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**Promoting Teacher Wellbeing: A Book Study**

Katy Cooper, B.S. Ed

Otterbein University

April 2023

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Education degree.

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2023

**VITA**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this project is to present a professional development curriculum that promotes teacher wellbeing through a book study. The curriculum was developed considering the following research question: How can a book study be used to support strategies for teacher wellbeing? The frameworks used to answer the research question and create the curriculum were PLC Book Study Guide (FLDOE, n.d.) and Professional Book Study (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.). The proposed book study is planned to take place over a six-month period and includes four meetings. A list of pre-selected books that promote teacher wellbeing, a sample book study invitation, monthly reading schedule, group norms and roles, reading guide, and protocols for each meeting are included in the curriculum. Teacher leaders can use the created curriculum to promote teacher wellbeing through a book study.

## SECTION ONE

Teachers everywhere are experiencing high levels of stress. According to von der Embse et. al., 2015 (as cited in Mankin et al., 2018), “stress is particularly prevalent among teachers, with nearly 30% reporting clinically significant levels of stress” (p. 220). I am in my tenth year of teaching elementary school and in my experience, I have found the profession to be overwhelmingly stressful. Teachers experience everyday stress, but the pandemic and remote teaching brought new challenges and stresses to teachers. Minihan et al. (2022) explained that 58% of teachers that participated in their study considered leaving the field since the start of COVID-19 Pandemic. Teacher wellbeing needs to be promoted because, “the past few years have challenged us beyond what self-care strategies can fix” (Miekle, 2022, p. 23).

Teaching is considered to be one of the most stressful careers along with nursing, managerial jobs, and professional and support management careers (Smith et al., 2000 as cited in Jepsen and Forrest, 2006). This topic is very personal to me because I have experienced teacher burnout. Golembiewski et al. (1983; as cited in Jepsen & Forrest, 2006) defined burnout as “a feeling of physical, emotions, and mental exhaustion, resulting from a chronic state and accumulation of pressure and stress at work” (p. 184). There have been times in my career where I have felt burnout to the extent that I have considered leaving the field. To find happiness in my career, I have tried changing school districts, buildings, and grade levels. I thought I would find happiness when I taught second grade instead of kindergarten or moved to a school district closer to home. As it turns out, I have experienced the same burnout or stress in each role.

During and after the pandemic, there were more self-care resources shared for teachers. While I was teaching online, I signed up for virtual journaling, yoga, gratitude, and meditation

classes that my district offered. I continue to focus on self-care, but I am at a point where I feel that I need more, and I notice my co-workers needing more, too.

I read ten suggestions for teacher self-care (Lesh, 2020) and the one that stood out to me the most was continual pedagogical improvement. According to Lesh (2020) “it is extremely important to keep learning and improving pedagogical skills” (p. 369). I connected with this form of self-care because I am working on my wellbeing as a teacher and continuing my pedagogical improvement by attending graduate courses at Otterbein University.

It is important for teachers to take care of themselves. “Childcare teachers first have to take good care of themselves in order to perform well as a childcare professional” (Park et. al 2020, p. 1). My experiences with the stress of teaching led me to develop a curriculum to promote teacher wellbeing so that I can be the best teacher that I can be for myself, my friends and family, my co-workers, and my students and their families.

For this project, I am developing a curriculum for teachers, using a book study approach to promote teacher wellbeing. I am part of the Professional Development (PD) committee at my school, and I know wellbeing is a relevant topic for myself and other teachers that I work with. Knowing self-care is important to teachers, our PD committee planned an optional yoga session for teachers to attend. Many teachers from our building attended and reported enjoying the session! We plan to continue to provide other self-care professional development options for teachers in the future.

Book studies are a preferred form of professional development where teachers can collaborate and build relationships (Smith and Galbraith, 2011). Drawing on readings by Smith and Galbraith, and others, I have decided to create a book study to promote wellbeing so that

teachers can learn and grow from each other. I plan to share the knowledge, resources, and curriculum development with my PD committee and school staff.

### **Research Question**

How can a book study be used to support strategies for teacher wellbeing?

## **SECTION TWO**

This chapter presents a review of research and literature on the topic of book studies for promoting teacher wellbeing. Teacher wellbeing starts with understanding teacher stress and how stress leads to burnout. In this chapter, stress and burnout are defined and reported stressors for teachers are explained. Strategies for managing teacher stress and avoiding burnout along with teacher wellbeing and its components are explained. This chapter also reviews characteristics of effective and ineffective professional development, examples of book studies as professional development, and suggested frameworks for planning and implementing book studies. This review of literature will explore how a book study can be used to support strategies for teacher wellbeing.

### **Teacher Stress**

Teachers everywhere are experiencing high levels of stress. Kyriacou (2001; as cited in von der Embse et al., 2015) defines teacher stress as “a negative experience that is a function of job-related pressures and the individual ability to cope” (p. 224). Teachers experience stress in their jobs from high stakes testing (von der Embse et al., 2015), student behavior and discipline (Collie et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007), and problems with parent-teacher relationships (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). If not addressed and supported, these teacher stressors can affect staff and students, and can eventually lead to teacher burnout.

Von der Embse et al. (2015) conducted a study to determine the reliability and validity of a teacher stress instrument they were developing. The Educator Test Stress Inventory (von der Embse et al., 2015) was being developed to measure teachers' level of stress related to testing. It was administered to 8,084 educators in a southeastern state in the United States and “descriptive results indicated a number of respondents reporting a high degree of stress related to the testing experience; 28% of participants experienced significantly ‘high’ anxiety” (p. 233). Previous results from studies conducted by von der Embse and colleagues (Putwain & Best, 2011; von der Embse & Witmer, 2014; von der Embse & Hasson, 2012; as cited in von der Embse et al. 2015) had indicated that when teachers feel stressed during testing times, their students also feel stressed and may not perform as well on tests.

In British Columbia and Ontario, Canada, an online questionnaire was administered to determine how teachers' experiences with stress, teaching efficacy, and job satisfaction (i.e., outcome variables) were related to school climate and social and emotional learning (i.e., predictor variables) along with how the three outcome variables interacted with each other (Collie et al., 2012). Results from 664 participants in 17 school districts (elementary and secondary schools) found that student behavior and discipline negatively affected teacher efficacy and job satisfaction. Another finding was, teachers felt positive about teacher efficacy when they collaborated with co-workers, said their students were motivated, and they felt comfortable implementing SEL. Teacher stress caused by student behavior and discipline, coupled with reduced sense of teaching efficacy, can lead teachers to feel burnout. When teachers felt positive about their teaching efficacy, they were more satisfied with their jobs and were able to handle the effects of stress.

Similarly, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) developed and tested a 24-item questionnaire called the Norwegian Teacher Self- Efficacy Scale (NTSES), that was completed by 244 elementary and middle school teachers (teaching grades 1-10) in Norway. This study was designed to test how external control “teachers’ general beliefs about limitations to what can be achieved through education” (p. 619), teacher self-efficacy, and teacher burnout related to four strain factors (i.e., student behaviors, disagreements with parents and other teachers, and being told to teach in a way teachers disagree with). Teacher self-efficacy included the following factors in this study: adapting, discipline, motivating, instruction, coping, and cooperating. Results acknowledged “a particularly strong correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout” (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, p. 620).

