

What If I Don't Like Any of The Choices?

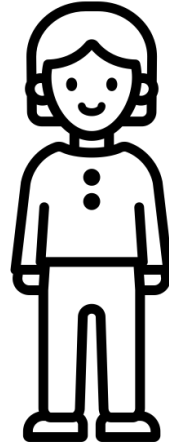
The Limits of Preference Elicitation for Participatory Algorithm Design

Samantha Robertson, Niloufar Salehi





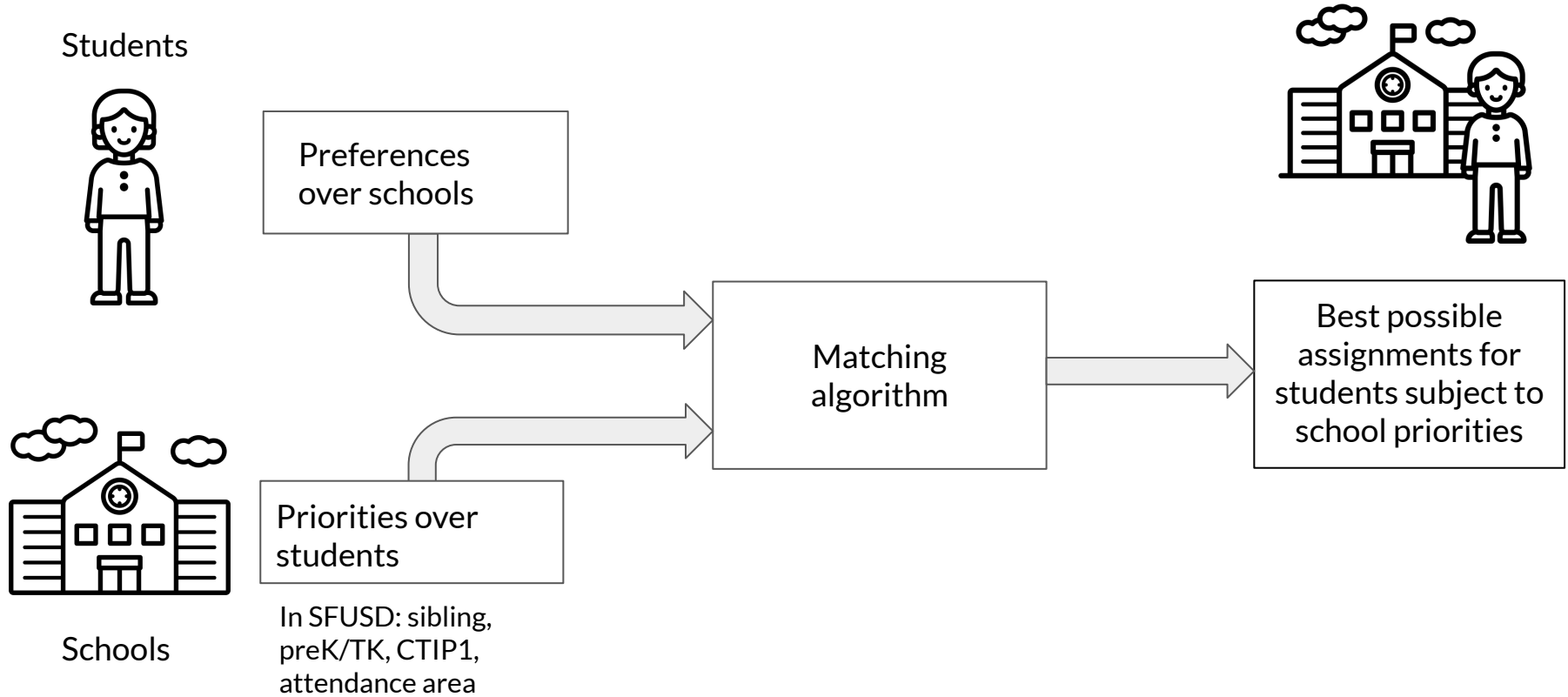
- Needs
- Values
- Goals



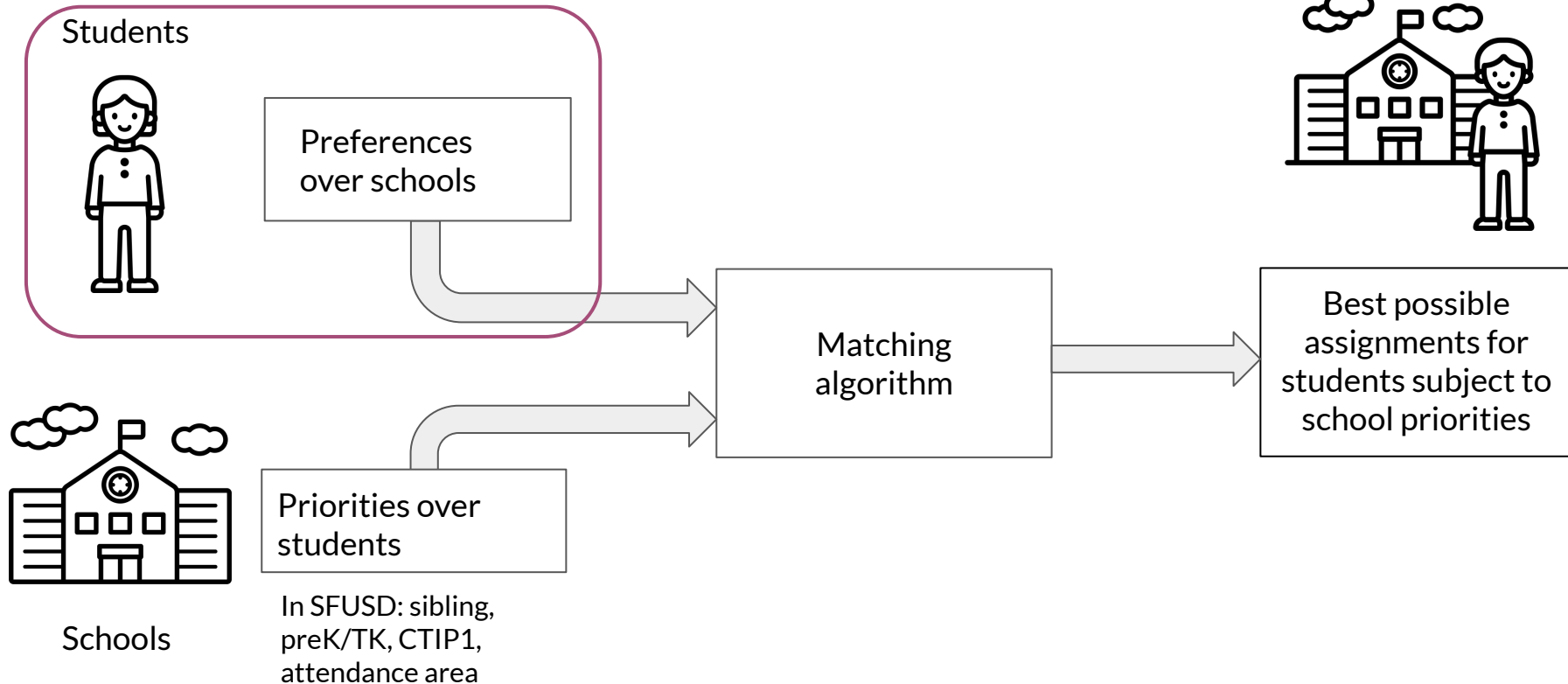
