



Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division (Leadership Strategies to Build a Professional Learning Community)

By Anthony Muhammad, Foreword by Richard DuFour

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Drawing upon his study of 34 schools (11 elementary, 14 middle, and 9 high schools) from around the country, Dr. Anthony Muhammad describes the underlying tensions that impact culture among four different groups of educators in a school:

- The Believers are those who are committed to the learning of each student and who operate under the assumption that their efforts can make an enormous difference in that learning.
- The Fundamentalists are preservers of the status quo.
- The Tweeners are members of a staff who are typically new to a school and are attempting to learn its prevailing culture.
- The Survivors are those who have been so overwhelmed by the stress and demands of the profession that their primary goal becomes making it through the day, the week, and the year.

Busy administrators will appreciate this quick read packed with immediate, accessible strategies. This book provides the framework for understanding dynamic relationships within a school culture and ensuring a positive environment that supports the changes necessary to improve learning for all students. The author explores many aspects of human behavior, social conditions, and history to reveal best practices for building healthy school cultures.

Benefits

- Learn how leaders can overcome staff division to improve relationships and transform toxic cultures into healthy ones.
- Examine educators motivations for hanging on to paradigms that are contrary to

those articulated by their school or district.

- Understand the underlying tensions that impact school culture among four different groups of educators: Believers, Fundamentalists, Tweeners, and Survivors.
- Attain specific strategies for working with each group of educators to transform school culture into a professional learning community.
- Create positive environments in which staff not only tolerate change but also seek and embrace the changes that maximize organizational effectiveness.

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Editorial Review

Review

Muhammad issues a passionate call for all educators to confront the fierce urgency of now and to take meaningful steps that breathe new life into schools and the students they serve. I urge you to read this book and heed his words. --Richard DuFour, author and consultant

Insightful and thought provoking. Change is a difficult concept to embrace. Muhammad gives solid suggestions and allows readers to think about how to guide change within their own environments. --Pam Samson, principal, Eisenhower Junior High, Hoffman Estates, IL

This book has the potential to revolutionize America's educational system. It gives school leaders the tools and language to instill sustained cultural change in their schools. --Alexander McNeece, principal, Douglas Elementary, Garden City, MI

About the Author

Anthony Muhammad, PhD, is one of the most sought-after educational consultants in North America. As a practitioner for nearly 20 years, Dr. Muhammad has served as a middle school teacher, an assistant principal, a middle school principal, and a high school principal. His tenure as a practitioner has earned him several awards as both a teacher and a principal. His most notable accomplishment came as principal at Levey Middle School in Southfield, Michigan, a National School of Excellence, where student proficiency on state assessments more than doubled in five years. Muhammad and the staff at Levey used the Professional Learning Communities at Work model of school improvement, and the school has been recognized in several videos and articles as a model high-performing PLC. As a researcher, Dr. Muhammad has published articles in several publications in both the United States and Canada. He is a contributing author to *The Collaborative Administrator: Working Together as a Professional Learning Community* (2008).

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