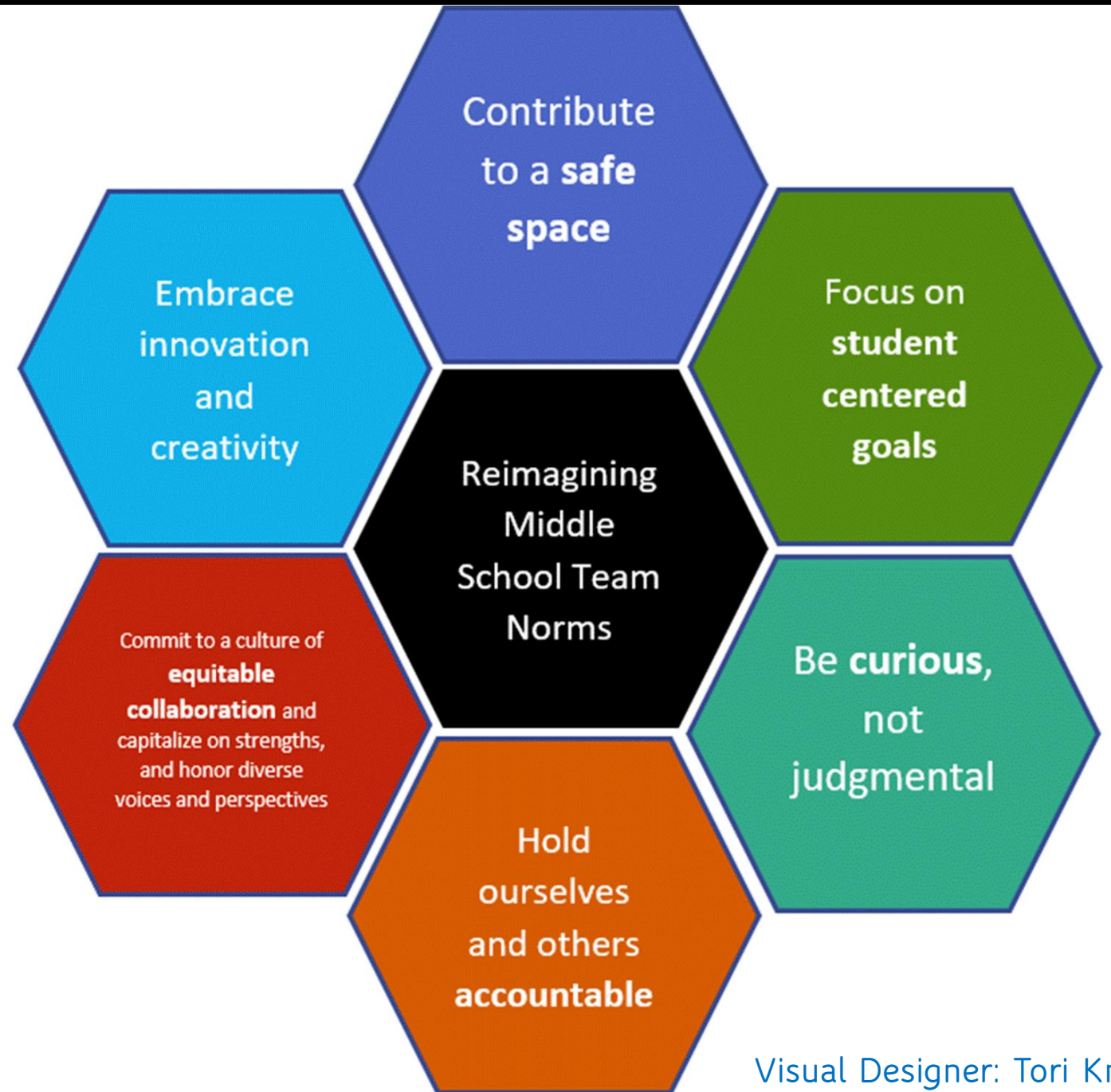
***The Successful Middle School: This We Believe* examines decades of research into the developmental nature of young adolescents and the school structures and practices that best support those needs.**

- ❑ Crumple paper into a ball
- ❑ On my count—throw your ball
- ❑ Pick up one that lands near you
- ❑ Read it. Find it in your book. Reflect. And write what comes to your mind about it below their writing.
- ❑ Crumple again. Throw again. Repeat step above.
- ❑ Do that again!
- ❑ Last step—don't crumple but rather give to Wendy!