1. Option A
2. Option B
3. Option C

Preferences \neq Participation

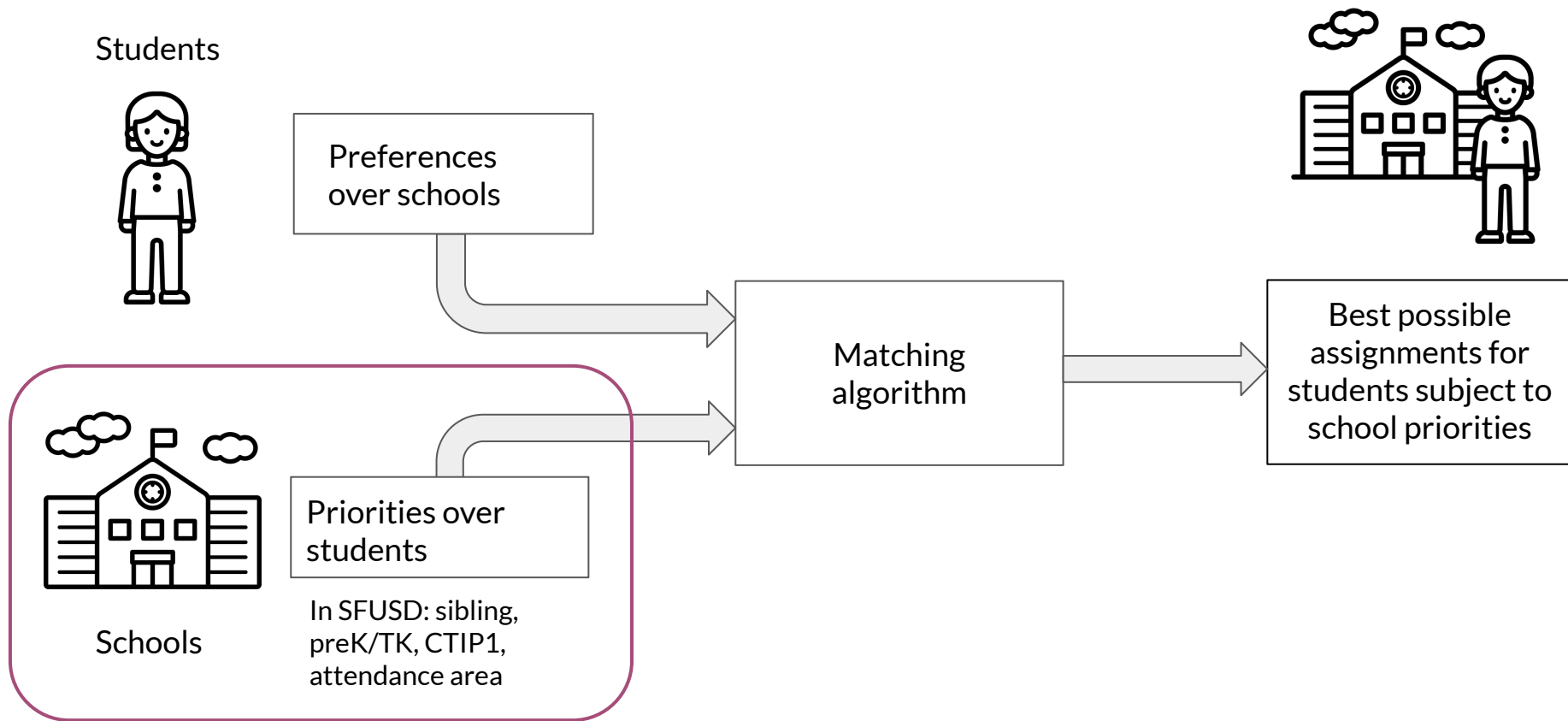
An example...