In the study conducted by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007) there were five significant findings about the relationship between external control, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher burnout with the four strain factors for teachers. The first finding was that teachers reported feeling exhaustion from behavioral problems with students and conflict with parents. It was also found that “students with behavioral problems and conflicts among the teachers were not significantly related to any of the NTSES subscales” (p. 618). The next finding explained that “conflict with parents related negatively to five of the six dimensions of teacher self-efficacy as well as to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization” (p. 621). The following finding stated, “perceived collective teacher efficacy was slightly lower for teachers who experienced conflict among the teachers” (p. 616). In conclusion, the last finding showed that four of the six self-efficacy subscales were negatively impacted when teachers are told to teach in a way they did not feel is best practice. The findings of this study explained the impact of different stressors on teachers.

When teachers experience these high levels of stress from high stakes testing, student behavior and discipline, and problems with parent-teacher relationships they are “vulnerable to psychological distress” (Cheng et al., 2021, p. 1197) and can experience anxiety and depression (Turner et. al., 2021). This amount of stress affects their self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Turner et al. 2021; von der Embse et al., 2015) and can eventually lead to burnout. These high levels of stress can affect teachers’ overall wellbeing and should be taken very seriously.

### **Teacher Burnout**

Managing teacher stress is important to all teachers because if educators continue to feel high amounts of stress, this will eventually lead to burnout (Cheng et al., 2021; Turner et al., 2021). Golembiewski et al. (1983; as cited in Jepsen & Forrest, 2006) defines burnout as “a feeling of physical, emotions, and mental exhaustion, resulting from a chronic state and accumulation of pressure and stress at work” (p. 184).

It is important to support teachers so they feel less stress and avoid teacher burnout. Teacher stress and burnout can affect students and schools. Teachers who experience high levels of stress do not feel satisfied with their roles and it leads to depersonalization (Fiorilli et. al., 2017). With all the demands of teaching, teachers can “detach from their work context without applying for help” (Fiorilli et al., 2017, p. 129). Cheng et al. (2021) explained that “teachers’ psychological well-being is linked to their classroom teaching and student development outcomes” (p. 1197). When teachers do not have the support they need to manage high levels of stress, they can be negatively impacted by relationships, classroom instruction, and may lead to teachers leaving the field (Mankin et al., 2018).

### **Combating Teacher Stress and Burnout**

Schools around the world are recognizing the importance of supporting teachers with stressors in their jobs to help teachers avoid burnout. Schools are implementing strategies such as positive psychological strategies and mindfulness-based programs, and studies are being conducted to determine what makes teachers happy (Cheng et al., 2022; Paterson & Grantham, 2016; Turner et al., 2021).

In a pilot study, Turner and Theilking (2019) worked with five teachers in five different elementary schools in Australia to help teachers use four key psychological strategies for three weeks to study how their wellbeing was affected. Affected included looking for meaning, providing social support, focusing on positive aspects, and character strengths. Peterson and Seligman (2004; as cited in Turner & Theilking, 2019) explained character strengths as “the routes to displaying the virtues of wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence” (p. 940). Each participant was interviewed three times throughout the three weeks. At the end of the study teachers reported feeling calm and positive; they felt they were more engaged when teaching their lessons (more lessons were student-led or included student interest), felt their relationships and feedback with students improved (teachers spent more time one-on-one with students and gave more breaks and more time to finish work), and felt that student behaviors and attitudes improved, too.

In 2021, Turner et al. expanded the program to fourteen primary and secondary schools in Australia “to compare effects across a larger sample, over a longer period of time” (p. 1297). Staff were trained on the four strategies (character strengths, looking for meaning, providing social support, and focusing on positive aspects) to implement for thirty days. Researchers adapted the survey from the previous study (Turner & Theilking, 2019) and created the “Teacher wellbeing, teaching practice and student learning” survey (p. 1299). Teachers

implemented these four strategies for thirty days and completed a 24-question survey in week 3 and week 6 that included three sections, teacher wellbeing, teacher practice, and student learning. Each question was measured on a five-point scale.

Results from the first section of the survey, teacher wellbeing, indicated that teachers' perceptions of their wellbeing increased from week 3 to 6 and 79.1% of teachers said they're more positive at work. The results from the second section of the survey, teacher practice, showed that after teachers implemented the four strategies there was "no statistical difference in mean teaching practice scores between week 3 and week 6" (p. 1302). On the other hand, results from the third section of the survey, student learning, showed a positive impact on student learning from week 3 to week 6, 69.7% of teachers said their students are showing more confidence and their work is progressing. In conclusion, results from this study show that when teachers implement these four strategies (character strengths, looking for meaning, providing social support, and focusing on positive aspects), their perceived wellbeing and student learning improves. Implementing these four strategies are examples of how teachers can combat stress and burnout and focus on wellbeing.

Cheng et al. (2022) conducted research to study the effect of teachers practicing mindfulness. Researchers worked with two groups (mindfulness training (MT) group and comparison group) including 70 kindergarten teachers in China. Before and after the program, teachers in both groups had their wellbeing measured. The group of teachers that participated in the four weeks of the mindfulness program practiced a combination of mindfulness-based stress reduction, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, and mindfulness teachers' program. Through the post-test results and discussions with teachers in the MT group, the following common themes were found after implementing mindfulness: improved present moment awareness, enhanced emotion

regulation (teachers reported being able to relax more), and greater compassion and acceptance (teachers said they were nicer to themselves and others). Teachers who participated in mindfulness recommended that the mindfulness program be shared with other teachers.

To gain a better understanding of what makes teachers happy, a two phase study was conducted in Local Authority in Scotland (Paterson & Grantham, 2016). In the first phase, 34 teachers from five primary schools completed the Glasgow Motivational and Wellbeing Profile (GMWP). The researchers identified one school in which the teachers reported being happiest with a wellbeing score of 23.06 out of 30 points. Five teachers from that school worked in focus groups and answered four questions to help the researchers further understand what makes happy teachers happy. Paterson and Grantham (2016) asked the following questions:

What does the term ‘teacher wellbeing’ mean to you? What are the factors that support and promote TWB in the school context, and how do they do that? What wider factors support and promote TWB – for example, out with a school context? How do societal attitudes and beliefs contribute to supporting teacher wellbeing? (p. 104)

Their responses showed that teachers who are happy need social support within schools and need society to have a better understanding of the teacher’s role. It was also stated that there needs to be general consensus of the definition of wellbeing.

### **Teacher Wellbeing**

Researchers have said that it is relevant to address teacher stress and burnout and it should be taken seriously (García-Lázaro et. al., 2022; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Roffey, 2012). Mickle (2022) explained that in order to really reduce stress and burnout, “it will take more than exercise routines and meditations apps” (p. 19). Reducing stress and burnout can start with an

understanding of wellbeing. Wellbeing can be defined as social and emotional, mental, physical, and psychological health (Miekle, 2022; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022; Van der Vyver et al., 2020). Within the literature, the following five components have been found to support teacher wellbeing: social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support (García-Lázaro et. al., 2022; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Miekle, 2022; Roffey, 2012; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Park et al., 2020; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022). It is important to recognize teacher stressors and how they can lead to burnout, and it is even more crucial to promote teacher wellbeing so that teachers and students are happy.