Community Agreements

Roles

Timekeeper	Note Taker	Process Observer
Susan Thomas	Tori Knight	Self-Reflection



Visual Designer: Tori Knight

Roles

Timekeeper	Note Taker	Process Observer
Susan Thomas	Tori Knight	Self-Reflection

Process Observer: Helps the group gain more awareness of its group dynamics so that it can accomplish its goals.

Process Observer Prompts:

- 1.A Community Agreement we seem to be holding well is...
- 2.A Community Agreement we seem to struggle with is...
- 3.Some patterns of communication that I noticed were...
- 4.Some of the non-verbal communication that I noticed was...
- 5.Frustration seemed to increase when...and decrease when...
- 6.People seemed more engaged when...and less engaged when...
- 7.Our ability to make decisions seemed to increase when...and decrease when...
- 8.We seemed to get stuck when...
- 9.We seemed to create forward momentum when...

Source: [Elena Aguilar, 2016](#)

To collaboratively craft **recommendations** to be shared with our **Superintendent and Executive Team** about **middle school structures and practices** that better serve the **developmental, social-emotional, and academic needs** of our **middle school students**. These recommendations will be based on authentic and extensive **input and feedback** from our students, families, and staff, **evidence-based best practices**, and will include **global competency principles** and **equitable grading practices** .

PROJECT GOAL

PROJECT DELIVERABLES



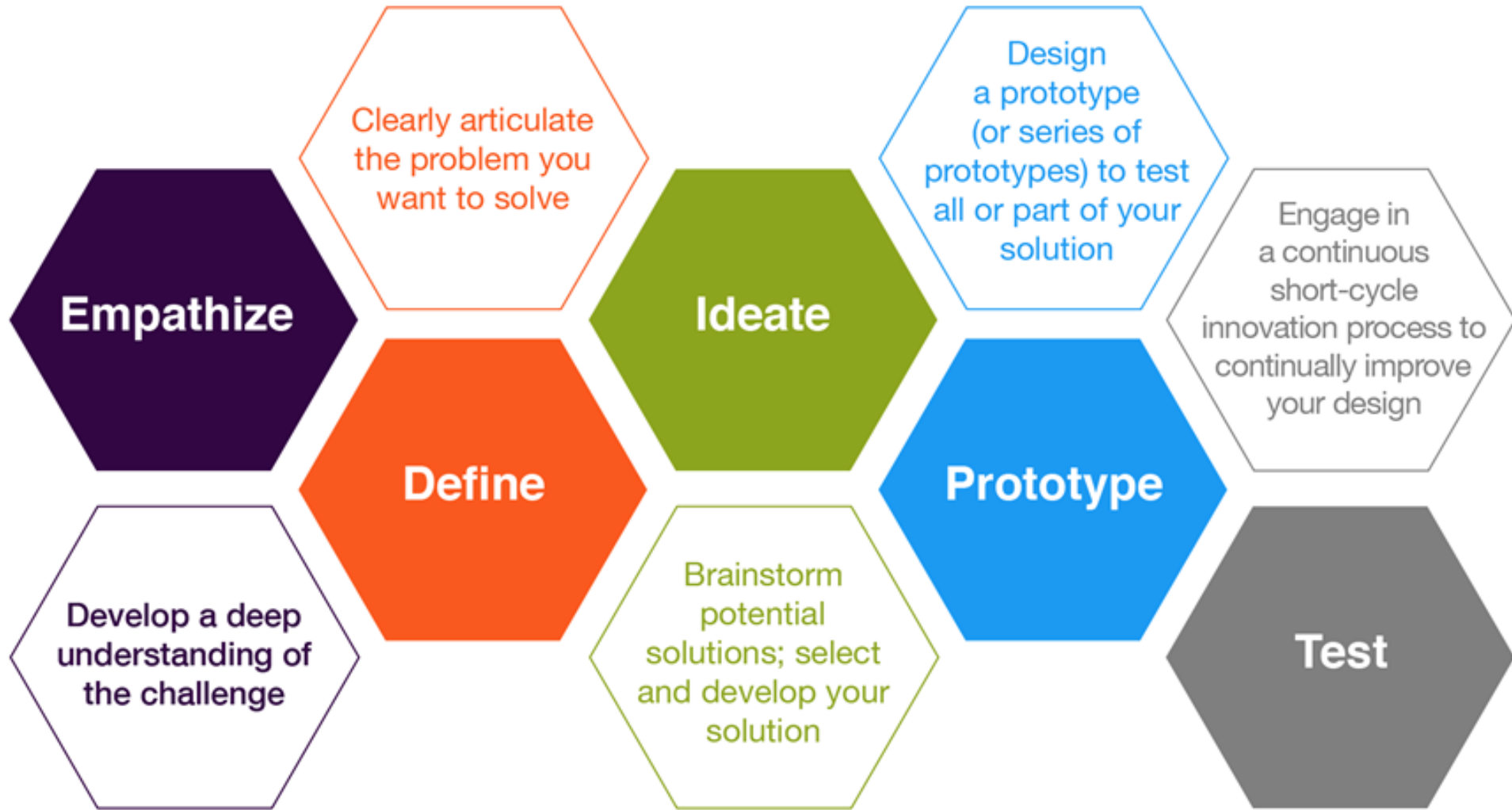
1 - Recommendation for a **new, “reimagined” middle school model(s)** which **may** include:

