Two Goals

- Wake You Up!
- Leave with some helpful ideas:
- How ethical issues arise
- Some moral principles
- The dangers of ethical issues
- Can we reframe ethical issues?

Ethical Issues

- How do ethical issues arise?
  - People's welfare is affected
- Some kinds of cases in board’s code
  - Misbehaving: Misleading, confidentiality, personal advantage, being partial, etc.
- Some kinds are not
  - “Cub Scouts on the SB”!

Cub Scouts on the SB!

- Many choices we make trade-off the welfare of some people for the welfare of others:
  - Salary scales: new vs. experienced teachers
  - Salary/FTR: Teachers vs. Students?
  - Average students vs. special students
  - Snow routes: Supported st’s vs. unsupported
  - Meeting standards vs. caring for kids
  - Some school vs. another school
  - Other cases?

Some Moral Principles

1. Do what will produce the greatest good overall, regardless of who is benefited.
2. Do what will benefit those least well-off.
3. Do what will benefit those who most deserve it.

Salary scales: new vs. experienced teachers
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Salary/PTR: Teachers vs. Students?

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Average students vs. special students

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Meeting standards vs. caring for kids

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Other cases?

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How decide between these principles?
### Dangers of Ethical Issues

- Cases where people dig in their heels, and are not willing to accept trade-offs:
  - Mascot issues
  - Sex ed, Gay-Straight Clubs, Evolution, Math texts!
  - Others?

### Dangers of Ethical Issues

- Labeling an issue as “moral” puts everyone on the defensive.
- Calm, reasoned discussion becomes very difficult.
- School boards, as political bodies, are suited for search for common ground, compromise, and “majority rules”.

### Dangers of Ethical Issues

- Once an issue is labeled as “moral,” compromise is often ruled out as betrayal, common ground is difficult to find, and “majority rules” is anathema.
- Playing the “morality card” can be a substitute for having to gain popular support for your position.
- Moralists vs. Populists

### Reframing Ethical Issues

- Can we avoid moral issues?
- Not always. Examples?
- Can we minimize people’s framing issues as moral issues?
- We can try to avoid doing it ourselves!
- Don’t give up on the responsibility to marshal political support for your views.

### Reframing Ethical Issues

- Moralistic decisions, made without popular support, are not generally sustainable in the long run.
- Moralists do the right thing, regardless of what others think.
- Moralists don’t make the best leaders.
- Good leaders encourage a process that might lead people to do the right thing.

### Beyond Your Board’s Code of Ethics

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