Goal Consensus 2

The Nature of Goal Consensus

Listening to David Snowden, a revered researcher in the field of knowledge management, Stef was taken aback when Snowden (2020) stated unequivocally, "there is no such thing as goal consensus." As he spoke, Stef gradually realized that he was using the term *consensus* as synonymous with *unanimous*. In reading other researchers around this topic, this appears to be a fairly common practice, and one that might undermine our ability to embrace goal consensus as a critical element of building collective efficacy.

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines consensus as "a generally accepted opinion; wide agreement," whereas unanimity is defined as "complete agreement among every member of a group." While the distinction may be subtle, it is important not to conflate consensus as unanimous agreement and it is equally important not to insist on unanimity before moving forward or we would doom every initiative before it begins.

> Goal consensus is reached when the faculty that has engaged in a process for identifying goals comes to an agreement about the school's goals.

Another nuanced challenge in understanding the nature of goal consensus is that groups rarely work toward one single intention. In our increasingly complex world, challenges are not met with one simple (or even complicated) goal. Instead, groups must determine the overarching goal that drives the need for their work together, they must consider the

17

smaller purpose-driven goals that will guide their work in a coherent fashion, and they must distinguish between mastery and performance goals to motivate teams and increase goal-relevant behaviors. In a sense, groups might find more success achieving goal consensus if they approach it as a collaborative process rather than an action to accomplish.

In addition to these challenges, goals must not be considered sacrosanct, as if they were etched in stone. As teams progress along their learning journey, they must be willing to revisit, revise, and rethink their goals in light of new understandings. Sometimes the most important thing we learn is that we were heading down the wrong path all along.

VIGNETTE 2.1

Goal Consensus as a Reflective Practice

The leadership team in Maine Township knew they needed to do something to shift the focus away from teacher-centered classrooms. As one administrator put it, "Every time I walked into a classroom, it was clear where the focal point was—the front of the room. When an adult opened the door to visit the class, every student swiveled their head to turn and see who had entered."

The team believed that cooperative learning skills were sorely needed. They decided to invest in a robust "train the trainer" model, embarking on an initiative that would theoretically result in training all of the Maine Township educators in cooperative learning strategies. Well into the implementation, the leadership team noticed something that became a great source of frustration: the only classrooms where there was a demonstrated shift in practice were those whose teachers had begun training colleagues following the "train the trainer" session. It wasn't spreading out to the other educators in the buildings.

This raised two critical questions for the leadership team: how can we create skill-learning opportunities that move beyond the traditional "one-off" workshop so they actually change instructional practice? The other question came from the observation that those teachers who had stepped up to become trainers were clearly most invested in changing the learning for students. Therefore, how might Maine

Township create more opportunities for teachers to take on those leadership roles?

The leadership team realized that while their original goal focused on shifting practice to create more student-centered classrooms is worthy, it didn't direct them in a way that would actually result in changes to the student learning experience. They realized that the more critical goals to pursue revolved around adult learning. The Maine Township leadership team developed a new theory of action: Shifting the goal to one that creates optimal conditions for teachers to learn—focusing on adults—would have a higher likelihood in changing practice, thus impacting the student learning experience.

Source: Maine Township, District 207. Used with permission.

The importance of goal consensus in building collective efficacy has been highlighted throughout the last decades. Kurz and Knight (2003) found that consensus on school goals was a significant predictor of collective efficacy. Robinson et al.'s research (2009) on the impacts of leadership identified five powerful leadership dimensions, one of which was establishing goals and expectations. Most notable about their description was the need for staff involvement in order to provide clarity and consensus around goals. In *District Leadership That Works: Striking the Right Balance*, Marzano and Waters recognized that collaborative goal setting has been noted in the research for at least 40 years, and they wrote that book in 2009!

The importance of goal consensus is a deceptively simple concept. In reality, achieving goal consensus requires leadership and a commitment of time and resources. It also requires a careful understanding of the nature of goals. Goal consensus does not mean that a group will work toward a single, definitive end game. Figuring out what an organization's goals should be is a challenging process; while it may seem like the logical first step in any initiative, goals often reveal themselves along the journey. As Jill Geocaris, the Innovative Adult Learning coordinator from Maine Township, described, "We did a lot of finding our way during the first two years. It wasn't that there was a lack of goals—we had a clear vision of learning from the superintendent, we had areas of focus—and then we realized that we had to pull things together for people because they weren't seeing how everything was

connected. It's not that the goals were wrong, it's that organizations reflect and refresh every once in a while."

The Maine Township Journey

Superintendent Ken Wallace faced a dilemma: his district of three high schools was experiencing a rapidly changing student population and educators were clinging to outdated teaching approaches. Ken reflected, "It was difficult to come in and uncover what was happening. We weren't meeting student needs especially in the area of access. Our most challenging courses too often weren't available to our traditionally underserved students, a population that has been our fastest growing. It would have been easier to maintain the status quo—identifying the need and bringing it out in the open was a tremendous risk."

