



## Educator Wellness: A Whole School Approach to Improve Staff Stress and Retention and Student Achievement

**EDUCATOR WELLNESS** is the **impact** of a **school’s organizational and individual systems** (e.g., culture and climate, employee training and supports, etc.) on staff social, emotional, physical, and mental **well-being**.

This **influences staff stress through four main sources<sup>1</sup>** that create positive or negative working conditions and ultimately impacts the teaching and learning environment for students.

The 2019 District of Columbia Teacher Workforce Report found that “[o]f Effective teachers who plan to leave teaching after the current or next school year, more than half (58 percent) said their top reason involved working conditions related to either school culture or leadership.”<sup>2</sup>

1

### School Environment & Structure

The school’s leadership, climate, culture, and presence or absence of trusting relationships.

2

### Job Demands

Ability for staff to make decisions about content, increased variance in job role vs. expectations, and addressing challenging behaviors.

3

### Work Resources

Opportunity for staff support and autonomy in decision-making and collaboration to support staff voice in school-level decisions.

4

### Social Emotional Learning Competencies

Resources and opportunities to attend to and develop own social-emotional competence to better manage stress and well-being.

To sustainably address employee wellness, adopt a **tiered framework<sup>1</sup>** that supports a whole school approach.



Approaches that teach individuals self-care, wellness, and stress management techniques.

Approaches that focus on building workplace relationships and supports.

Approaches that focus on changing the organization’s culture to prevent stress from occurring.

**Employee wellness programs** often focus on the top tier, individual, but systemic change is most effective at the bottom two tiers and **requires**:

1. Leadership buy-in and support;
2. Implementation to be championed at the school and LEA level; and
3. Is part of a comprehensive wellness culture.

For more information please visit [OSSE.dc.gov](https://osse.dc.gov).  
For questions regarding OSSE’s approach to educator wellness and supports please email [osse.hydt@dc.gov](mailto:osse.hydt@dc.gov).

### References

- 1 Greenberg, M. T., Brown J. L., Abenavoli, R.M. (2016). “Teacher Stress and Health Effects on Teachers, Students, and Schools.” Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, Pennsylvania State University.
- 2 Office of the State Superintendent of Education, The New Teacher Project. (2019). “District of Columbia Teacher Workforce Report.”