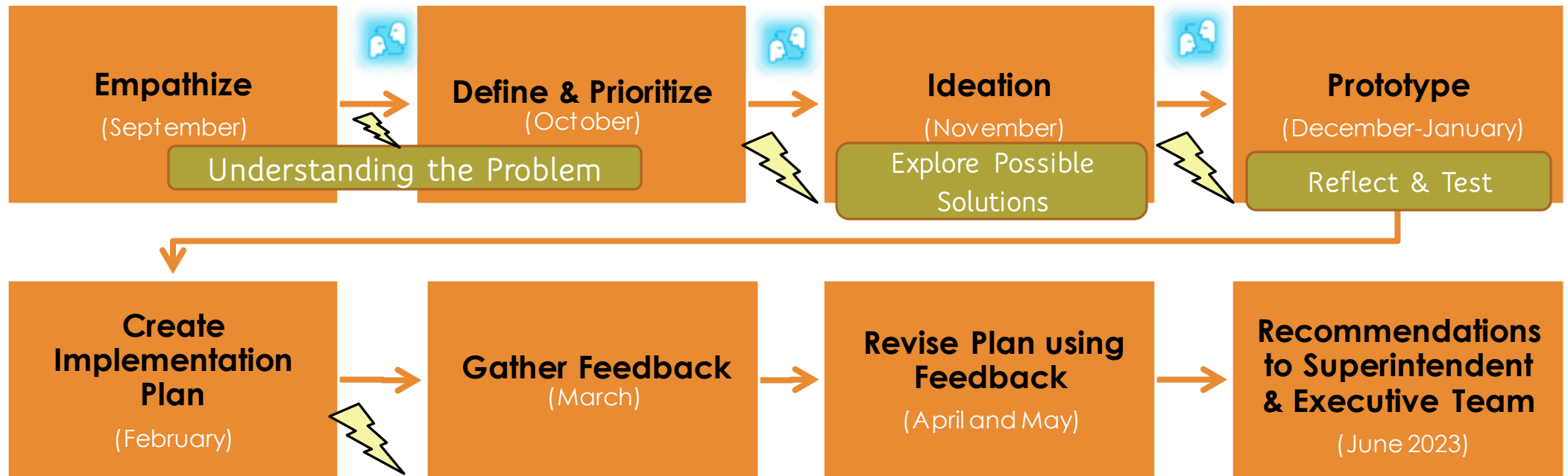
- Engaging and relevant academic program
- The integration of SEL instruction and relationship-building into the school day
- MTSS tiers/system of supports
- Global competency principles
- Equitable grading practices
- Smooth school-level transitions for students and families