A critical first move was to build a leadership team composed of believers; it was important that the school leaders agreed that something needed to change. Building this team was important because it allowed for messages of change to filter to all educators from multiple levels, not just the superintendent's office. In this respect, the leadership team was very intentional in using social persuasion as an efficacy enhancer. The team knew that the changes required would leave some people feeling uneasy, anxious, or even inadequate. This recognition is an important aspect of any implementation and is particularly crucial when considering educators' receptiveness to change (Figure 2.1). The team recognized that starting out, teachers might dismiss or evade proposed changes, as is often the case in the early stages of implementation

Figure 2.1   Receptiveness to Change During Stages of Implementation Matrix
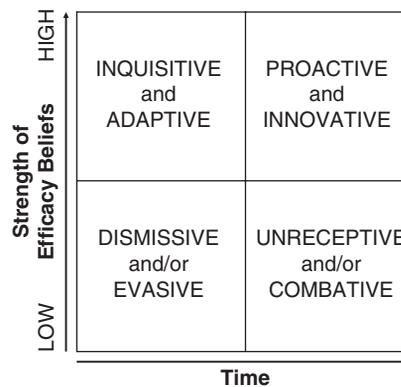
where efficacy beliefs are not strong. Without significant support, those beliefs might continue to be low. Over time, this might result in educators continuing to resist or, worse, becoming combative. To address the receptiveness issue, Ken intentionally strove to minimize concerns by communicating high standards while providing assurances "*we know you can do this* and we're here to support you."

The leadership team noticed the greatest impediment to student success was restricted access; the most successful students were those who had access to the most enriched programs. And yet, that access was denied to many students—particularly minority students—and the team viewed this as a fundamental system design flaw. Their steady insistence on creating more access for greater numbers of students became the mission. The issue of access to advanced coursework is not unique to Maine Township. "Too many Black, Latino, and low-income students . . . are not given the chance to participate in advanced coursework or programs in high school . . . . These students are missing out on critical opportunities that can set them up for success in college and careers" (Education Trust, 2019).

Believing that access alone would not be enough to support students—particularly those with little experience in rigorous courses—Maine Township also pursued new teaching methodologies. An additional goal was developed, to shift instruction from the traditional style prevalent in many classrooms. With this intention, Maine Township educators were acknowledging what Martin Haberman (1991) described as the "pedagogy of poverty"—teacher-centric practices based heavily on passivity and compliance. "Such experiences are too commonly sustained in our current educational system, where teacher preparation programs often fail to support educators in developing the skills and mindsets needed to close the opportunity and achievement gaps of struggling students" (Riordan, Klein, & Gaynor, 2019, p. 327). A recognition of these two barriers to student success—access and pedagogy—represented a radical shift in district goals.

As the district attempted various approaches to supporting both teachers and students, they pursued the "train the trainer" model to implement cooperative learning practices and discovered an implementation gap—the "one-stop workshop" wasn't effective. As a result, they moved to professional learning designs that would permit more embedded and meaningful learning experiences. Maine Township's focus on student

success wasn't misplaced; it was the ultimate long-term goal. They learned that they needed to consider and articulate more immediate benchmark goals that would move them on their journey.

Focusing on Adult Learning

The Maine Township district website clearly states, "Adult learning is at the foundation of student learning in our district." The professional learning program was thoughtfully constructed with a focus on coaching. Maine Township first learned from educational coaching experts and then made a conscious decision to break from a fundamental belief in the field—that you shouldn't *make* people participate in coaching. This was a significant challenge and caused some pushback. The leadership team held their ground, however, believing that the only way to achieve a tipping point in practice was to acknowledge that coaching is good for everyone, not just those who see the need.

The adult learning program in Maine Township identified learning pathways to define how educators would meet the academic and social/emotional needs of students. Those pathways were closely aligned to district beliefs about the student learning and experiences that would support their future to success. A fundamental value in Maine Township is that high expectations for changes in educator beliefs and practice demand a high level of support in the form of time and resources, opportunities for individuals and teams to experience mastery, and efficacy-enhancing feedback through coaching. This required implementing a multitiered support system, with beliefs about what students need connecting to adult learning goals in a reciprocal relationship.

Focusing on the adults as a way to address inequity and instructional improvement is far from the norm. As noted by Hammond (2015), "Too often we focus only on doing something to culturally and linguistically diverse students without changing ourselves, especially when our students are dependent learners who are not able to access their full academic potential on their own" (p. 52). The emphasis on adult learning was a bold move by Maine Township to confront inequities that existed in their system.

Overcoming Challenges

The Maine Township leadership team acknowledged that it was not a linear trajectory of success in their approach to adult learning. Jill Geocaris

described a significant missed opportunity: when initially rolling out the coaching model, the district invested a lot of time and resources into training the coaches, assuming that the staff *being coached* didn't need any training at all. "It was as if we trained the coaches behind a veil of secrecy," Jill reflected, "and it would have really helped those first coaches if we had thought to train the staff." The staff is now "there" in terms of their willingness and openness to the coaching model, but Jill acknowledged that the initial effort probably took a lot more time than it should have. While Maine Township certainly explained the program and why it was important, the extra step that Jill wishes they had taken would have supported staff in understanding how to get the most out of their work with the coaches.

