HITCHCOCK ISD

FINANCE & OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE SERIES

THE SCHOOL FINANCE BLIND SPOT

How Weak School-Level Controls Create Financial, Operational, and Reputational Risk

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WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE CAN HURT YOUR DISTRICT.

EVERY DOLLAR HAS A STORY

EVERY DOLLAR
DESERVES ACCOUNTABILITY.


THE SCHOOL FINANCE ICEBERG
ABOVE WATER
ERP
Payroll
Purchasing
Accounts Payable
BELOW WATER
Activity Funds
Athletics
Fundraisers
Booster Clubs
Student Fees
Cash Collections
KEY MESSAGE:
What’s below the surface is where risk hides—and visibility is lost.

INTRODUCING THE SPEAKER

JAMES BRISCOE

SPEAKER | EDUCATOR | LEADERSHIP ADVOCATE

James Briscoe is a passionate speaker dedicated to strengthening school financial accountability, leadership, and operational excellence.

With years of experience in education and a mission to empower districts through transparency and stewardship, James helps school leaders confront blind spots, strengthen governance, and build systems that protect their people, their resources, and their communities.

LEADERSHIP
Developing stronger leaders and cultures.

ACCOUNTABILITY
Building systems that ensure stewardship and trust.

TRANSPARENCY
Turning information into insight and action.

*Passionate About **People**. Committed to **Stewardship**. Focused on **Impact**.*

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Questions Every District Leader Should Be Asking

ARE OUR CONTROLS WORKING?

Policies exist.
Procedures exist.
But are they operating consistently at every campus?

CAN WE SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Activity Funds
Fundraisers
Athletics
Student Organizations

WOULD WE KNOW BEFORE AN AUDIT?

Can risks be identified early?
Or only after findings occur?

ARE WE PROTECTING PUBLIC TRUST?

Every transaction impacts confidence.
Every dollar deserves accountability.

THE CHALLENGE IS NOT A LACK OF CONTROLS
THE CHALLENGE IS A LACK OF VISIBILITY

FINANCE — OPERATIONS — PROCUREMENT — CAMPUS ACTIVITY — PUBLIC TRUST

Strong governance begins with asking the right questions.

AUDIENCE POLL

Who Handles Money in Your District?

- Teachers
- Coaches
- Sponsors
- Secretaries
- Bookkeepers
- Booster Clubs

How many of those transactions can your CFO see today?

THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL

We focus on what's visible. We risk what's invisible.

WHAT WE MONITOR

AP
Invoices. Payments. Vendor activity.

PAYROLL
Salaries. Benefits. Withholdings.

PURCHASING
Requisitions. POs. Approvals.

≠

WHAT WE ASSUME

ACTIVITY FUNDS
Cash collections. Deposits. Recordkeeping.

ATHLETICS
Gate receipts. Concessions. Team accounts.

FUNDRAISERS
Cash handling. Proceeds. Use of funds.

What we don't see can't be managed.
Assumptions are not controls.

FRAUD IS NOT THE PROBLEM

Fraud is the symptom. The real issue is what happens before.

WEAK CONTROLS — Policies exist on paper, not in practice.

LIMITED VISIBILITY — Transactions happen out of sight, out of mind.

PROCESS BREAKDOWNS — Gaps and workarounds create opportunity.

FRAUD — Fraud is the result, not the root cause.

Stronger controls and greater visibility prevent fraud.
Fix the process. Reduce the risk.

WHY SCHOOLS ARE VULNERABLE

CASH

Cash transactions are harder to track and easier to misuse.

FUNDRAISING

High volume of transactions with emotion and urgency involved.

DECENTRALIZED AUTHORITY

Many hands, many locations, minimal oversight.

MANUAL PROCESSES

Paper-based and spreadsheet systems create gaps and risk.

LIMITED VISIBILITY

District leaders can't see everything happening at the school level.

SECTION 2

THE CONSEQUENCES

The Numbers

93

Verified Cases

$49M

Losses

68%

School Level

MONEY MOVES EVERYWHERE

Decentralized activities. Countless transactions. One district.

ATHLETICS

Team fees, equipment, gate receipts, travel.

FINE ARTS

Program fees, events, performances, supplies.

BOOSTER CLUBS

Donations, sponsorships, merchandise, events.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Club dues, events, fundraisers, activities.

CONCESSIONS

Sales, inventory, deposits, expenses.