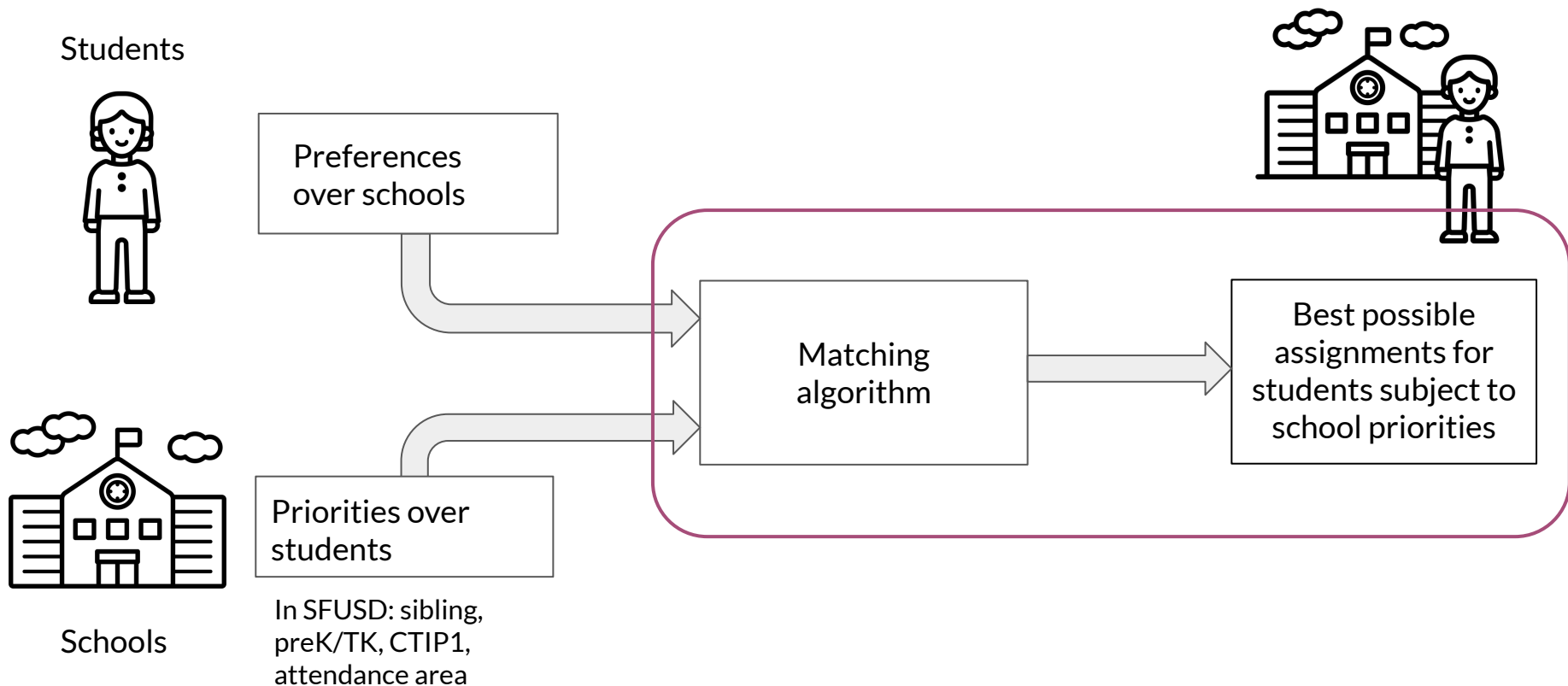
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