Interestingly, the district recently embarked on a new coaching model for cooperating teachers working with preservice education students. Jill laughingly observed, "You think we would have learned, but we did it again! We trained the cooperating teachers on how to work with novices but didn't train the preservice teachers." After the first year of implementation, the cooperating teachers noted that student teachers should have been involved in the coaching training. Jill wryly noted, "Maybe the third time will be the charm!"

This implementation gap lesson was clearly learned because the adjustment was made for year two of the program. Now the cooperating teachers and student teachers are trained in coaching methodologies together. It is having an impact as evidenced in this quote from one of the cooperating teachers: "It's not as if I wouldn't have had some of these conversations with [my student teacher] without what we did [in this program]. But it's more intentional. There's a little bit more structure to it, and I feel a little bit more accountable to it. And so, you add all those things together, it's made it smoother, it's made it more organized. It's been a more positive experience for me; I think I've grown more because of it."

Evidence of Success

Since fully implementing the adult learning initiative, Maine Township has seen significant increases in student achievement on various measures. One of their significant goals was to increase access for students to enriched programs and higher-level courses. From 2008 to 2020 (Figure 2.2), enrollment in accelerated, dual credit, or advanced

Figure 2.2   Maine Township Course Enrollment Trend

% of Students Enrolled in at Least One Accelerated,
Dual Credit, or Advanced Placement Course

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
—— Acc+DC=AP	32.2%	34.7%	37.3%	38.9%	41.6%	44.6%	45.8%	47.5%	48.1%	52.7%	57.7%	62.1%	63.9%
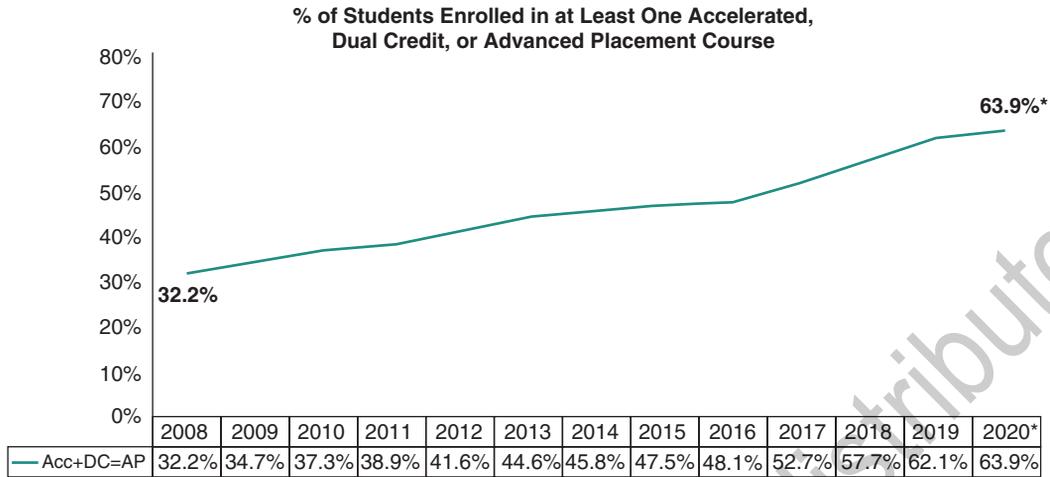
Source: Maine Township, District 207. Used with permission.

*2020 figure is projected enrollment.

placement courses almost doubled, demonstrating that the removal of barriers and increases in support had the desired effect on student access.

An additional measure of success in Maine Township is student performance on the ACT (a university entrance exam). While the student population had shifted to one composed of more students from low socioeconomic environments, that same population significantly improved their performance on the ACT measure (Figure 2.3). The black line indicates a linear regression calculation of what would have happened to the mean if nothing else had changed, particularly in Maine Township's instructional program. The top green line indicates the actual ACT performance, showing a 0.9 higher mean in 2017 over 2002, when universal ACT testing began. The 22.6 mean of 2017 is 3.4 points higher than what would have been predicted, based on the low-income increase. After 7 years of significant work on goal alignment and adult learning, Maine Township students outperform based on predicted composite scores. Given that the ACT composite scores are typically 23.6 for higher income and 19.5 for lower income students, this is a powerful closing of the income achievement gap (Mattern, Radunzel, & Harmston, 2016).

Determining student achievement is a difficult part of the work, particularly when there is controversy over which assessments are meaningful measures of success. Illinois state assessments have been recognized as containing "significant racial and class bias" (Feagin & Barnett, 2004).

