Developing a School Profile:  
An Analysis of Critical School Improvement Dimensions

The purpose of this activity is to provide you with the opportunity to analyze the changes in seven 
important dimensions of school improvement over a period of time, in this case three years. We believe 
the activity will be insightful as you reflect upon the dimensions (Culture, Professional Development, 
Organizational Structure, Organizational Resources, Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and 
Leadership). We encourage you to give this task your careful thought.

Directions
Please use the attached charts to assess your school on each dimension. The “1” to “9” scale was 
designed to represent continuous, equal intervals. Please note that “5” is not meant to be an average or 
median score. This scale is continuous, but does not represent a “normal curve.” To assist you in the 
interpretation of each dimension, we have provided “working definitions” of each dimension.

Rating Scale:
1=detrimental impact on students
3=neutral impact on students
5=minimal positive impact on students
7=solid positive impact on students
9=exceptional positive impact on students.

For each chart, please place a dark dot in the shaded columns of January, May, and September for 
each year. You certainly may place a dot for each month, but that is usually not necessary unless there 
were noticeable fluctuations in the impact of the dimension during the four-month period.

Attached example for Heartland Middle School:
The following page provides an example of a completed chart for Heartland Middle School. This page 
represents a profile of Heartland’s curriculum over a three-year period, as developed by the school 
faculty. The staff determined that in 2002 the curriculum had neither a positive or negative impact on the 
learning experiences of their students. That impact moved in a positive direction (up) over the next four 
months and as the 2002-03 school year began (September, 2002) the curriculum had improved (possibly 
due to curriculum development during the summer). Little change occurred from September, 2002 
through May, 2003. In September of the 2003-04 school year the impact of the curriculum on the 
students was again on the rise, peaking in January and dipping slightly in May (perhaps a loss of 
effectiveness as the newness wore off and the school year became more hectic in the spring).

Copies of the Profile Charts:
After you have completed your Profile Charts, we will make a copy of them for our records. Please use a 
dark pen or pencil to complete our profile plot (connect the dots) before you give it to us to copy.

Engaging the Entire Faculty
As with most of the activities we have used throughout Project ASSIST, you can implement this activity 
with your faculty. Engaging the entire faculty provides them with the opportunity to “think-through” the 
evolution of these key dimensions over the past few years. That reflection and related discussion is 
healthy. A second benefit is that you will have the perspective of the entire faculty to use as a basis for 
goal setting. If you choose to engage the entire faculty, you might consider asking faculty to complete the 
sheets individually and then discuss the information and create a group (table) profile. You can then 
collect either the group profile and compile that information or collect the individual profiles and compile 
that information to create your school profile. As always, you will be provided a three-hole-punched copy 
for your binder and an electronic copy.