PTO

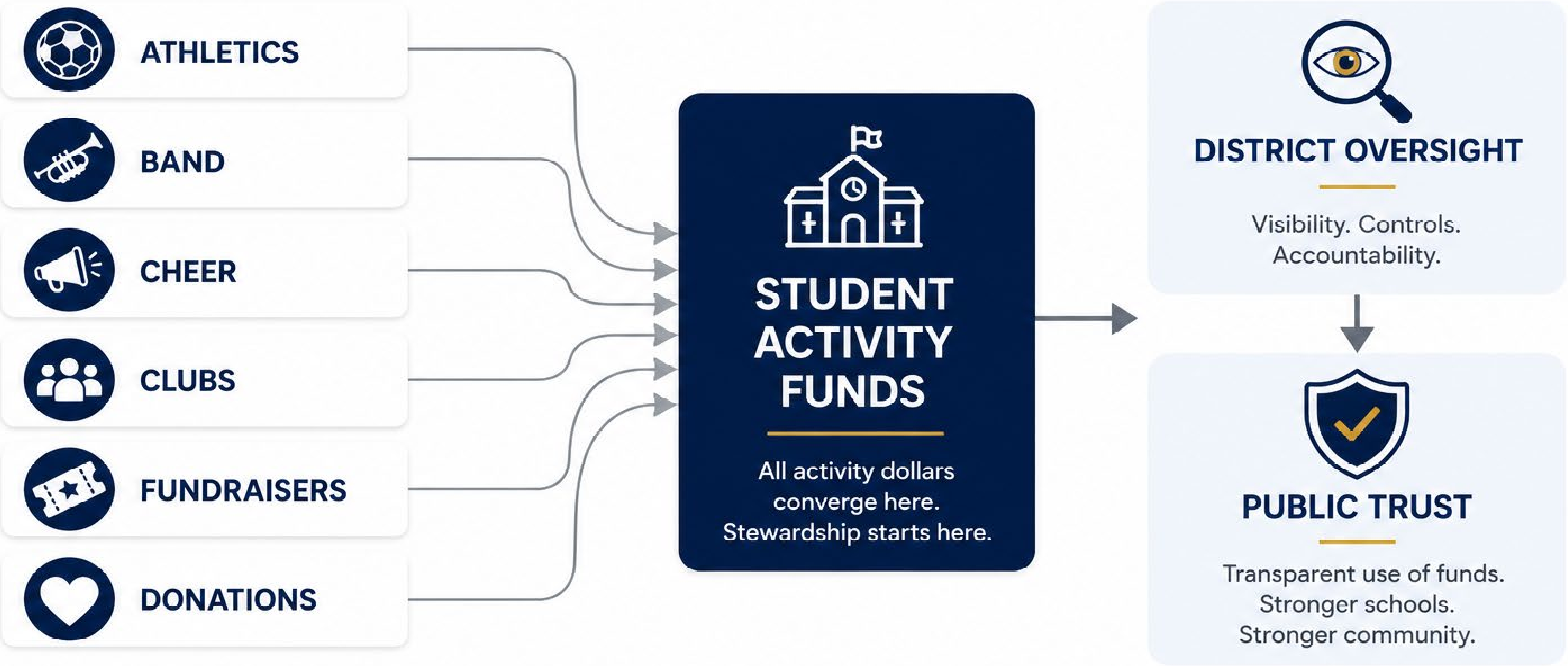
Donations, events, fundraisers, expenses.

FIELD TRIPS

Payments, permission fees, transportation, activities.

THE SCHOOL FINANCE ECOSYSTEM

Multiple sources. One point of accountability. Shared responsibility.



EVERY REVENUE STREAM CREATES AN ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENT.
Know it. Track it. Protect it.

WHAT IS REALLY AT RISK?

