Robert's Rules of Order…the Basics

1. Only one subject (motion) may be before the group at one time

Motions should be made during appropriate times, such as after a presentation, or during new business.

Exception: Multiple subjects may be raised during an informal brainstorming session that precedes a formal motion.

2. Seconding the motion

If a motion does not get a second, the motion dies. If a friendly amendment is made to the motion, the mover of the original motion decides whether to accept the amendment. Any motion amended or not, must have a second, prior to discussion of the motion.

3. Speaking order

The mover of the motion speaks first ... and last.

4. Speakers rights

Each item presented for consideration is entitled to full and free debate. All members have equal rights.

5. Majority Rules

After a motion is discussed, someone can make the motion to "call the motion" or vote on it. It can also be voted on to "table the motion," or postpone discussion. The rights of the minority must be preserved, but the will of the majority must be carried out.

6. Re-opening subjects (motions) already discussed

After a vote has been taken on a motion, someone who voted with the majority on the underlying vote can make the motion to re-open the subject. It requires a two-thirds vote of the members present to re-open a subject.

7. Quorum

A majority of the membership constitutes a quorum. Meetings may be held to discuss issues with an absence of a quorum, but motions will be held until the next meeting that achieves a quorum.

Using Robert's Rules….Some Basics

If You Want To.....	You Say to the Chair....
Add to or change a motion. (Two times only.)	I wish to amend the motion.
Stop a motion YOU have made.	I wish to withdraw the motion. (No vote needed.)
Get a committee to study the matter.	I move that we refer this to _____ committee.
Put the matter aside until another time.	I move that the motion be tabled.
Bring up a motion that was tabled.	I move that the motion be taken from the table.
Discuss something without having to stick to the rules.	I move that we suspend the rules. (Requires to the rules 2/3 vote.)
Get discussion back on track.	I call for the order of the day.
End discussion.	I move that we close debate. (Requires 2/3 vote.)
Get more information on matter being discussed.	Point of information.
Point out violation of procedure or bylaws.	Point of order. (No vote needed.)
Call attention to something concerning the wellbeing of meeting participants (bad acoustics, room temperature, other discomforts)	Personal privilege.(No vote needed

Steps in a Motion	What to Say
1. The member rises and addresses the chair.	"Chair . . ."
2. The chair recognizes the member.	"The chair recognizes (name of person)"
3. The member makes a motion.	"I move to _____."
4. Another member seconds the motion. **(No second = motion fails)**	"Second."
5. The chair states the motion.	"It is moved and seconded to _____. Are you ready for the question?"
6. The members debate the motion.	"The chair recognizes (name of person) to speak to their motion . ."
7. The chair puts the question and the members vote.	"All those in favor of adopting the motion _____ will say 'aye,' [pause] those opposed will say 'no'."
8. The chair announces the result of the vote.	"The ayes have it and the motion carries, and ____ will be _____."

Sample Action Statements by Category

Sample Thinking	Sample Way to Say It
Key Findings	
Is it accurate? Is it appropriate? Is it derived from data? Is it attached to a number (quantifiable)? Is it a priority for improving student achievement? Are there more than 2-3? If so, prioritize.	"I move to amend key finding #1 to include a percentage." "I move to delete key finding #1 and identify a trend related to _____." (*Then explain the data-based rationale for such a change.*) "I move to rephrase key finding #1 to read: _____." (Stick to the meat and not the minutia—i.e. typos, grammar, etc.) "I move to table discussion regarding this item (or action plan) until such time as we can gather further information regarding ___."
Strategy/Activity	
Are there more than 2-3? If so, prioritize. Does the strategy directly target the key finding? Are you confident the strategy will improve student achievement in the identified area? Is there a more effective strategy for the targeted key finding? Does the strategy explicitly target the identified sub-group?	"I move to replace strategy #1 with _____." (Then explain the data-based or research-based rationale for such a change). "I move to delete strategy #1 because it does not directly target the key finding." "I move to relocate key finding #1 to the proposed expenditures column because it is an expenditure and not a strategy." "I move to table discussion regarding this item (or action plan) until such time as we can gather further information regarding ___."
Proposed Expenditures	
Is the expenditure really necessary to implement the identified strategy effectively? Is the expenditure a responsible use of our limited resources? Is there a cheaper alternative that would work equally well or better? Have we funded that item or position before—if so, what evidence is there to prove it was effective?	"I move to replace proposed expenditure #1 and #2 with ____ because this is a more cost effective means of addressing the same need." "I move to include _____ as an expenditure because it will be needed to implement the strategy effectively." "I move to delete expenditure #1 because… It has not proven to be effective in previous years." It is not necessary to implement the strategy." It is not an expenditure."

Means of Evaluating Progress

Will it authentically measure progress in the IDENTIFIED AREA? Is it specific? Can the means provide a "yes" or "no" answer if asked "Have we made progress in the IDENTIFIED AREA?" Is it a RELIABLE means of evaluating progress? Is it an EFFICIENT means of evaluating progress?	"I move to amend the means to measure progress to include a quantifiable target." "I move to delete the means to measure progress because I find it unreliable." "I move to substitute _____ for the given means to measure progress because I believe it is more cost effective and equally reliable." "I move to delete the means to measure progress because it does not measure the indicated strategy." "I move to include _____ as a means to measure progress."

Monitoring

Does it identify a specific position and state what that person shall do and when? Are all strategies / expenditures being monitored? Is the position mandated or funded (identified as a proposed expenditure)? Is the position REALLY needed to meet the identified need, or are there more cost effective alternatives that would equally address the need? Is the monitoring activity something that could be efficiently reported to SSC at regular intervals? Will the monitoring activity really monitor the activity or expenditure? Is there a more effective, efficient, or cost-efficient way of meeting the same monitoring need?	"I move that item one read: _____." "I move to add _____ to the monitoring column." "I move that instead of item #1 and #2, we instead use _____ to monitor progress." "I move that we delete _____ because we have not proposed to fund that position or activity." "I move that we delete item #1 because it doesn't authentically monitor the strategy." "I move that we change #1 to _____ because that will be more efficiently reported to SSC." "I move to change item #1 to _____ because that would be a more reliable method."