

Handout 2  
ABC Elementary School (Fictitious) – Narrative  
Handout

**The information provided below is fictitious and is to be used for training purposes only.**

ABC Elementary school opened in a middle class neighborhood in a medium-size city in the 1980s. For a number of years the neighborhood remained stable, but when the economy began to change in the 2000s, the population of students that ABC Elementary served began to change. A nearby factory closed and a number of families moved in order to find employment elsewhere. A number of foreclosures occurred and more homes went to the rental market. In addition, the resources available to the school decreased as the budget grew tight. The following areas pertaining to the school were affected:

**School climate and culture:** Overall the school facility is in good repair and the building is kept clean and safe. Teachers do not have any common planning time, and there has been a good deal of teacher turnover in the last several years. This has made it difficult to establish a cohesive culture at the school. Some teachers have high expectations for students and others do not. In addition, student discipline is inconsistent.

**Attendance:** Student attendance is consistently high with students missing on average two days per semester; however, teacher attendance records reveal that on average teachers miss one day of school per month.

**Curriculum and Instruction:** The curriculum for reading has been in place for one year and the math curriculum has been used for two years. The curricula was selected by the district and all schools use the same materials. Professional development occurred prior to implementation, but little follow-up has occurred. There are intervention components which resource teachers use with students who have been identified as low-achieving.

**Leadership:** This elementary school has a principal and assistant principal who have both been at the school for five and six years respectively. A guidance counselor has served at the school for ten years and an instructional coach was hired this year. The instructional coach works primarily with third grade teachers in an effort to help students at that grade be successful on the state assessment.

**Family and Community Engagement:** There are a wide variety of family structures represented at the school with a large percentage of single-parent homes and children being raised by grandparents. Parents do not seem to have the time to come to the school to engage in school activities as many work two jobs. The school does partner with some community businesses and faith-based organizations and these relationships are strong. Businesses provide financial and volunteer support, and churches provide after-school tutoring and goodie-bags for teachers at the beginning of the school year. If the school staff or leadership becomes aware of a need for students, oftentimes these organizations will attempt to meet that need.

**Professional Development and Staff Capacity:** While professional development is provided at the district level, and the instructional coach provides some professional development for third grade teachers, teacher turnover is problematic. In addition, the professional development may or may not meet the specific needs of the teachers and students of the school.

**Assessment:** Progress monitoring is a component of the reading and math curricula; however, teachers are not proficient in interpreting the data and utilizing it to impact instruction. The results of the state assessment reflect that much improvement is needed.

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