One Incident Can Impact More Than a Balance Sheet

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- District funds
- Student activity funds
- Fundraising proceeds

EMPLOYEES

- Reputations
- Careers
- Professional trust

ONE INCIDENT CAN IMPACT ALL FOUR

STUDENTS

- Programs
- Opportunities
- Experiences

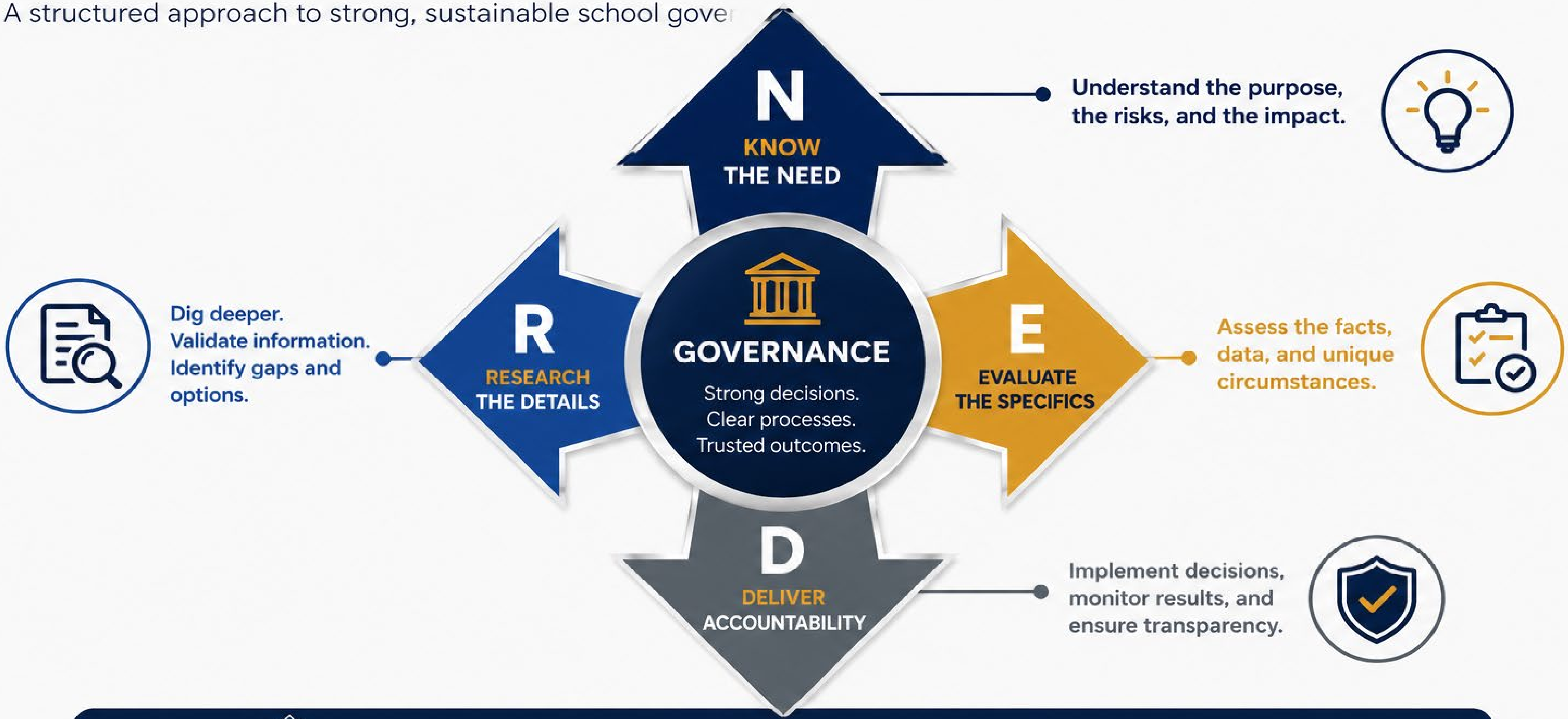
PUBLIC TRUST

- Community confidence
- Board credibility
- District reputation

School-level financial accountability is ultimately about protecting people.

THE N.E.R.D. GOVERNANCE MODEL

A structured approach to strong, sustainable school gover



Better governance. Stronger stewardship. Greater trust.

The N.E.R.D. model turns good intent into great governance.

THE N.E.R.D. GOVERNANCE MODEL

A structured approach to strong, sustainable school governance.

N | KNOW THE NEED

Understand the purpose, the risks, and the impact.

- **DEFINE THE PURPOSE**
  Why does this matter?
- **IDENTIFY THE RISKS**
  What could go wrong?
- **UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT**
  Who is affected and how?
- **ALIGN TO PRIORITIES**
  How does this support our mission?

GOVERNANCE

Strong decisions.
Clear processes.
Trusted outcomes.