### ***Social and Emotional Learning***

The first component to support teacher wellbeing is social and emotional learning (Bailey & Weiner, 2021; CASEL, 2023; Flushman et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2013). According to Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (2023) SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

Jones et al. (2013) explained social and emotional learning (SEL) as a “wide range of competencies from emotional intelligence to social competence to self-regulation” (p. 62). Jones et al. (2013) explained three competencies that teachers can consider for social and emotional health: emotional processes (learning and understanding feelings), social/interpersonal skills (positivity and kindness), and cognitive regulation (staying calm in stressful situations and

modeling reacting appropriately). “Teachers who are calm, positive, and content are likely to be better equipped to treat students warmly and sensitively, even when students behave in challenging ways” (Jones et al., 2013, p. 63).

Teaching is “emotional labor” (Bailey & Weiner, 2021, p. 48). Teachers have the challenging responsibility to recognize and regulate their own emotions when working with others to help themselves avoid stress and burnout. Emotional labor is defined as “investing emotional energy but also suppressing one’s feelings to meet a job’s goals” (Bailey & Weiner, 2021, p. 48). Since teaching is considered emotional labor, it is important for teachers to understand the importance of their social and emotional learning to support their overall wellbeing, Jones et al. (2013) suggested the following interventions for teachers’ SEL: emotion-focused training, relationship-building, and mindfulness and stress reduction, and SEL routines. Implementing these strategies will help teachers manage stress, avoid burnout, and focus on wellbeing.

A study was conducted to look at how New Teacher Learning Communities (NTLC) can help new teachers and their social and emotional learning (Flushman et al., 2021). They defined SEL as the “development of competencies related to the awareness and management of emotions and relationships as well as skills needed to address challenges through problem solving” (p. 85). This study was organized between a teacher preparation program (TPP) at a local university and a local K-12 school district on the West Coast. New teachers were invited to join the NTLC and they were given an interest survey. Twenty-seven teachers (15 elementary teachers, 5 secondary, and 7 special education) responded and those teachers were invited to join six sessions about SEL focus. Some topics of the sessions included activities to promote self-care, brainstorming,

sharing successes and challenges, sharing a google site with resources, social activities, and opportunities to co-teach.

Results from the surveys showed that new teachers scored an average of 4 (on a scale of 1-6) showing “a consistently high level of agreement” (p. 92) to feeling connected, comfortable, and supported in the NTLC. The teachers gave the highest score (5.84 out of 6) to the following statement “The NTLC is a supportive space for new teachers” (p. 93). All new teachers from this study were also invited to be interviewed and 13 of the 27 participated. The following common themes were found as a result of this study: teachers felt a sense of belonging while building relationships and practicing communications, they felt they were supported with making decisions and solving problems. These new teachers were given a community to support their social and emotional learning which contributed to their overall wellbeing and helped manage teacher stress and avoid burnout.

### *Self-care*

The second component to support teacher wellbeing is self-care (Baumgartner & Anderson, 2022; Benson, 2018; Lesh, 2020). Benson (2018) explained that teachers need to focus on self-care because teachers report feeling “like sponges, all day soaking in our students' emotions” (p. 41). Some of the suggested strategies for implementing self-care included working with experienced teachers, reaching out for support from other professionals, and giving teachers a safe and private space to talk.

Baumgartner and Anderson (2022) created the self-care problem solving pathway to help teachers manage stress by focusing on self-care. This pathway is arranged by a series of seven questions: what is the problem, how does the problem make me feel, how do I handle my

feelings, what is stopping me (i.e. external concerns and/or internal feelings), how do I move forward, what supports do I have (i.e. emotional, skills or information, people), and how do I build self-care into decision making? Authors created this pathway to help early childhood teachers practice self-care to support their overall wellbeing.

Similarly, a list of ten self-care strategies was compiled for teachers because “the demand for self-awareness of well-being and mindfulness is magnified” (Lesh, 2020, p. 367). Some of the suggestions included gratitude journaling, reflecting, exercise and proper diet, spending time with family and pets, celebrating accomplishments, and creating a plan to manage stress. Another self-care suggestion was finding a trusting co-worker because “having someone in your profession who understands your day-to-day procedures is key to being able to decompress and let go” (p. 368). The final suggestion was to continue pedagogical improvement (keep reading and attending professional development). These are all examples of implementing self-care to support teacher wellbeing.

### ***Resilience***

The third component to teacher wellbeing is resilience (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Park et al., 2020). Park et al. (2020) conducted a study with 466 childcare teachers in South Korea. First, participants completed a questionnaire about self-care, social support in the workplace, and resilience. Results showed an average score of 2.69 out of 4 for self-care, 2.94 out of 4 for social support, and 2.82 out of 3.5 for resilience. Further analysis was completed to see how self-care, social support, and resilience affect each other in teachers’ overall wellbeing. It was determined that teachers who felt resilient were more likely to engage in social support and had better self-care. Social support did not show to have a significant impact on teachers' reported self-care.

Upon experiencing the benefits of support among colleagues, childcare teachers will be more engaged in supportive relationships at the daycare center and strengthen their ability to bounce back from stressful and challenging adversities, which will thus let them manage their professional life effectively and take care of their personal wellness. (p. 9)

The results of this study show how resilience in teachers can contribute to their overall wellbeing.

Ten teachers from three different schools in South Australia were interviewed and asked them to share how they bounced back from stressful situations at work (Howard & Johnson, 2004).

Resilience was found to be an overall theme between the teachers and was shown through three protective factors (i.e., agency, a strong support group, and competence and a sense of achievement). First, it was found that resilient teachers had “a strong sense of their own agency” (p. 411). The authors explained agency as not taking things personally and having a strong “moral purpose” (p. 410). Teachers said it helped to move on from stressful teaching situations when they reflected on the situation and either decided they handled it appropriately or decided they did not handle it appropriately and thought of how they can handle the challenge and persevere in the future.

The second protective factor that was consistent between the teachers was a strong support group. Howard and Johnson (2004) explained that “resilient individuals have strong connections with others and know that there are people who care about what happens to them” (p. 412). Teachers reported feeling supported from family, friends, co-workers, principals, and counselors. They also said they felt supported when there were systems in place to help during urgent situations. The third protective factor was competence and a sense of achievement. This was

defined as “pride in achievement and a sense of one’s own competence in areas of personal importance or significance” (p. 413). These protective factors were thought to help teachers practice resiliency and this contributed to their overall wellbeing.

### ***Teacher Efficacy***

The fourth component to teacher wellbeing is teacher efficacy (Chung, 2019; García-Lázaro et al., 2022). García-Lázaro et al. (2022) conducted a study in Spain with 390 preservice teachers in their last year of undergraduate school. Preservice teachers completed pre and post scales online called The Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale related to Teacher Competencies I and II. During the study, researchers and preservice teachers discussed what impacts their self-efficacy. Results from the study showed that “social demands from pupils and schools presented changes in perceived self-efficacy of PSTs, affecting their emotional states and job satisfaction, and can impact the rates of teachers dropping” (p. 11). Chung (2019) asked teachers in 25 schools in Korea to complete a survey concerning teacher efficacy, collective self-esteem, organizational commitment, and social support. The results from 212 surveys found that teachers reported that social support from coworkers and supervisors positively impacted teacher efficacy, and with higher teacher efficacy came greater organizational commitment. Findings from these studies showed the significance of teacher efficacy and the important role it plays in overall teacher wellbeing. It also shows the relationship between teacher efficacy and social support. If teachers felt social support, they reported feeling more effective about their teaching.

