# School Culture Typology Worksheet

School:

Read and circle the description that best describes the school in each row. Look across the rows and identify two areas of relative strength and two areas for potential growth.

|  | Toxic | Fragmented | Balkanized | Contrived Collegial | Comfortable Collaborative | Collaborative |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Row 1  Student Achievement | many teachers believe that if students fail it is the students’ fault | teachers usually do not discuss issues related to student achievement | most teacher discussions related to student achievement are restricted to within departments, cliques, or close friends | teachers are given time to discuss student achievement and are expected to do that during this time | teachers are given time to discuss student achievement, most of this time is spent on giving advice and trick-trading | teachers are given time to discuss student achievement and this time is spent critically analyzing each other’s practice |
| Row 2  Collegial Awareness | many teachers do not care about the effectiveness of other teachers | most of the teachers are unaware of what other teachers are teaching | most teachers are aware of only what their friends in the school are teaching | the school leadership expects teachers to know what other teachers are teaching | teachers occasionally observe and discuss what other teachers are teaching | teachers seek out opportunities to observe and discuss what other teachers are teaching |
| Row 3  Shared Values | values shared by many teachers are contradictory with student needs | there is not much agreement among teachers concerning ed. values | there are small groups of teachers that share educational values | the school leadership provides teachers a list of school values | there is general agreement among teachers concerning educational values | there is strong agreement among teachers concerning educational values |
| Row 4  Decision Making | decisions are easily made because many teachers do not care | teachers are usually not interested in participating in decisions that concern students | there are small groups of teachers that attempt to control the decisions made concerning students | school leaders expect teachers to participate in all decisions concerning students | teachers occasionally show an interest in the decisions made concerning students | there is an expectation among teachers to participate in decisions concerning students |
| Row 5  Risk-Taking | many teachers protect their teaching style from “innovation” | most teachers typically do not experiment with new ideas | innovations are usually initiated within a single grade or department | school leaders mandate teachers to try new ideas | teachers occasionally like to experiment with new ideas | teachers are constantly looking for new ideas |
| Row 6  Trust | teachers talk behind other teachers’ backs | trust among teachers is not considered necessary | there are teachers who only trust certain teachers | teachers are placed in situations where they are required to trust each other | trust is assumed and therefore not a critical issue | there is a strong interdependence among teachers at this school |
| Row 7  Openness | teachers who are committed to students and to learning are subject to criticism | teachers usually are not interested in suggestions concerning instruction made by other teachers | teachers usually keep their opinions and advice concerning instruction among their friends | teachers are expected to contribute to discussions about effective teaching at meetings | teachers are occasionally open to giving or receiving advice concerning instruction | teachers are very interested in the opinions of their colleagues concerning instruction |
| Row 8  Parent Relations | many teachers avoid parents whenever possible | teachers would rather not have parents’ input regarding instructional practice | there are cliques of teachers that parents perceive as the better teachers | school leaders require teachers to be in contact with parents regularly | most teachers are comfortable when parents want to be involved in instructional practices | teachers aggressively seek the involvement of parents in classroom instruction |
| Row 9  Leadership | school leaders are seen as obstacles to growth and development | school leaders are not visible in the school very much | school leaders frequently visit and/or praise the same teachers | school leaders monitor the meetings that are designed for teacher collaboration | school leaders encourage teachers to give each other advice without being too critical | school leaders challenge ineffective teaching and encourage teachers to do the same |
| Row 10  Communication | school policies seem to inhibit teachers’ abilities to discuss student achievement | communication among teachers is not considered important at this school | it is difficult to have productive dialogue with certain groups of teachers | communication is dominated by top-down mandates | warm and fuzzy conversations permeate our school | any teacher can talk to any teacher about their teaching practice |
| Row 11  Socialization | new teachers are informally indoctrinated by negative staff members quickly | teachers at this school quickly learn that it is “every man for himself” | new teachers are (informally labeled, then) typecast into certain teacher cliques | there are many mandatory meetings for new teachers to attend | new teachers are encouraged to share their experiences with other faculty members | all teachers assume some responsibility in helping new teachers adjust |
| Row 12  Organization History | teachers are quick to share negative stories about this school | “teachers asking for help” has traditionally been considered as a professional weakness | some grades, departments, or teams consider their successes as separate from the whole school | school leaders have established strong control over much of what goes on at school | this school is known for celebrating everything | at this school there is an understanding that school improvement is a continuous issue |