E | EVALUATE THE SPECIFICS

R | RESEARCH THE DETAILS

D | DELIVER ACCOUNTABILITY

Good intent starts the conversation.
N.E.R.D. governance turns it into results.

GOVERNANCE REQUIRES MORE THAN OVERSIGHT

From Controls to Insight

E — EVALUATE THE SPECIFICS

CONTROLS

- Segregation of Duties
- Approvals
- Deposits
- Reconciliations

Are controls operating as intended?

R — RESEARCH THE DETAILS

INSIGHTS

- Internal Audits
- Data Analytics
- Trend Reviews
- Exception Reporting

What does the data reveal?

Strong governance combines control validation with continuous analysis.

ACCOUNTABILITY IS WHERE GOVERNANCE BECOMES ACTION

D — DELIVER ACCOUNTABILITY

Turning insight into action and measurable results.

TRAINING

Equip people with the knowledge and skills to do it right.

MONITORING

Continuously review activity and performance to ensure alignment and compliance.

TECHNOLOGY

Leverage systems that enable accuracy, transparency, and efficiency.

LEADERSHIP

Set the tone, model expectations, and drive a culture of accountability.

Accountability is not a policy.
It is a culture supported by people, processes, and technology.

GOVERNANCE MATURITY MODEL

From Reactive Compliance to Predictive Stewardship

MATURING CAPABILITIES. STRONGER OUTCOMES.

LEVEL 1

REACTIVE
Issue Response

CHARACTERISTICS
- Issues are discovered after they occur.
- Processes depend on individuals rather than systems.
- Limited visibility into school-level financial activity.
- Audit findings often drive corrective action.

PRIMARY FOCUS
Firefighting and issue resolution.

LEVEL 2

CONTROLLED
Established Controls

CHARACTERISTICS
- Basic controls are established.
- Approvals and reconciliations occur consistently.
- Responsibilities are defined.
- Compliance expectations are communicated.

PRIMARY FOCUS
Control and compliance.

LEVEL 3

STANDARDIZED
Operational Consistency

CHARACTERISTICS
- Districtwide processes are documented and implemented.
- Financial activities follow consistent procedures.
- Training and expectations are standardized.
- Accountability is embedded into daily operations.

PRIMARY FOCUS
Consistency and operational excellence.

LEVEL 4

MONITORED
Continuous Oversight

CHARACTERISTICS
- Data is actively reviewed and analyzed.
- Leadership receives regular performance and compliance reports.
- Exception reporting identifies emerging risks.
- Internal controls are routinely evaluated.

PRIMARY FOCUS
Visibility and continuous improvement.

LEVEL 5

PREDICTIVE
Strategic Stewardship

CHARACTERISTICS
- Analytics identify risks before issues occur.
- Decision-makers have real-time visibility into financial activity.
- Technology supports proactive oversight.
- Governance is strategic rather than reactive.

PRIMARY FOCUS
Risk prevention and strategic stewardship.

The goal is not perfect compliance.

The goal is creating a governance environment where risks are identified, understood, and addressed before they become problems.

PROTECT RESOURCES | **STRENGTHEN TRUST** | **SUPPORT EDUCATION** | **DRIVE BETTER DECISIONS**

WHAT LEVEL BEST DESCRIBES YOUR DISTRICT TODAY?

KEV SCHOOL SOLUTIONS
MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR

GOVERNANCE IS NOT MANAGEMENT

Understanding the Distinct Roles Required for Effective Oversight

BOARD

SETS EXPECTATIONS

- Establishes vision
- Approves policy
- Defines accountability
- Oversees stewardship

ADMINISTRATION

EXECUTES AND MONITORS

- Implements controls
- Monitors activity
- Addresses risk
- Ensures compliance

TECHNOLOGY

ENABLES VISIBILITY

- Provides transparency
- Documents activity
- Creates audit trails
- Supports decision-making

GOVERNANCE

Governance establishes accountability.

Management executes accountability.

Technology provides visibility into accountability.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE REQUIRES ALL THREE WORKING TOGETHER.