### ***Social Support***

The fifth component to teacher wellbeing is social support (Chung, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Chung (2019) defined social support as “coworker support, which was in the

form of similarity, intimacy, and cooperation, and supervisor support” (p. 8). Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) organized a study in Norway with 2,569 teachers in 127 elementary and middle schools. Participants in this study were given 60 minutes to complete a questionnaire regarding “the relations between teachers’ perceptions of six school context variables and their feeling of belonging, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and motivation to leave the teaching profession” (p. 1036). Responses from teachers showed that they felt a sense of belonging when they had supporting relationships with their co-workers. It was then found that when teachers felt they belonged in their school community it positively correlated with their job satisfaction. The last connection showed that when teachers were satisfied with their jobs, they were less likely to leave the field of teaching. This study revealed the importance of social support in a teachers’ overall wellbeing. Teachers need social support to feel like they belong, and when they do, they are more satisfied with their jobs and less likely to leave teaching.

In order to manage teacher stress and avoid teacher burnout, support systems that promote wellbeing must be in place. If these stressors continue, burnout will continue, and teachers will keep leaving the field. Research has shown that teachers report they are the most satisfied and happy in their jobs when their overall wellbeing is prioritized. This literature review has provided evidence that the following key components are essential to teachers’ overall wellbeing: social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support. This research also suggests that when teachers are happy, they are better teachers and better co-workers and more likely to remain in their careers as teachers, so it is critical to support teachers and promote teacher wellbeing. Districts are recognizing the need to provide additional support for teachers, and they are providing various types of professional development to meet the needs

of their educators. One context for using social support to promote wellbeing is Teacher Book Studies.

### **Professional Development and Book Studies**

In order to promote and support teacher wellbeing, Strafford-Brizard (2021) suggested to “provide opportunities for staff and educators to reconnect, heal, and feel safe and supported” (p. 85). Promoting teacher wellbeing through professional development will allow teachers to learn the key components to their wellbeing to help them manage teacher stress and avoid burnout.

When creating a professional development to address teacher wellbeing, it is important to consider the factors of effective and ineffective professional development (Bautista & Wong, 2019; Guskey, 2003). Bautista and Wong (2019) conducted a study with preservice and practicing music teachers in Singapore to understand what characteristics they felt were less effective in professional development. During this study, 12 preservice teachers participated in discussions and 98 primary music specialists completed surveys. Based on information collected in the study, teachers found professional development to be least effective when it was brief and infrequent, was with teachers and/or facilitators they didn’t know in settings they were unfamiliar with, and was less-collaborative. These characteristics of PD led teachers to feel less positive about the PD topics. Therefore, a book study PD for teacher wellbeing should avoid being brief and infrequent, with unfamiliar staff and in unfamiliar settings, and be less-collaborative (Bautista and Wong, 2019).

Guskey (2003) said that effective PD for teachers “must be well organized, carefully structured, and purposefully directed” (p. 749). Teachers value PD that gives them time to work, share, and learn with their colleagues (Guskey, 2003). Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) explained that effective PD should occur over 6 to 12 months, build “strong working relationships among

teachers” (p. 44), and give teachers the opportunity to discuss the everyday struggles of teaching. To get the most from PD, it is suggested that teachers participate in at least 30 hours of study in a specific area (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Svendsen 2020). Researchers also encouraged teachers to take part in PD by preparing to share ideas to help with learning and growing (Ajani, 2019; Schlesinger, 2017). Ajani (2019) explained that PD is effective when teacher needs are assessed, the PD is interactive, teachers problem solve, and provide feedback. It is important to consider these research-based strategies when planning effective PD to promote wellbeing for teachers.

### ***Book Studies as Professional Development***

Book studies as professional development foster teachers' sense of belonging, which contributes to their overall wellbeing. Book studies provide teachers a space to share, learn, and problem solve with their co-workers. Smith and Galbraith (2011) explained that book studies are “simple, inexpensive tools for professional development that may be more effective than traditional training methods” (p. 170). Staff at The Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University have used book studies for professional development and the feedback from the PD showed that staff appreciated the conversations and preferred book studies over other PD styles.

Goldberg and Pesko (2000) asked 13 elementary and high school staff in four districts about their experience in a professional book study. When teachers first met, they discussed personal and professional reading interests, and decided on four book titles. Members in the group met monthly to discuss the books and it was found that staff said they were feeling more positive and motivated as a result of participating in the book study. Staff also said the book study gave them “opportunities to engage in deep conversations, to layer personal experiences with literacy learning, and to probe instructional issues on an extended basis” (p. 41). These

professionals have reported enjoying and preferring book studies as a form of effective professional development.

Comparably, Burbank et al. (2010) worked with 24 student teachers and 12 practicing teachers in a year-long program and examined the use of book clubs as professional development with each group. Feedback was provided through interviews, discussions, written responses, exit slips, and surveys. Both groups reported that book studies as PD gave them “opportunities to think about and reflect on current practice; a vehicle for increasing teacher dialogue, both within and across school sites; and as a platform to discuss pressing, professional issues in a nonthreatening way” (p. 63). Both groups also felt that the book study was most effective when it was structured, asked specific questions, many group members shared, and there was time for conversation and feedback.

In 2020, Blanton et al. conducted a study in rural East Tennessee with 28 teachers. Teachers participated in ten book studies over four years. In the first two studies, coaches selected books for teachers to read. A supervisor chose the next two books, and the rest were chosen by teachers from a list of recommendations. Participants joined voluntarily and were able to choose the books they wanted to read. Participants in each book study met in person three times and completed one online activity. Interviews and blog entries were collected from the book study to gain insight into teachers' perceptions of book studies as professional development. Teachers said they felt it was important to be able to choose their own book, said they felt they were able to get more from the book studies when they were prepared, and everyone equally participated. Teachers noticed and appreciated that the facilitator participated and led conversations but did not dominate and provided a comfortable environment for sharing between teachers. Overall, teachers “believed that the book study groups provided professional

development that met their needs in more powerful ways than traditional professional development” (p. 1014). Findings from this research support book studies being a form of professional development.

Book studies are a form of professional development that provides teachers social support through relationships with their co-workers, factors known to support teacher wellbeing (Chung, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Organizing and providing a book study to promote teacher wellbeing would allow teachers to learn the components of wellbeing (i.e., social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support) that help teachers manage stress and avoid burnout.