2 - Recommended **implementation plan**

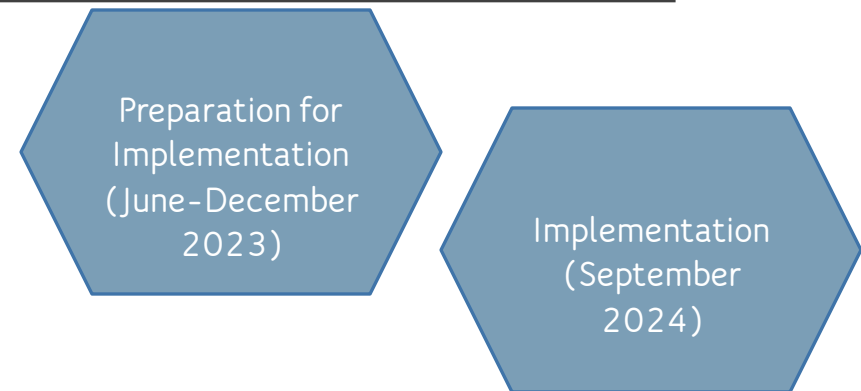
Both deliverables will be guided by:

- Design-based process that includes data & evaluation
- Research (academic literature & other districts/schools)
- Stakeholder feedback
- Reasonable timeline





DESIGN THINKING PROCESS AND TIMELINES

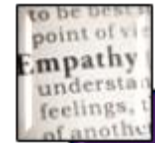


Checkpoint



Feedback Loop

Design Thinking



Empathize

What are the needs of the people we are solving for?

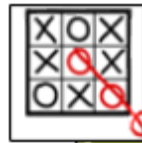
- Gain an empathic understanding of the problem we are trying to solve
- Get to know the MS students and understand their desires, needs, and objectives
- Set aside our own beliefs and assumptions
- Why do we need to solve the problem?
- Why is so important to them?
- What will be the outcome if we were to address the problem/need?



Define

What are we trying to solve?

- What patterns did we see?
- What did they hear most often?
- What difficulties did the middle students have?



Ideation

What could we do?

- Look at the problem from all angles and generate as many ideas as possible.
- Potential ways to address the problem/needs?



Prototype

What do we do?

- It's about taking all the ideas from stage three and creating tangible plan to experiment with.
- What is the plan of implementation?
- How does it look like in our district?
- When is happening?
- Who is impacted by changes?
- Does our prototype work?



Implement Feedback and Revisions

How do we want to proceed?

- Identify what we learned
- Identify questions still open
- Consider what to do differently
- Revise earlier stages as necessary

Empathize

- Do we understand the needs of students?
- Have we observed a middle school student?
- Did we talk to a diverse set of students with proximity to the problem?
- Did we create a safe space for honest sharing?
- Have I asked questions about students' needs?
- Have I shadowed a student?
- Have I interviewed a student?
- Did we listen to and learn from middle school



Define

- Is the problem statement focused on middle school students?
- Who are the students impacted (intentionally or unintentionally)?
- Did we identify the challenge?
- Did we examine research and data?
- Do we understand context & identity root cause?
- Did we reflect on personal experiences?



Ideation

- Are different perspectives heard during the process?
- How does/could this promote opportunities or access for those who have been historically excluded?
- How can this benefit all students equitably?
- Did we engage community to generate solutions?
- Did we define success and barriers/mitigations?
- Did we generate ideas that would lead to success and overcome barriers?



Prototype

- Is this aligned to the District's mission, vision, values?
- How does this result in preventing, reducing, or removing barriers to more equitable outcomes?
- Have provisions been made to provide necessary supports (training, resources, time) for implementation?