Board Direction + Administrative Execution + Technology Visibility


WHAT CFOs REALLY NEED
Not software. Better outcomes.
KEV
SCHOOL SOLUTIONS
MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR
TECHNOLOGY
A TOOL
Powerful.
Important.
Not the solution.
VISIBILITY
See activity.
Make informed decisions.
ACCOUNTABILITY
Ensure responsibility.
Drive stewardship.
CFO SUCCESS
TRANSPARENCY
Open, clear, and trusted information.
CONFIDENCE
Trust the numbers.
Lead with assurance.
TRUST
Stronger stewardship.
Stronger decisions.
Stronger public trust.
Software is simply a tool that helps achieve:
Visibility
Accountability
Transparency
Confidence
Technology does not create accountability.
People, processes, and governance create accountability.
Technology simply makes it scalable.
KEV
SCHOOL SOLUTIONS
MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR

WHY TECHNOLOGY MATTERS

Visibility Turns Information Into Accountability

WITHOUT VISIBILITY

- Manual tracking
- Delayed reporting
- Inconsistent processes
- Limited oversight

REACTIVE

MANUAL → MODERN

Visibility Changes Everything

WITH VISIBILITY

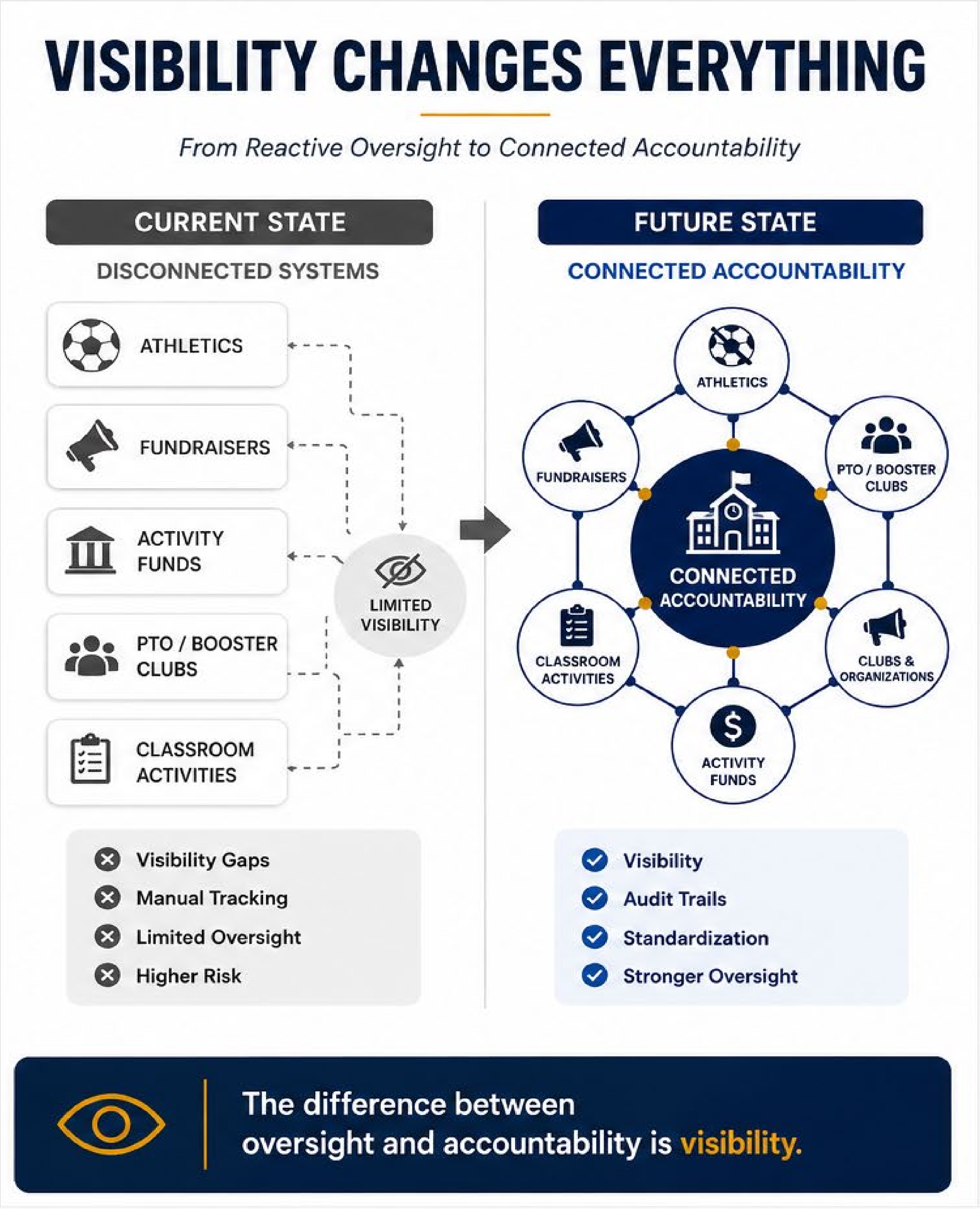
- Real-time information
- Standardized processes
- Stronger accountability
- Better decisions

PROACTIVE

TECHNOLOGY DOES NOT CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY.
IT ENABLES ACCOUNTABILITY.