Figure 2.3 Maine Township Percentage of Free and Reduced-Price Lunch and Average ACT

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2005	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
DISTRICT 207 % FRL	11.7	16.2	14.5	14.2	16.1	16.6	14.9	21.1	22.4	26.5	27.4	27.4	29.4	29.1	29.7	28.4
Avg.ACT Composite	21.7	21.7	21.9	22.2	22.4	22.2	22.8	22.2	22.5	22.6	22.4	22.6	22.5	22.7	22.4	22.6
Predict.ACT Composite	21.0	20.5	20.7	20.6	20.5	20.5	20.7	20.0	19.8	19.4	19.3	19.3	19.1	19.1	19.0	19.2
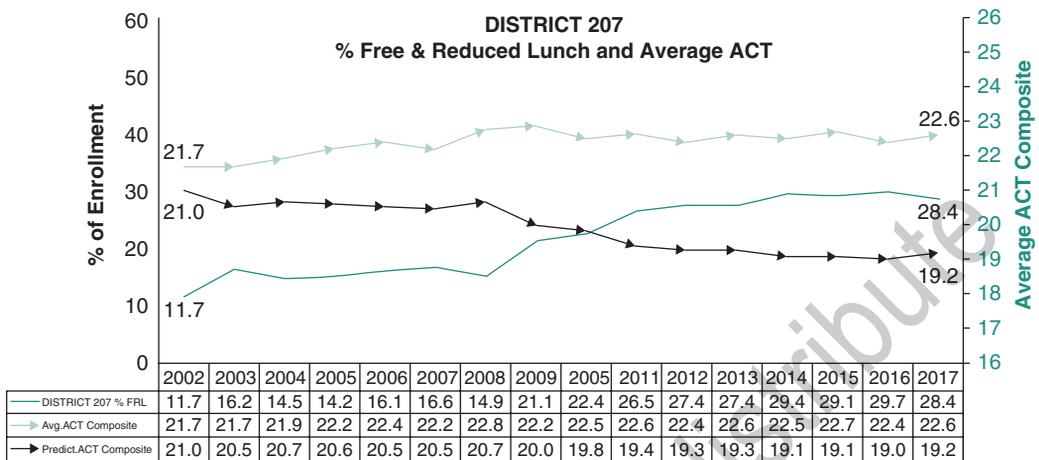
Source: Maine Township, District 207. Used with permission.

Nevertheless, student performance on those assessments was used to criticize the work in districts like Maine Township (Johnson, 2019). Collective efficacy among educators supports their ability to stay the course and persist, particularly when controversy arises over what measures to use. Superintendent Ken Wallace affirms, "In perhaps the most important areas, like career advisement and exploration, the reports [from state assessments] are years behind in their ability to reflect what actually matters to students, parents and communities. We will continue to work toward designing schools that meet the needs of every learner so that we focus on our students' abilities to succeed well beyond high school." Meeting the challenge of implicit bias in standardized testing requires continuous embedded reflection on the equity goals established by a school district.

It is also important to recognize other success criteria besides data points from assessment results. Recalling the story of overwhelmingly teacher-centered classrooms, which prompted the initial investment in cooperative learning, Jill Geocaris noted, "Back then, every head would swivel when an adult would walk into the classroom during a lesson. It's completely different now: when I walk into a class, no one even looks up. The students are so engaged in what they are learning and discussing together—they don't even notice when I enter the room!" There are tangible signs that coaching has impacted instructional practices to such an extent, the entire student experience has shifted.

Another important sign of success comes from the numbers of applications to leadership roles and positions in the district. By strategically creating more and more leadership opportunities for teachers, more and more educators are involved in the various focus committees, whether it be literacy, social-emotional learning, technology, differentiated instruction, and more. When the original coaching positions were posted, the applicants were from the core group of educators described as "the usual suspects," or the teachers that would typically volunteer for leadership roles. Over the years, an increase in leadership opportunities for educators has affected the applicant pool. During the most recent round of applications, "new" people applied, notably, those who were recently engaged in some type of leadership activity. The leadership experience provides educators with a "hook" as they begin to see the connectedness of district goals for students and adult learning competencies. It is natural that they then want to support their colleagues to also see that connectedness.

The adult learning priority is completely transparent to the school community; students are well aware of teachers who have participated and the difference it makes in their practice. As one teacher put it, "It's pretty humbling when an 11th grader asks if you've had a chance yet to be involved in a coaching experience."

How Does Goal Consensus Develop Collective Efficacy?

In this chapter, our focus is on goal consensus (Figure 2.4). Maine Township's consensus on a series of goals impacts multiple elements that have been shown to increase collective efficacy. The adult learning pathways combined with coaching create multiple opportunities for mastery experiences. When teachers try new approaches to instruction and those approaches resonate with students, they naturally want to continue their efforts.