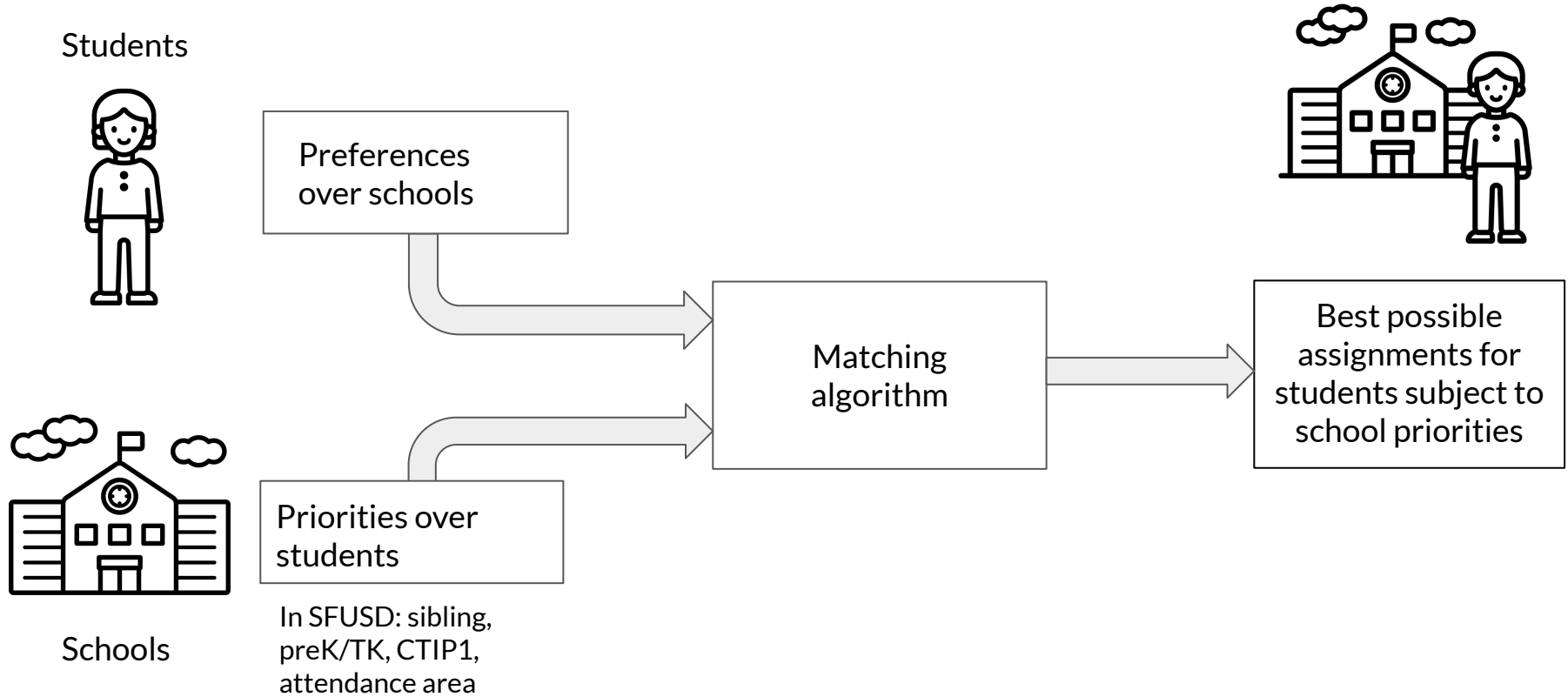
An example...