Governance + Visibility + Consistency = Accountability

Strong governance requires people, processes, and technology working together.



VISIBILITY CHANGES EVERYTHING
From Reactive Oversight to Connected Accountability
CURRENT STATE
DISCONNECTED SYSTEMS
ATHLETICS
FUNDRAISERS
ACTIVITY FUNDS
PTO / BOOSTER CLUBS
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
LIMITED VISIBILITY
Visibility Gaps
Manual Tracking
Limited Oversight
Higher Risk
FUTURE STATE
CONNECTED ACCOUNTABILITY
ATHLETICS
FUNDRAISERS
PTO / BOOSTER CLUBS
CONNECTED ACCOUNTABILITY
CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS
ACTIVITY FUNDS
Visibility
Audit Trails
Standardization
Stronger Oversight
The difference between oversight and accountability is visibility.

CLOSING THE SCHOOL FINANCE BLIND SPOT
Introducing KEV SCHOOL SOLUTIONS MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR
VISIBILITY
See activity as it happens.
STANDARDIZATION
Consistent processes districtwide.
KEV SCHOOL SOLUTIONS MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR
ACCOUNTABILITY
Strengthen stewardship. Build trust.
AUDIT TRAILS
Document every transaction. Build confidence.
VISIBILITY
See what matters. When it matters.
AUDIT TRAILS
Trace every dollar. Every decision.
ACCOUNTABILITY
Hold everyone accountable.
STANDARDIZATION
One set of processes. One districtwide standard.
Technology does not replace governance. It enables it.
KEV SCHOOL SOLUTIONS MANAGE EVERY DOLLAR

Cash theft remains the most frequent type of school-level fraud

62%

OF CASES INVOLVE SKIMMING CASH FROM ACTIVITY FEES, FUNDRAISERS OR TICKET SALES

School Fraud Incidents by Type

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTED SCHOOL-LEVEL FRAUD INCIDENTS BY TYPE

CASH IS EASY TO STEAL. CONTROLS MAKE IT HARD.

STRONG CONTROLS. SAFE SCHOOLS.

PROTECT STUDENTS. PROTECT TRUST.

30-DAY ACTION PLAN

Four Weeks. Practical Steps. Stronger Governance.

WEEK 1

ASSESS

Understand Your Current State

- Identify financial collection points
- Evaluate existing controls
- Document risks and gaps
- Establish a baseline for improvement

WEEK 2

REVIEW

Strengthen Processes

- Review approvals and workflows
- Validate segregation of duties
- Standardize procedures
- Address immediate control gaps

WEEK 3

TRAIN

Build Accountability

- Train staff and sponsors
- Clarify expectations
- Reinforce stewardship responsibilities
- Promote consistent practices

WEEK 4

MONITOR

Create Visibility

- Review activity and exceptions
- Monitor compliance trends
- Analyze reporting data
- Drive continuous improvement

ASSESS
Awareness

REVIEW
Consistency

TRAIN
Accountability

MONITOR
Stewardship

Small steps today lead to **stronger controls, greater transparency,** and **lasting trust.**

ACCOUNTABILITY
TRANSPARENCY
STEWARDSHIP

GOVERNANCE IMPROVES THROUGH CONSISTENT ACTION

Start. Strengthen. Sustain.

THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK MONDAY MORNING

1

Where is money collected in our district?

2

How do we monitor those transactions?

3

What would we know today if something went wrong?

If you cannot answer these questions confidently, you have found your **blind spot.**

TRANSPARENCY PROTECTS MORE THAN MONEY

- PROTECTS STUDENTS.
- PROTECTS EMPLOYEES.
- PROTECTS COMMUNITY TRUST.
- PROTECTS PUBLIC EDUCATION.

STRONG GOVERNANCE. STRONGER SCHOOLS. STRONGER FUTURE.