### ***Frameworks for Teacher Book Studies***

Researchers (Burbank et al., 2010; Guskey, 2003) have shared the importance of using structure when implementing book studies as professional development. The Florida Department of Education (n.d.) explained “what sets an effective book study apart from an ineffective one lies in both the initial planning of the book study itself and the utilization of the knowledge, skills, and practices acquired” (Directions for Using this Guide section, para. 1). The United Federation of Teachers (n.d.) said a “book study can be a powerful way for educators to drive their own learning” (p. 3). Suggested frameworks for creating a book study are *PLC Book Study Guide* (FLDOE, n.d) and *Professional Book Study* (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.).

The Florida Department of Education (n.d.) shared three phases for planning and implementing a book study. The first phase is **Planning the Work**. FLDOE explained that adult learners appreciate professional development that is “grounded in and connected to solving real-world issues” (Phase 1: **Planning the Work** section). The four steps included in **Planning the**

**Work** phase are to build your learning team, select books and create goals for the study, establish group norms, and plan the reading. The second phase is **Working the Plan: Protocols for Discussion Groups Meetings**, and there are six group learning protocol suggestions: top 10 list, round robin, silent webbing, Q and A, expense account, affinity map. The third phase is the **Future**. Suggestions are to plan meeting times regularly during the school day, rotate responsibility so leadership is shared, and share resources and learnings with others. This guide also includes resources for creating synergy through group norming, a book study during reading guide, and a book discussion guide. These three phases and resources can be used to create an effective book study that promotes teacher wellbeing.

The Professional Book Study (UFT, n.d.) listed several responsibilities of book study creators: know how to create and maintain the book study, determine structures for the study, assign roles within the group, establish norms, plan tools and note taking for group discussions, and select protocols. Study structures to consider are chapter by chapter, independent reading, application, and protocols. This book study includes protocol resources and explanations for using text-rendering, the final word, the wagon wheel, and levels of text. The suggested roles for the group include the facilitator, recorder, reflector, and time keeper. The framework created by UFT can be used to plan an effective book study that promotes teacher wellbeing.

While there's a strong body of evidence to support the development of teacher wellbeing, not everyone is in agreement. Tyner (2021) explained that some feel that focusing on social and emotional learning will take away from academics. Another opposing view says that some are protesting social emotional learning and one reason is because it is believed to be connected to critical race theory (Anderson, 2022). Similarly, "SEL, particularly for teachers, is simply not a feasible spending priority for many districts (Lobosco, 2021 as cited in Isbell and Miller, 2023).

In conclusion, it is important to consider the agreeing and opposing views to professional development that promotes teacher wellbeing.

### **Conclusion**

This review of literature explains that teachers experience high levels of stress from high stakes testing, student behavior and discipline, and problems with parent-teacher relationships (Collie et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; von der Embse et al., 2015). If teacher stress is not managed, it will eventually lead to teacher burnout (Cheng et al., 2021; Turner et al., 2021). In order for teachers to manage teacher stress and avoid teacher burnout, teacher wellbeing and its components (i.e., social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support) must be prioritized and promoted. Lesh (2020) suggested that teachers focus on the wellbeing component (self-care) by continuing pedagogical improvement through reading and attending professional development. This curriculum development project will be based upon the effective professional development strategies explained in the literature review along with book study frameworks to create a book study for teachers to promote wellbeing. A book study PD will address self-care with continued pedagogical improvement (Lesh, 2020) and provide social support for teachers to manage stress and avoid burnout. Wellbeing factors will be learned and discussed throughout the book study.

### **SECTION THREE**

This chapter is the theoretical framework for my professional development book study to promote teacher wellbeing. This book study was created based on PLC Book Study Guide (FLDOE, n.d) and Professional Book Study (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.). Information from both resources were referenced when creating this curriculum development book study to promote teacher wellbeing. I chose this project because reading is a hobby of mine, I have enjoyed

participating in personal and professional book studies, it is considered an effective form of professional development, and staff have reported enjoying book studies as forms of professional development (FLDOE, n.d.; Smith & Galbraith, 2011).

For the purpose of this project, wellbeing is defined as social and emotional, mental, physical, and psychological health (Miekle, 2022; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022; Van der Vyver et al., 2020). The following six components of wellbeing were explained in Chapter 2: social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support (Chung, 2019; García-Lázaro et al., 2022; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Miekle, 2022; Roffey, 2012; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Park et al., 2020; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022). This project focuses on providing social support to teachers to contribute to their overall wellbeing.

Social support is defined as coworker support, “in the form of similarity, intimacy, and cooperation, and supervisor support” (Chung, 2019, p. 8). Teachers need social support to feel like they belong, and it has been reported that when they do have social support, they are more satisfied with their jobs and less likely to leave teaching (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2011). The following frameworks were used to guide planning and implementation of the book study to promote teacher wellbeing.

### **Frameworks**

This curriculum development book study was created based on the PLC Book Study Guide created by The Florida Department of Education (n.d.) and Professional Book Study created by The UFT Teacher Center (n.d.). These book study frameworks are referenced because they consider planning professional development for adults rather than book studies in the classroom for children. They also provide suggested roles for book studies, protocols, discussion

guides, and resources for teachers to use while they are reading and participating in the book study. The selected resources are organized and structured, which are considered effective professional development characteristics for teachers (Guskey, 2003).

In comparison, *The Professional Book Study* (Duval County Public Schools, n.d.) and *How to Plan an AWESOME Book Study* (Bell, 2022) were reviewed, although not selected for a resource for this project because they were more vague and did not include the resources for teachers to use while reading. In order to promote and support teacher wellbeing, Strafford-Brizard (2021) suggested to “provide opportunities for staff and educators to reconnect, heal, and feel safe and supported” (p. 85). Promoting teacher wellbeing through professional development will allow teachers to learn components to their wellbeing to help them manage teacher stress and avoid burnout.

### **Criteria**

Wellbeing is the focus of this curriculum development. This topic is important to me personally because I have experienced burnout in my career and I want to prioritize my wellbeing. As a teacher, I am not alone, so I want to develop a project that benefits my colleagues as well. I am on the professional development committee at my school and know that teachers are asking for professional development opportunities that support teacher self-care and social support. A book study PD will address self-care with continued pedagogical improvement (Lesh, 2020) and provide social support for teachers to manage stress and avoid burnout.

Teachers will be able to participate in the book study and learn the components of wellbeing.

The first step in planning for the book study was researching books on wellbeing for teachers. I decided to find several books about wellbeing so that teachers could choose the book that best fits their needs. The PLC Book Study Guide (FLDOE, n.d) suggested “If possible, offer

several book options for the group to choose from” (Phase 1: **Planning the Work** section).

Based on the suggestion of FLDOE (n.d.) I searched books about teacher wellbeing and chose the following books to review for the book study: *A Practical Guide to Teacher Wellbeing* by Elizabeth Holmes, *Don't Just Survive, Thrive* by Sarajane Herrboldt, *For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers* by Peter Mishler, *Healthy Teachers, Happy Classrooms* by Marcia L. Tate, *Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers* by Daniel Tricarico, *Supporting Teacher Wellbeing: A Practical Guide for Primary Teachers and School Leaders* by Suzanne Allies, *The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care* by Sarah Forst, and *180 Days of Self-care for Busy Educators* by Tina H. Boogren.

