

FRAGMENTATION

Doing what's safe: I wish I could do more. There is a tendency towards compliance. Rather than stretching our creativity to imagine better ways to serve students and communities, we play it safe and limit ourselves to actions and ideas that fall in line with standards and requirements. Even if we want to explore doing something different, there's pressure to not take risks and adhere to priorities that everyone knows are outdated and ineffective.

ORGANIZATIONAL ETHOS

Not addressing the "real" problem: Work is frustrating because we aren't allowed to address the deeper issues at play. We have to stick to surface level solutions and create countless workarounds that do some good even though we know they won't really change anything. Dealing with the root causes of the problem isn't part of our official mission and so the system will keep producing the same results. We just have to deal with it.

MISSION-PROBLEM ALIGNMENT

Competition: There's never enough funding or resources to go around. We may work together but at the end of day it's you or me, your project or mine. I need to get the recognition to make sure I still have a job.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

INTEGRATION

Flexible and adaptive: I know I can make a difference. My organization is committed to meeting the actual needs of people, even if those needs aren't overtly aligned with our mission. We are encouraged to think creatively of how to better serve students and our ideas are listen to and the most promising ones are incorporated into our practices.

Genuine buy-in both internally and externally: I believe in what the organization is doing. The vision and mission feels authentic and relevant to the real world situation. The organization welcomes honest conversations - both from within and from the community - about challenges and is willing to shift in response to new insights about the nature of the problem.

Collaboration: I care about the success of my colleagues and when I see ways I can help, I do. I trust them and know they are always willing to be a sounding board for ideas and a resource to help me move forward when I'm confused.

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Lack of Trust: Leadership is always checking in on us to make sure things are getting done “right”. They seem convinced that if they don’t keep a close eye on things, everything will go off the rails.

Staying within identity roles: I see all the problems that contribute to students being underserved but there’s only so much I can do. After All, there are other people who are supposed to be taking care of all those things and I can barely keep my head above water as is.

Redundant efforts: It feels like every week I discover that someone else is working on the same task I’m working on or that it was already done by another department last month. So much of the work I do is a waste because nobody knows what other people are doing. Things could be so much more efficient if we could just figure out how to work together.

Inconsistent communication: I often feel like I don’t know how to talk about what my organization does. When I speak with people from other levels or departments it feels like we’re using different languages. People in the community are often confused about what we do.

LEADERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

INTEGRATION

Mutual Respect: Leadership has our respect because they always walk their talk. They personally model the behaviors they ask of us. We know they are here to help amplify what we are already doing.

Going beyond the job description: I serve the student as a whole person not just the part of them that fits within my department. Even though my job technically has a specific set of responsibilities, if I see other areas where I can help I have the freedom and resources to do so.

Effectively building upon the work of others: I have what I need to consistently do my job better. I know where to find relevant tools, resources, and to develop my skills. I use them often to build upon the work of others and I know that the work I do will be available for others to use.

Consistent messaging: If you talk to anyone in our organization about our mission, values or theory of change you will hear a similar story. People outside our organization can quickly understand what we do and how we do it.