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An example...

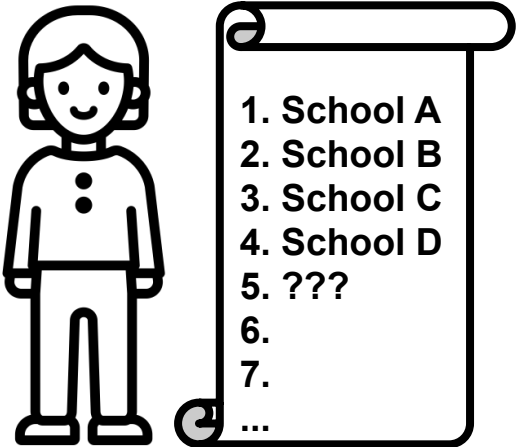


Three assumptions

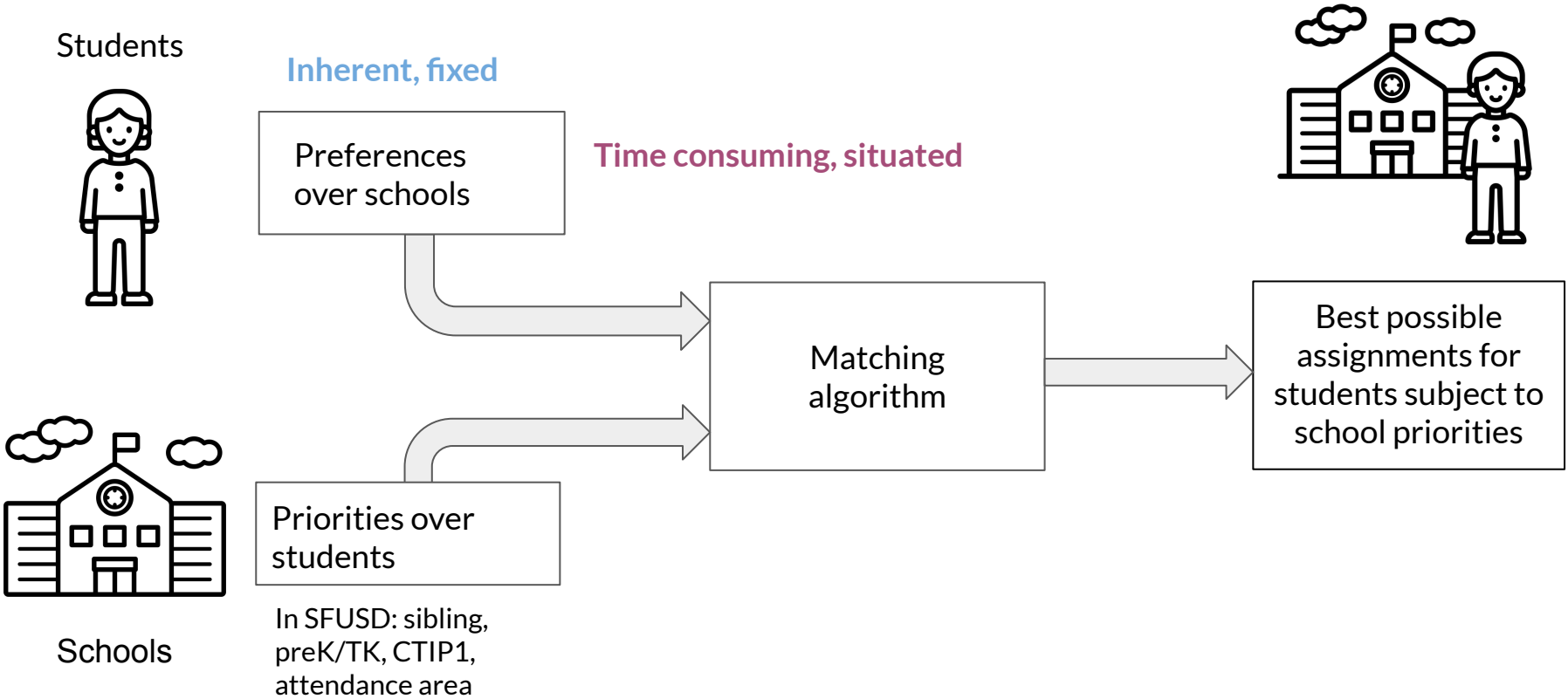
1. Preferences are **inherent and fixed**
 2. Preferences **fully encapsulate** relevant values, needs, and goals
 3. Some aggregation of these preferences is **socially optimal**
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1. Preferences are inherent and fixed

What do I prefer?