In Maine Township, one of the driving goals is to create as many leadership opportunities for teachers as possible. These opportunities to work meaningfully on a team create leadership opportunities that traditionally haven't existed for many teachers. When those leadership opportunities are available—along with the time and resources to do the work—it builds collective efficacy. The significant emphasis on creating opportunities via committees and peer coaching provides educators with critical

Figure 2.4   A Model for Leading Collective Efficacy: Goal Consensus
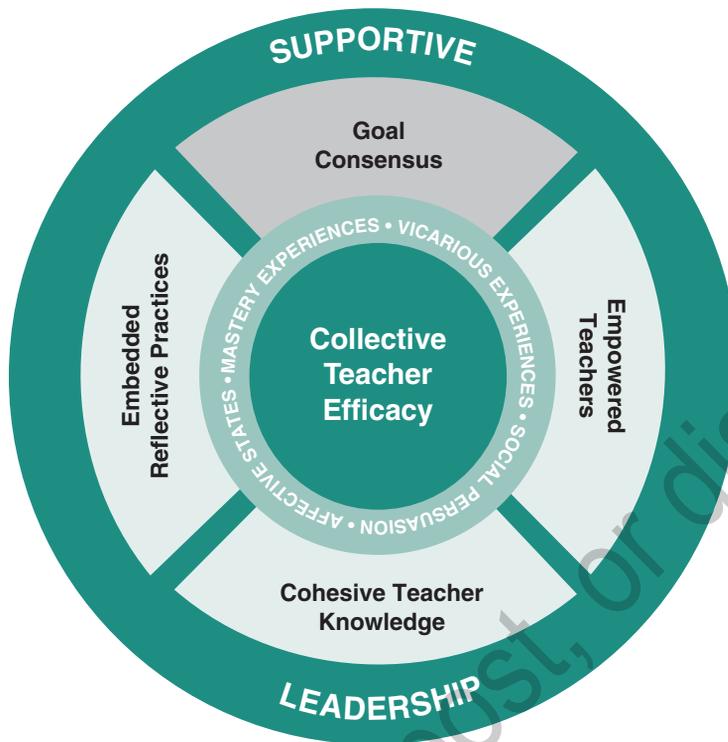
opportunities to collaborate around a focused goal. Importantly, teachers are not only leading the development (via the committees) but are front and center in coaching their colleagues. Their learnings and successes create frequent opportunities for vicarious experiences.

By involving teachers directly with each other in the form of coaching, there are significant opportunities for interdependent work. Coaches and teachers collaborate on a point of inquiry that is immediately relevant because it is based on an individual teacher's context and student need. Working to investigate and strategize around that point of inquiry is a prime example of professional interdependence. When teachers are successful as a result of their coaching, they enjoy another opportunity for a mastery experience on two levels: one for the teacher who successfully implemented a new instructional strategy and one for the coach who successfully supported a colleague in their work.

The nested series of goals Maine Township has set provide guidance and coherence to the work they are undertaking. Yes, the overarching vision is student success—and that is supported by a series of clear and

coherent adult learning goals aligned to a clear vision of what student success actually means in Maine Township. The leadership team's willingness to revisit and course correct—with stakeholder involvement—is the process that embodies goal consensus.

When organizing a retreat for staff members involved in adult learning leadership roles in the district, one of the teacher leaders expressed surprise that there were so many names on the invitation list. Jill Geocaris quipped, "I'm building an army!" The process has truly built a sense of belonging through slow and steady insistence on all educators aspiring to reach the competencies that have been set for all learners in the community—adults as well as students.

How Can We Support Goal Consensus in Our School or District?

In terms of reaching goal consensus, it is important to remember the examples presented earlier in this chapter. Goal consensus is more of a process toward common understanding than it is an attempt to reach unanimity. The term *shared vision* has long been used by change theorists, and this may be a helpful way to consider goal consensus. In *Taking Charge of Change*, Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (2014) explain, "We recommend the development of a shared vision, or mental image, of what the change will look like when it has been implemented well and is operational. . . . Having a picture in the "mind's eye" of the change in operation provides the implementer with a target for initiating the work to be done to reach full implementation of the change" (p. 76). Leaders must consider how to create transparency and clarity in creating a shared vision and how best to achieve consensus around making the vision a reality. There are many ways to approach the process of goal consensus, and it begins with a leader acknowledging their own role with some humility and willingness to make it a collaborative team effort.

Research and psychology provide insights into how goal setting works and why goal setting is important. In the section that follows, we summarize some of the important ideas gleaned from researchers and psychologists. When helping teams gain consensus on goals, it's important for leaders to

- obtain input from various stakeholders in developing a shared vision;

- know the difference between mastery and performance goals;

- identify long-term, mid-journey, and small-win goals; and

- motivate persistent goal-oriented behavior.

Obtain Input From Various Stakeholders in Developing a Shared Vision

Collaborating to develop a shared vision requires all stakeholder voices to be heard, and this can feel overwhelming when groups are large and perhaps geographically widespread. Recently, Stef was asked to help facilitate gathering data from stakeholders to support vision refinement of a statewide initiative involving hundreds of participants in far-flung locations. Stef's team used a stakeholder interview process popular in UX (user experience) design. Over the course of several sessions, large groups were gathered and participants were asked to self-organize into triads. Within a triad, each stakeholder played each role: the interviewer, the interviewee, and the note-taker. Responding to a series of guided questions posed by the interviewer, each interviewee responded with stories, insights, hopes, and concerns. Note-takers gathered the information in a prepared template. The process repeated until every participant had a chance to share their thinking. The notes from all interviews were compiled and processed by the team to find commonalities, ultimately creating a concept map representing the system's vision as a whole. While an intensive undertaking, the stakeholder interviews perform a critical function during the initial stages of a goal consensus process: every voice was heard so that when the ultimate vision was shared, each participant recognized their part in creating it. (More information about conducting stakeholder interviews can be found in Appendix C.) The test for whether a vision is truly shared by all may best be described by Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, and Smith (2012), who wrote, "A vision is not really shared unless it has staying power and an evolving life force that lasts for years, propelling people through a continuous cycle of action, learning, and reflection" (p. 87).