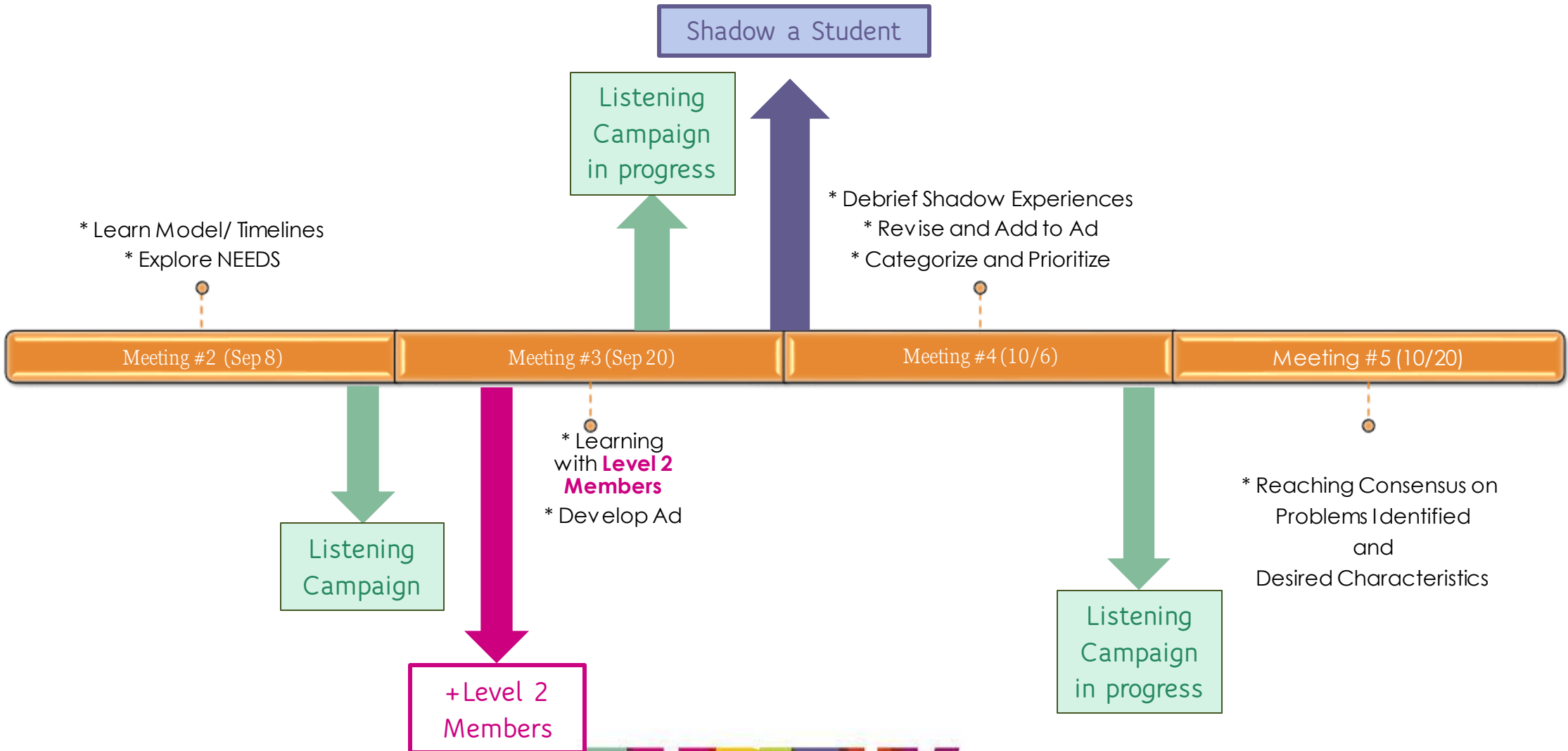


Implement Feedback and Revisions

- Based on what was learned from completing this review, have we made changes?
- How were implementation plans adjusted to ensure key relevant issues will not be missed?



Criteria of Success



EMPATHY

Sympathy vs. Empathy



EMPATHIZE

Empathy is the foundation of **human centered design**. The problems you're trying to solve are rarely your own, they're those of **particular students**. Build empathy for our students by learning what they feel, experience, want and value.

To empathize, we:

Observe. View students and their behavior in the context of their lives.

Engage. Interact with and interview students.

Immerse. Walk in the students' shoes. Experience what they experience for a mile or two.

An activity to build our empathy...

Think of a middle school student...

- your own child or family member, student you taught, even yourself as a middle schooler

What do they like about middle school?

How do they feel? How do you want them to feel?

What are their strengths? How can they improve?

What do they want to learn? What do you want them to learn?

What do they need? What is getting in their way?

What do you hope for them as they go through middle school?

What do you wish for the student's middle school experience?

What do you think the student wants us to know?



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What do you hope for them as they go through middle school?

What do you wish for the student's middle school experience?

What do you think the student wants us to know?



5 minutes

Sharing

Share with a partner



Add or Revise
as you talk with
each other



We will collect
these and use
them next time!

5 more minutes

What is next: Point-of-View Advertisement

WHY use a POV
advertisement?

A point-of-view (POV) is your reframing of a design challenge into **actionable problem statements** that will help launch us later into solutions

HOW to use a
POV
advertisement?

Grounding the work in our students, and their needs, adding our insights in an advertisement format.