While reviewing books about wellbeing for the book study, I decided that books that would have the most impact for the book study should cover at least four of the five components of wellbeing discussed in section two. The five wellbeing components include social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support (García-Lázaro et. al., 2022; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Mickle, 2022; Roffey, 2012; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Park et al., 2020; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022). I also decided that the books should be written by people with experience in education and should be published no earlier than 2020. Books written since the pandemic will provide the most up-to-date and relevant information for teachers.

**Table 1**

*Book Selections*

<b>Book title</b>	<b>Wellbeing Components</b>					<b>Year published</b>	<b>Author</b>
	<i>Social and Emotional Learning</i>	<i>Self-care</i>	<i>Resilience</i>	<i>Teacher Efficacy</i>	<i>Social Support</i>		
<i>A Practical Guide to Teacher Wellbeing</i>	Yes	Yes			Yes	2019	Elizabeth Holmes
<i>Don't Just Survive, Thrive</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2021	Sarajane Herrboldt
<i>For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2021	Peter Mishler
<i>Healthy Teachers, Happy Classrooms</i>	Yes	Yes			Yes	2022	Marcia L. Tate
<i>Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	2018	Daniel Tricarico

<i>Supporting Teacher Wellbeing</i>		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2021	Suzanne Allies
<i>The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care</i>	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	2020	Sarah Forst
<i>180 Days of Self-care for Busy Educators</i>	Yes					2020	Tina H. Boogren

I created the table above to review the list of eight books about teacher wellbeing (see **Table 1: Book Selections**) and decided on the following book choices for the book study professional development to promote teacher wellbeing: *Don't Just Survive, Thrive* by Sarajane Herrboldt, *For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers* by Peter Mishler, *Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers* by Daniel Tricarico, and *Supporting Teacher Wellbeing* by Suzanne Allies, and *The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care* by Sarah Forst. All of the selected books are highlighted in green in **Table 1: Book Selections**. Each book addresses at least four of the wellbeing components shared in Chapter 2 and were written by educators. Three of the four books selected for the book study were written after 2020. *Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers* by Daniel Tricarico was published in 2018, although I decided to keep this book as an option for teachers because it does meet the other criteria. This book addresses four of the wellbeing components, it was written by an educator, the short chapters are very manageable for teachers' busy schedules, and there are journal activities with each short chapter. This is great self-care for teachers to implement during the book study. This

list of books will be shared with teachers so they can choose a book to read that best fits their needs. The conversation and social support in the book study will allow teachers to learn all the components of wellbeing, even if they are not covered in the book they are reading.

The following books were not selected for the book study *A Practical Guide to Teacher Wellbeing* by Elizabeth Holmes, *Healthy Teachers, Happy Classrooms* by Marcia L. Tate, and *180 Days of Self-care for Busy Educators* by Tina H. Boogren. *A Practice Guide to Teacher Wellbeing* was written by an educator however it did not meet the criteria for the book study because it was published in 2019 and it only addressed three wellbeing components (social and emotional learning, self-care, and social support). *Healthy Teachers, Happy Classrooms* by Marcia L. Tate was written by an educator and was published in 2022, although was not selected as an option for the book study because it only addressed three wellbeing components (social and emotional learning, self-care, and social support). *180 Days of Self-care for Busy Educators* by Tina H. Boogren was not selected for the book study because it focused primarily on self-care, which is only one of the five components of wellbeing from Chapter 2. Even though this book was written by an educator and published in 2022, I felt it did not meet the criteria for this book study.

**Phases 1, 2, and 3** from PLC Book Study Guide created by The Florida Department of Education (n.d.) addressed in section four outline the professional development book study to promote wellbeing. **Phase 1 is Planning the Work** and includes these four steps: build your learning team, select books and create goals for the study, establish group norms, and plan the reading. To build the learning team for this professional development book study, teachers will be invited to voluntarily participate in this book study to promote teacher wellbeing.

According to PLC Book Study Guide, “the desired size of a study group can range from 2 to 10 people but a suggested size is 3-5 educators who are able to reflect upon and adapt their practice as needed” (Directions for Using this Guide section). Therefore, the minimum size for this professional development book study is 2 participants and the maximum number of participants for this book study is 10. If there are more than 10 interested participants, the first 10 participants will be invited to participate in the professional development book study and those who were not able to participate will be invited to participate in another round of this professional development. Notes from the book study can be shared with other staff to encourage promoting teacher wellbeing. PLC Book Study Guide explains that administrator participation is considered productive practice, for this reason, administrators will be invited to voluntarily participate in the book study. The other steps of **Phase 1**, select books, create goals, establish group norms, and plan the reading will take place during Meeting 1, which is further explained in Chapter 4. Group roles from Professional Book Study (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) are also incorporated into Meeting 1 of the professional development book study.

**Phase 2 Working the Plan: Protocols for Discussion Groups Meetings** includes six group learning protocol suggestions. These protocol suggestions from FDOE (n.d.) along with discussion and protocols from Professional Book Study (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) are included in Meetings 2, 3, and 4 for the book study to promote teacher wellbeing and are further explained in Chapter 4. **Phase 3** is the **Future** and includes suggestions to plan meeting times regularly during the school day, rotate responsibility so leadership is shared, and share resources and learnings with others. **Phase 3** is incorporated throughout Meetings 1, 2, 3, and 4 in the professional development book study.



# Promoting Teacher Wellbeing

*A Book Study*

Katy Cooper

2023

## Introduction to the Curriculum

Welcome to this Professional Development Book Study to promote teacher wellbeing! This curriculum is organized into 4 meetings and takes place over 6 months. Resources from Professional Book Study (FLDOE, n.d.) and PLC Book Study (The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) were used when creating this curriculum.

In this book study, teachers are invited to voluntarily participate to learn components of wellbeing that they can immediately implement in their personal and professional lives.

Wellbeing components focused on in this book study:

- Social and emotional learning
- Self-care
- Resilience
- Teacher efficacy
- Social support

This book study provides social support for teachers, giving them a safe space to relate to and learn from their co-workers. The goal for this curriculum is to help teachers prioritize themselves by learning ways to cope with teacher stress and avoid burnout.

The following 5 books are pre-selected for the book study based on their explanation of the wellbeing components.

- *Don't Just Survive, THRIVE* by Sarahjane Herrboldt
- *For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers* by Peter Mishler
- *Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers* by Daniel Tricarico
- *Supporting Teacher Wellbeing: A Practical Guide for Primary Teachers and School Leaders* by Suzanne Allies
- *The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care* by Sarah Forst

Consider using the **Book Study Invitation** in the Resources section of the curriculum to invite teachers to the book study. In order to have the most effective book study, the maximum number of participants per session is 10. Once you have participants, be sure to share and set a time, date, and location for your first meeting. Happy reading!

