COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT SCENARIOS

# Scenario #1

John Smith High School has recently deployed a student engagement survey to begin an intervention to increase student engagement. When you visit the school, you notice:

* Few teachers are greeting students at their door during passing period.
* Students are actively participating in on-topic group discussions.
* Teachers seem to be more like authoritarian figures, barking orders in the halls.
* Students can recite answers, but seem to have difficulty summarizing their learning in their own words.
* Teachers report that students oppose writing in math class, asking “Why are we doing this, this isn’t English!”

**The results of the survey were eye-opening. Some of the stand-out results include:**

* My teachers treat all my friends fairly. (38%)
* My teachers respect me as an individual. (42%)
* When learning new information, I try to put the ideas in my own words. (21%)
* When learning things for school, I often try to associate them with what I learned in other classes. (27%)

# Scenario #2

During an observation of Mrs. Harvey’s Science class at John Smith High School, you notice:

* Some students loudly exclaimed “This is boring!”
* Student conversation is not allowed.
* Classroom tasks involve rote memorization—no novelty or authenticity.
* Student writing consists of note-take and cloze-style worksheets.

**Responses of note from the student engagement survey for Mrs. Harvey’s students include:**

* My teachers treat all my friends fairly. (38%)
* My teachers respect me as an individual. (42%)
* When learning new information, I try to put the ideas in my own words. (21%)
* When learning things for school, I often try to associate them with what I learned in other classes. (27%)

# Scenario #3

Sally Doe, a student in Mrs. Harvey’s Science class at John Smith High School, was willing to sit down for a short interview with you. During this interview, she revealed:

* “In this class, it’s all about memorizing stuff to pass a test. It’s just not interesting to do the same thing every week.”
* “I don’t really get what Mrs. Harvey wants from us. I thought this was a science class, not English. She tries to get us to do some writing every once in a while.”
* “Mrs. Harvey is normally using her computer when we come into class. I feel like she doesn’t even notice me until she calls my name during roll.”
* “We never get to talk or do group projects in this class. I learned a lot more in my science class last year because I got to talk to people more often.”

**A small sample of Sally’s responses on the student engagement survey reveal her perceptions:**

* My teachers treat all my friends fairly. (3 out of 9)
* My teachers respect me as an individual. (4 out of 9)
* When learning new information, I try to put the ideas in my own words. (2 out of 9)
* I try to think through topics and decide what I’m supposed to learn from them. (2 out of 9)