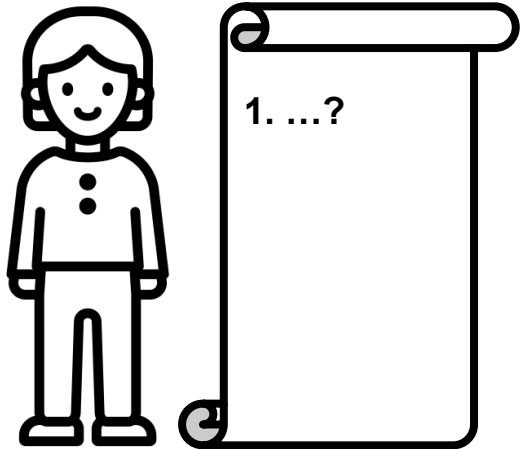


1. Preferences are inherent and fixed

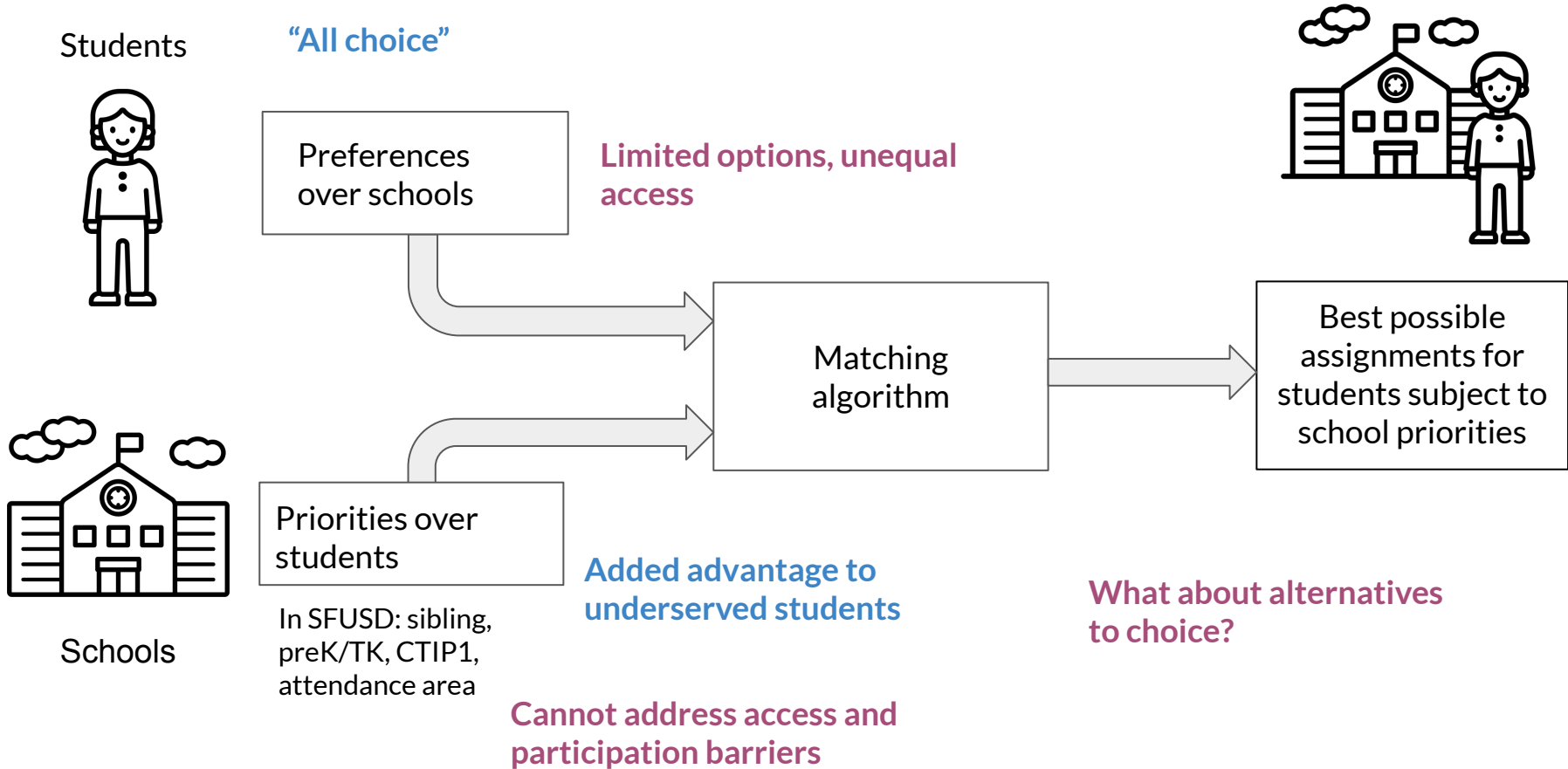


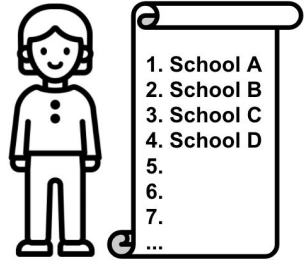
2. Preferences **fully encapsulate** relevant values, needs, and goals

What if I don't like any of the choices?

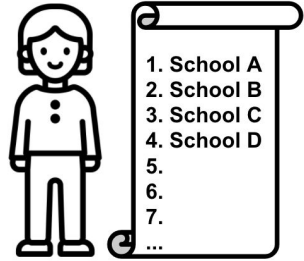
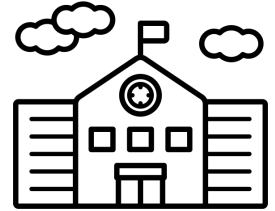


2. Preferences fully encapsulate relevant values, needs, and goals

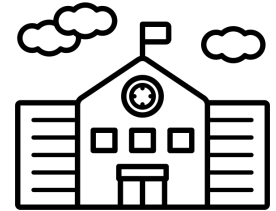
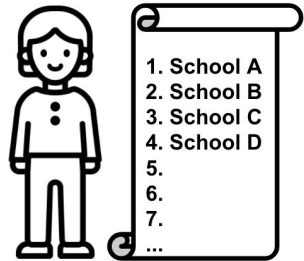