When an overarching vision has been established, mastery and performance goals (long-term, mid-journey, and small-win goals) can be identified. These goals should not be etched in stone but be subject to frequent scrutiny, consideration, and revision as needed. As Wheatley (2006) wrote, "We need to be able to

> Robinson et al. (2009) noted that the degree of staff consensus about school goals was a significant discriminator between otherwise similar high- and low-performing schools in their meta-analysis on the impact of leadership on student outcomes.

trust that something as simple as a clear core of values and vision, kept in motion through dialogue, can lead to order" (p. 147). The larger vision acts as a container; within the container, members of the system can develop and work toward goals aligned with the vision.

Know the Difference Between Mastery and Performance Goals

When building consensus on goals, it is important to note the difference between mastery and performance goals and what that difference means in relation to motivating teams. In his book, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* (2009), Pink explores the often counterintuitive notions about motivation. When it comes to goals, Pink writes simply, "Goals work. The academic literature shows that by helping us tune out distractions, goals can get us to try harder, work longer, and achieve more" (p. 48). But delving more deeply into the nature of goals, research suggests "goals that people set for themselves and that are devoted to attaining mastery are usually healthy. But goals imposed by others—sales targets, quarterly returns, standardized test scores, and so on—can sometimes have dangerous side effects" (p. 50).

> Performance goals are goals that are directly related to an outcome. For example, "All students will improve their Spanish by 5 percent as represented on the final exam." A mastery goal is when teams set out to become the best they can be on a single task. For example, "All students will become proficient in Spanish." Research shows that mastery goals are preferable because they spark internal motivation.

Pink goes on to describe several cases of extrinsic and performance-oriented goals backfiring because they extinguish intrinsic motivation, encourage cheating or shortcuts, and foster short-term thinking. Mastery goals, on the other hand, encourage inquiry, promote collaboration, and are intrinsically motivating.

Maine Township's adult learning competencies provide an example of mastery versus performance goal. As part of their "Build Learner Ownership" pathway, competency 5.2 states: "I can utilize routines and strategies to empower learners to set and monitor progress toward personal and academic goals; develop abilities to self-reflect and self-regulate; cultivate growth mindsets; and influence perceptions of self-efficacy and purpose" (Maine Township District 207, 2020). Contrast that with a performance-oriented goal that, instead of monitoring student progress toward an academic goal, might set a standardized assessment expectation, such as solve 80 percent of the problems correctly.

This example of a mastery goal is powerful for several reasons: It encourages striving toward a goal rather than showing competence. By being open-ended, it does not remove the adult learner from the process but encourages creative and, possibly, collaborative approaches. It also encourages a long-term approach that cultivates a disposition in the learner rather than a short-term fix, such as tips and tricks for getting more problems correct on a test. We are not suggesting that systems do away with performance goals. They are important in identifying patterns and trends for subgroups of students and improvement over time. We are suggesting, however, that in order to activate goal-oriented behavior and motivation amongst educators, that leaders help teams focus on mastery goals. After all, research shows that when a mastery goal is met, the performance goal takes care of itself (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000).

> Research shows that when a mastery goal is met, the performance goal takes care of itself (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000).

Identify Long-Term, Mid-Journey, and Small-Win Goals

We find sand dunes (Figure 2.5) to be a helpful analogy when further considering goals. Sand dunes, from far away, look like smooth, sculpted mountains. When you get a closer look at the sand, however, we can see that it is made up of granules that vary in shade and size. More startling, when we look at sand under a microscope, we learn that it is even more irregular and variable in shape and color. These three different representations of the same sand are similar to the way we must approach goals. We need long-term goals (far away sand dunes), mid-journey goals (the sand itself), and small-win goals (microscopic grains of sand). All three are critical to

- agree on what we all believe represents success,
- understand the benchmarks along the way to the agreed-upon success, and
- celebrate movement along the path with small wins that direct our course.

Long-term goals—those distant sand dunes—are motivational in nature. They help teams to understand the big picture, the reason why the work should be undertaken. Long-term goals help to reduce ambiguity, which can be a significant threat to collective efficacy. Maintaining a clear, long-term vision is critical to a team's ability to stay the course.

> Maintaining a clear, long-term vision is critical to a team's ability to stay the course.