## Meeting 1

### Phase 1: Planning the Work

#### Select a book and create goals for the book study

1. Share the 5 pre-selected books with the group
  - *Don't Just Survive, THRIVE* by Sarahjane Herrboldt
  - *For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers* by Peter Mishler
  - *Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers* by Daniel Tricarico
  - *Supporting Teacher Wellbeing: A Practical Guide for Primary Teachers and School Leaders* by Suzanne Allies
  - *The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care* by Sarah Forst
2. Discuss group goals
  - a. What are our “big picture” goals for this study group?
    - i. Discuss wellbeing: Wellbeing can be defined as social and emotional, mental, physical, and psychological health (Miekle, 2022; Pagiriene & Ramanauskiene, 2021; Spilt et al., 2011; Squires et al., 2022; Van der Vyver et al., 2020)
    - ii. Discuss components of wellbeing:
      1. Social and emotional learning: “wide range of competencies from emotional intelligence to social competence to self-regulation” (Jones et al., 2013, p. 62)
      2. Self-care: Some of the suggested strategies for implementing self-care included working with experienced teachers, reaching out for support from other professionals, and giving teachers a safe and private space to talk.
      3. Teacher efficacy: Results from a study conducted by Chung (2019) found that teachers reported that social support from coworkers and supervisors positively impacted teacher efficacy, and with higher teacher efficacy came greater organizational commitment.
      4. Resilience: “resilient individuals have strong connections with others and know that there are people who care about what happens to them” (Howard & Johnson, 2004, p. 412)
      5. Social support: Chung (2019) defined social support as “coworker support, which was in the form of similarity, intimacy, and cooperation, and supervisor support” (p. 8)

iii. Share **Table 4: Notes for Wellbeing Components** in Resources section to encourage teachers to record examples of wellbeing during reading and discussion.

3. Discuss individual goals

b. Teachers think to themselves, write to themselves, or share with others. Individually, what do you hope to learn from this book study?

#### **Establish group norms**

1. Review **Establishing Norms** (The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) in Resources
2. Complete **Creating Synergy Through Group Norming** (FLDOE, n.d.) in Resources
3. Establish group roles (The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.)
  - a. Review **Roles** in Resources and decide roles for the book study members (facilitator, recorder, reflector, and time keeper) and decide if roles will stay the same throughout the book study or adjust as needed.

#### **Plan the reading**

1. Discuss meeting location, date, and times for Meetings 2, 3, and 4 and review expected readings for Meeting 2 (on the next page)
2. Share **Reading Guide** in Resources with teachers to complete during reading
3. Encourage teachers to bring books and reading guide to each meeting to be ready to participate in discussion
4. Teachers should take note of particular parts of their reading that stand out to them to be prepared for discussion at Meeting 2

**Table 2**

*Readings for Meeting 2*

Book title	Monthly Readings					
	Read for Meeting 2		Read for Meeting 3		Read for Meeting 4	
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
<i>Don't Just Survive, Thrive</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	
<i>For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers</i>	50 pages		50 pages		50 pages	
<i>Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers</i>	Sanctuaries	Mindfulness and Meditation	The Five S's	Self-Care	Resilience	What's Next
<i>Supporting Teacher Wellbeing</i>	Chapter 1 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 2 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 3 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 4 Part 1 and 2	Chapters 5 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 6 Part 1 and 2
<i>The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	

## Meeting 2

Phase 2: Working the Plan: Protocols for Discussion Group Meetings

### Group Norms

1. Review group norms created during Meeting 1
2. Review group goals and individual goals discussed in Meeting 1

### Protocol

1. Encourage teachers to refer to their books and reading guides during discussion for optimal learning
2. Recorder should take notes during the meeting to share with staff
3. Implement **Three Levels of Text** Protocol (The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) found in Resources

### Next Steps

1. Discuss meeting location, date, and times for Meetings 3 and 4 and review expected readings for Meeting 3 (on the next page)
2. Share **Reading Guide** in Resources with teachers to complete during reading
3. Encourage teachers to bring books and reading guide to each meeting to be ready to participate in discussion
4. Teachers should take note of facts, opinions, and points during their reading to be prepared for discussion at Meeting 3

**Table 3**

*Readings for Meeting 3*

Book title	Monthly Readings					
	Read for Meeting 2		Read for Meeting 3		Read for Meeting 4	
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
<i>Don't Just Survive, Thrive</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	
<i>For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers</i>	50 pags		50 pages		50 pages	
<i>Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers</i>	Sanctuaries	Mindfulness and Meditation	The Five S's	Self-Care	Resilience	What's Next
<i>Supporting Teacher Wellbeing</i>	Chapter 1 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 2 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 3 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 4 Part 1 and 2	Chapters 5 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 6 Part 1 and 2
<i>The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	

### Meeting 3

Phase 2: Working the Plan: Protocols for Discussion Group Meetings

#### Group Norms

1. Review group norms created during Meeting 1
2. Review group goals and individual goals discussed in Meeting 1

#### Protocol

1. Encourage teachers to refer to their books and reading guides during discussion for optimal learning
2. Recorder should take notes during the meeting to share with staff
3. Implement Adapted Top 10 List protocol (FLDOE, n.d.)
  - a. Set up: one note-taker at the board, and one appointed Coordinator to keep members on track. Other group members present with their notes.
  - b. Procedure:
    - i. Group members take turns sharing interesting facts, opinions, or points they learned from the assigned reading.
    - ii. Note-taker records as concisely as possible.
    - iii. Coordinator can allow discussion to occur, but prevents discussion from going too far off topic.
    - iv. When everyone is done sharing, the group evaluates their group's work and directs Note-taker to consolidate or eliminate notes.
    - v. Then the list is ranked from least important (10) or most important (1) of concepts from the reading. You could also consider narrowing the list into top 10 ideas that are common takeaways from the readings.
    - vi. A cleaned up version of the notes is made available to all group members.

#### Next Steps

1. Discuss meeting location, date, and times for Meeting 4 and review expected readings for Meeting 4 (on the next page)
2. Share **Reading Guide** in Resources with teachers to complete during reading
3. Encourage teachers to bring books and reading guide to each meeting to be ready to participate in discussion

4. Teachers should take note of what they've learned, realized, and/or now know during reading to be prepared for discussion at Meeting 4

**Table 4**

*Readings for Meeting 4*

Book title	Monthly Readings					
	Read for Meeting 2		Read for Meeting 3		Read for Meeting 4	
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
<i>Don't Just Survive, Thrive</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	
<i>For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers</i>	50 pages		50 pages		50 pages	
<i>Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers</i>	Sanctuaries	Mindfulness and Meditation	The Five S's	Self-Care	Resilience	What's Next
<i>Supporting Teacher Wellbeing</i>	Chapter 1 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 2 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 3 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 4 Part 1 and 2	Chapters 5 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 6 Part 1 and 2
<i>The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	

**Meeting 4**

## Phase 2: Working the Plan: Protocols for Discussion Group Meetings

**Group Norms**

1. Review group norms created during Meeting 1
2. Review group goals and individual goals discussed in Meeting 1

**Protocol**

1. Encourage teachers to refer to their books and reading guides during discussion for optimal learning
2. Recorder should take notes during the meeting to share with staff
3. Implement Adapted Round Robin protocol (FLDOE, n.d.)
  - a. Set up: entire group is seated in a circle, one Note-taker and one appointed Coordinator to keep members on track. Other group members are present with their notes.
  - b. Procedure:
    - i. One group member begins discussion with a statement that begins with “I learned,” “I realized,” or “I now know” and shared something from the assigned reading that appealed to them. Refrain from evaluative statements such as “I think,” “I feel,” “I believe.”
    - ii. When Group Member 1 is done, attention turns to his or her left. This member can either add on to GM 1’s statement, or begin a new statement of what he/she learned.
    - iii. Discussion continues in this fashion until every member has spoken at least twice.
    - iv. Group norms can determine if someone can “pass” one turn until later.
    - v. When discussion is concluded, Notetaker records a summary of the meeting in the group journal.