Nuts and Bolts

Next Meeting – Chinook

Chapter #3

What is coming up: WE EMPATHIZE

- "Shadow a Middle School Student"
- Listening Campaign
- Level 2 Members

Optimistic Closure

Roles

Timekeeper	Note Taker	Process Observer
Susan Thomas	Tori Knight	Self-Reflection

Process Observer: Helps the group gain more awareness of its group dynamics so that it can accomplish its goals.

Process Observer Prompts:

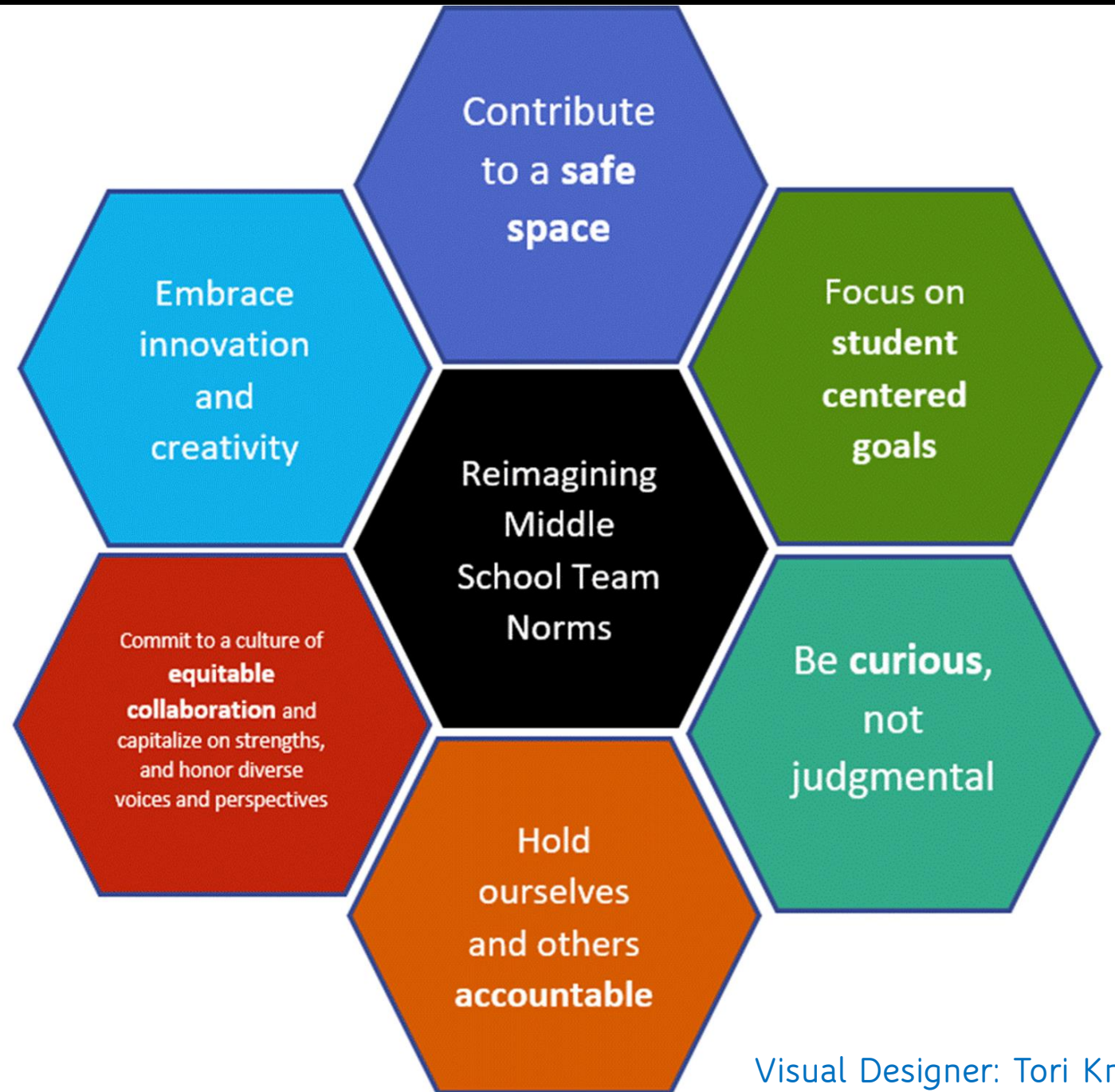
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Visual Designer: Tori Knight