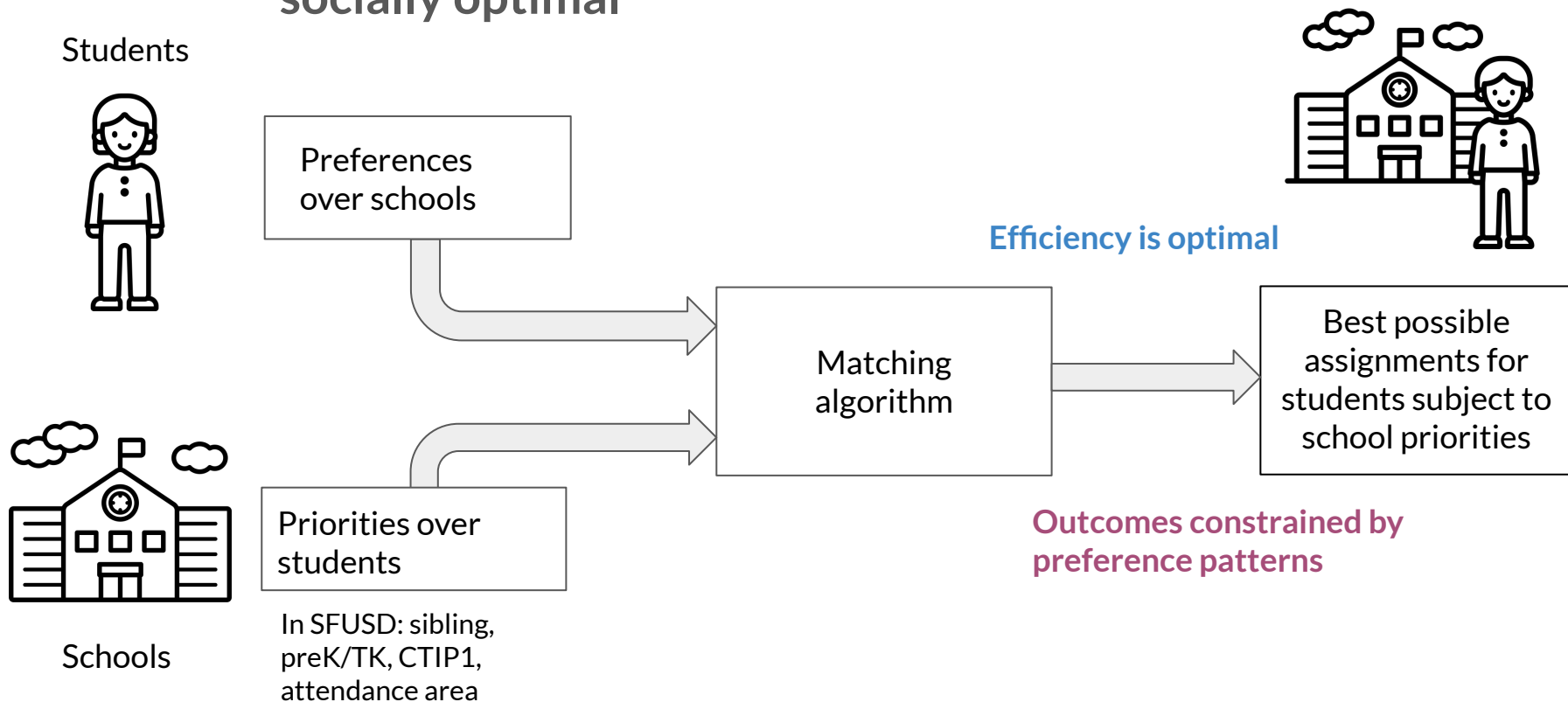
3. Some aggregation of these preferences is **socially optimal**



What do *we* prefer?



3. Some aggregation of these preferences is socially optimal



Expanding participation beyond preferences

- Alternative formats
 - What formats would work well?
 - More opportunities
 - When is participation appropriate?
 - Discourse and deliberation
 - How can we build accessible tools and infrastructure to involve stakeholders in the design and governance of algorithmic systems?
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Takeaways

- Preferences are an intuitive way to incorporate participation
 - Ask people what they want → Give as many people as possible what they want
 - But, the story is more complicated than that...
 - How do we ask people what they want? Who responds?
 - What are the alternatives they can choose from? Who benefits? What's missing?
 - How do we decide who gets what they *most* want? How does that drive change?
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Thank you!

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