Figure 2.5   Sand Analogy
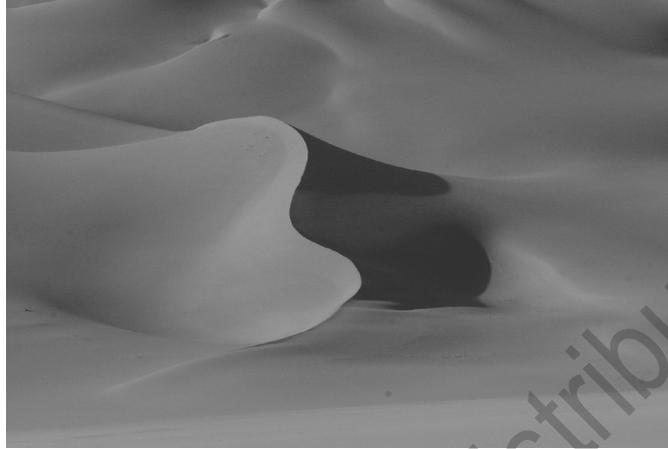
Image Sources: sand dunes from unsplash.com/audrius4x, sand close-up from unsplash
.com/@zedrex, sand under microscope from iStock.com/AlexmarPhoto

The mid-journey goals—those grains of sand—represent important benchmarks along the way. The magnitude of a long-term vision can be overwhelming, and so teams must establish markers of success in smaller, more manageable chunks. Just as important are the small-win goals that represent the day-to-day incremental work that moves educators along the path. These microscopic goals need to be celebrated as "wins" that provide teams with perspective on their progress and mastery and vicarious experiences. These experiences are essential in fostering belief among educators that they can do the hard work and see the impact of their efforts.

> Research shows that teachers' ambiguity and uncertainty impact their collective efficacy and, therefore, willingness to persevere against the challenges faced in schools today. Schechter and Qadach (2012) conducted a study with 801 elementary teachers and concluded that ambiguity was associated with a lack of efficacy.

> Goals that are attainable in a fairly short period of time focus attention on task-appropriate strategies through self-efficacy (Latham & Seijts, 1999).

Just as all stakeholders' voices shape the overarching vision, stakeholders must have the opportunity to come together for further consensus building about long-term, mid-journey, and small-win goals. One way to engage stakeholders in this process is through the co-creation of a logic model. A logic model is a tool that can be used to simplify complex relationships between various components for planning and monitoring progress. To aid in identifying the manageable chunks needed to achieve their goals, Maine Township used Killion's (2018) logic model to determine inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes for both students in the system and adult professional learning.

Peter DeWitt (2020) described a logic model as "a concept map for leaders, teachers, and staff members to use as a means of working through the issues they seem to be facing" (p. 24). A typical logic model template (Appendix D) identifies an overarching mastery goal along with five categories—inputs, activities, initial outcomes (small-win goals), intermediate outcomes (mid-journey goals), and intended results (long-term performance goals). Killion (2008) noted that developing logic models are "collaborative efforts best done by a representative group of stakeholders" (p. 49). Leaders might enlist a design team to draft a logic model and then share the draft with additional stakeholders for

> Killion (2008) notes that one important aspect of a logic model is the identification of the ultimate goals of the organization.

their reaction and input. Logic models are then used by teams to monitor and revise goals accordingly.

Logic models help teams identify the overall mastery goal, along with the small-win, mid-journey, and long-term performance goals. Again, leaders are encouraged to activate goal-oriented behaviors by focusing teams' efforts on the mastery goal. The performance goal is important because it will provide systems with information about how subgroups of students are or are not progressing and, ultimately, provide insights about where resources are needed. However, the mastery goal is what will activate the team's efforts and persistence. An example of a partial logic model (Table 2.1) is provided on the facing page. A logic model template is also provided in Appendix D.

Logic models help teams take the overall vision and begin to think about the specific resources, activities, and intended outcomes or goals they hope to achieve. They are useful tools for building consensus on goals, laying out the actions necessary to achieve goals, and making stakeholders' long-term vision more transparent. We have noticed, however, that after teams create logic models, where they have trouble staying on top of monitoring progress toward their goals usually comes mid-journey. If mid-journey goals are not attained, the long-term goals will not be met. What's important is that leaders have teams continuously revisit their logic model in order to determine if goals are being met, or if they need to be revised, and to consider if additional resource "inputs" are needed.

We have found that a World Café protocol (Appendix E) has been useful in helping teams revisit logic models mid-journey, specifically to determine progress. The World Café is a flexible and effective format for hosting large group conversations. The facilitator provides a prompt and individuals join a group of their choosing and engage in free-flowing discussions. There are usually three prompts, revealed one at a time, over a 90-minute period. The conversations are captured in a variety of ways and can be analyzed for themes. This is the most critical aspect of the World Café because it reveals the patterns arising across the entire group's conversation. Capturing these emerging themes—whether they be concerns, celebrations, or ideas for refinement—allows all members of a team to have a voice in both reflecting on and revising the goals of their logic model. Although the World Café wasn't specifically designed for the use of revising logic models, when used with the right prompts it is an excellent way to access all voices and gain new

Table 2.1 Logic Model Example

Mastery Goal: Students will become proficient self-assessors who will be able to articulate where they are in relation to the learning intention and success criteria and use that information to determine next steps.				
Inputs	**Activities**	**Small-Win Goals**	**Mid-Journey Goals**	**Long-Term Performance Goals**
Full-time instructional coaches for each low-performing school and half-time coaches for middle- and high-performing schools.	Principals hire instructional coaches. Central office provides professional learning for coaches and coachees.	Coaches gain knowledge and skills for coaching teachers. Coaches gain access to classrooms and work with classroom teachers.	Coaches support teachers' engagement in collaborative inquiry. Coaches support implementation of learning intentions and success criteria.	Year 1: 60% of students score proficient or above on literacy and mathematics standardized tests. Most students are beginning to self-regulate their learning. Year 2: 80% of students score proficient or above on literacy and mathematics standardized tests. Many students possess the qualities of self-regulated learners. Year 3: 100% of students score proficient or above on literacy and mathematics standardized tests. All students become independent, self-regulated learners.
Human and fiscal resources to provide professional learning and follow-up support for classroom teachers.	Central office engages teams in collaborative inquiry designs for professional learning. Instructional coaches provide follow-up support for classroom implementation.	Teachers collaboratively identify learning intentions based on standards. Teachers construct success criteria and share them with students.	Teachers consistently share learning intentions with students. Teachers co-construct success criteria with students and have students interact with criteria in meaningful ways. Teachers have students self- and peer assess using success criteria.	
High-quality instruction for students.	Teachers use success criteria as the basis for effective feedback.	Students learn strategies for improving their performance based on self- and peer assessment.	Students apply the new strategies in their learning for both learning and pleasure.	

insights and consensus for goal setting. Readers will find examples of prompts and an outline of how to facilitate World Café in Appendix E.

Motivate Persistent, Goal-Oriented Behavior

It is one thing to create goals, but it is an entirely different thing to spark an urgency within teams to engage in the interdependent work necessary to accomplish goals. As noted earlier, small-win goals and mastery goals both help to motivate teams to accomplish goals. Another aspect of motivating teams to engage in the behaviors that will advance

"Differences between mental models explain why two people can observe the same event and describe it differently: They are paying attention to different details. The core task of the discipline of mental models is to bring tacit assumptions and attitudes to the surface so people can explore and talk about their differences and misunderstandings with minimal defensiveness. This process is crucial for people who want to understand their world, or their school, more completely— because, like a pane of glass framing and subtly distorting our vision, our mental models determine what we see . . . unexamined mental models limit people's ability to change" (Senge et al., 2012, pp. 99–100).

With student background factors controlled, leadership made a difference to students through the degree of emphasis on clear academic and learning goals (Robinson et al., 2009).

progress toward goals involves creating a discrepancy between where teams currently are and where they want to be.

This involves a two-part process. It first demands that teams accurately assess where they are in relation to the goals they set. And then it involves creating a dissatisfaction with the discrepancy between these two places that serves as an incentive to achieve. The space between these two ideas is what Senge and colleagues (2012) describe as "creative tension." In seeking a resolution to that tension, teams become aware of opportunities that support the move from "what is" to "what could be." Leaders must create a discrepancy between current realities and desired futures by helping teams examine their mental models. Where there is a discrepancy between a school's current situation and their desired future, the dissatisfaction experienced by the team motivates them to take action—to close the gap—as long as they are committed to the goal. When Ken Wallace shared the data showing the limited access to high-quality instructional experiences for many Maine Township students, he provided clarity on "what is" happening for students. He then challenged community stakeholders to consider "what could be" by envisioning a district that addresses inequity by creating access and opportunity for all students.

Conclusion

Goal consensus may seem like a deceptively simple concept until we consider it more as a process than a "thing" to accomplish. Keeping in mind the tiered nature of goals—long-term vision, mid-journey goals, and small-win goals—along with a framing in terms of mastery versus performance will help guide organizations to be highly intentional and widely inclusive in goal development. Ideally, an organization can point

to a clear connection between small wins, mid-journey goals, and long-term vision. While it may seem a large challenge to create coherence between the various stakeholders in a system, they are bound together around the most important connection of all: their desire for the success of the students in their schools. Once that connection is made abundantly clear, building a shared vision is less daunting. Traditionally, the overarching vision has been determined by someone with an authoritative role—the superintendent, the school board, the principal. The need for vision to be developed collaboratively cannot be overstated. When based on authority alone, an imposed vision results in, at best, compliance, and, at worst, fractionalization and undermining behaviors. By encouraging participation from everyone within an organization, leadership is no longer a function of title or authority—everyone's voice is equally valid.

Goal consensus should be viewed as an ongoing and iterative process rather than seeking unanimity among stakeholders. As we saw with the Maine Township story, goals have multiple levels: the long-term vision that supports the journey, frequent checkpoints to assess progress, and short-term goals that make implementation manageable. In pursuit of developing goal consensus, we have to be willing to learn from mistakes by engaging groups in deep and meaningful reflection and being willing to make adjustments to our thinking. When groups are able to develop clear understandings around the purposes of their work, there is a higher likelihood that reflective practices will become regularly embedded in an ongoing effort to improve instruction. One such method of regularly revisiting goals is to structure a coherent system of adult learning directly tied to desired student achievement outcomes.

The need for vision to be developed collaboratively cannot be overstated.