**Phase 3: The Future**

1. Evaluate team’s functioning- look back at group goals and individual goals from Meeting 1 and discuss progress
2. Recorder should share all notes taken during Meetings 1-4 with staff

## Book Study Invitation

**You're invited to participate in a book study to learn more about  
Teacher Wellbeing**



Feeling stressed? Feel like self-care sounds good, but aren't quite sure how to fit it into your already busy schedule? You aren't alone! Learn the components of wellbeing to implement in your personal and professional life!

- Social and emotional learning
- Self-care
- Resilience
- Teacher efficacy
- Social support

### Did you know?

- nearly 30% of teachers are reporting clinically significant levels of stress (Mankin et al., 2018)
- 58% of teachers that participated in a study said they considered leaving the field since the Pandemic (Minihan et al., 2022)
- Teaching is considered to be one of the most stressful careers (Jepsen & Forest, 2006)

### Thing to know

4. Meetings every other month
5. Choose the book you want to read
6. Maximum 10 participants

**Notes for Wellbeing Components**

Consider using a table or template like this as you are reading or sharing to record examples of each component of wellbeing. Think about what seems manageable for you to implement or keep this as a reference to come back to when you need it.

**Table 5**

*Notes for Wellbeing Components*

<p><b>Social and emotional learning</b></p> <p><i>“wide range of competencies from emotional intelligence to social competence to self-regulation” (Jones et al., 2013, p. 62)</i></p>	
<p><b>Self-care</b></p> <p><i>Some of the suggested strategies for implementing self-care included working with experienced teachers, reaching out for support from other professionals, and giving teachers a safe and private space to talk.</i></p>	
<p><b>Resilience</b></p> <p><i>“resilient individuals have strong connections with others and know that there are people who care about what happens to them” (Howard &amp; Johnson, 2004, p. 412)</i></p>	
<p><b>Teacher efficacy</b></p> <p><i>Results from a study conducted by Chung (2019) found that teachers reported that social support from coworkers and supervisors positively impacted teacher efficacy, and with higher teacher efficacy came greater organizational commitment.</i></p>	
<p><b>Social support</b></p> <p>Chung (2019) defined social support as “coworker support, which was in the form of similarity, intimacy, and cooperation, and supervisor support” (p. 8).</p>	

**Table 6**

*Monthly Reading Schedule*

Book title	Monthly Readings					
	Read for Meeting 2		Read for Meeting 3		Read for Meeting 4	
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
<i>Don't Just Survive, Thrive</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	
<i>For All You Do: Self-Care and Encouragement for Teachers</i>	50 pages		50 pages		50 pages	
<i>Sanctuaries Self-Care Secrets for Stressed-Out Teachers</i>	Sanctuaries	Mindfulness and Meditation	The Five S's	Self-Care	Resilience	What's Next
<i>Supporting Teacher Wellbeing</i>	Chapter 1 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 2 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 3 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 4 Part 1 and 2	Chapters 5 Part 1 and 2	Chapter 6 Part 1 and 2
<i>The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care</i>	Part 1		Part 2		Part 3	

## **Establishing Norms**

### Establishing Norms

Adapted from The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.

#### Norms

- Express the values of the team.
- Form a process to resolve conflict.
- Guide discussion of new ideas.
- Direct the flow of communication.
- Set limits on all team members.
- Define the roles of team members.
- Provide guidance for behavior of the team.
- Help the team to evaluate its performance.
- Support the needs of the team and the organization.

#### **Sample Norms:**

##### **It's okay to...**

- Ask questions.
- Say "I don't know."
- Disagree — as long as it is not an attack.
- Take the time to understand everyone's point of view.
- Come to consensus.
- Compliment team members on contributions.
- Recognize different strengths in different people.
- Learn from each other and the professional literature

(The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.)

## Creating Synergy Through Group Norming

### Creating Synergy Through Group Norming

Adapted from Florida Department of Education, n.d.

Answer the questions below to jumpstart your thinking about useful team norms that will bolster collaboration and productivity.

List five behaviors you value in others during team meetings.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

List five behaviors that are counterproductive during team meetings.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now that you've considered the positive and negative behaviors that impact collaboration and productivity, you can begin to create your team norms by working through the categories below. Your group may choose to select some of the norms suggested and/or create their own in the space provided.

What procedures will govern meeting attendance?

Examples:

*Each team member will commit to participate actively for the entire school year.*

*All members will arrive on time and stay for the entire meeting.*

*All members will refrain from scheduling other activities during meeting time.*

*We will start and end on time.*

What procedures will govern how we talk?

Examples:

*All members will join in the team's discussion.*

*Each member will listen attentively as others speak.*

*Our conversations will reflect our respect for and acceptance of one another.*

*We will disagree with ideas, not individuals.*

*We will keep our conversations confidential.*

What attitudes and behaviors do you expect from team members?

Examples:

*All team members will come prepared.*

*Team members will be "fully present", both mentally and physically.*

*Members will refrain from working on other things during the meeting.*

*Team members will maintain a positive attitude toward the work to be done.*

What rules will govern decision making?

Examples:

*We will reach decisions by consensus.*

*Conflicts and differences of opinion will be handled professionally and respectfully.*

What other expectations do we have for team members?

Examples:

*We will reach decisions by consensus.*

*Conflicts and differences of opinion will be handled professionally and respectfully.*

## **Roles**

### Book Study Roles

Adapted from Florida Department of Education, n.d.

#### **Facilitator:**

- Is a neutral observer whose primary task is to maintain an orderly discussion.
- Gathers information from participants in order to create discussion questions/topics.
- Is responsible for pre-and post-meeting logistics.
- Helps to focus group on the common task.

#### **Recorder:**

- Captures the discussion process using the participants' own words and phrases.
- Records decisions and tasks assigned to individuals.
- Provides a clear, legible record of all aspects of the meeting, which must be approved by the participants before becoming a permanent, public record.

#### **Reflector:**

- Analyzes the processes of the meeting (did the group follow established norms?).
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses of the process.
- Communicates how well the set agenda was followed.

#### **Time Keeper:**

- Reminds group of time limits set to tasks.
- Ensures the group adheres to starting and ending times.

(Florida Department of Education, n.d.)

**Reading Guide**

Reading Guide

Adapted from Florida Department of Education, n.d.

Book Title:

What I Learned	Chapter # Or Page #	How I can use it	Result	Modification?

### Three Levels of Text Protocol

#### Three Levels of Text Protocol

Adapted from The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.

#### Purpose

This protocol is designed to deepen the understanding of a text and explore implications for participants' work. It asks participants to respond to 3 levels of the text: literal (level 1), interpretation (level 2), and implications (level 3)

#### Facilitation

Stick to the time limits. Each round takes up to 5 minutes per person in a group. Emphasize the need to watch air time during the brief group response segment. Do 1-3 rounds. Can be used as a prelude to a text-based discussion or by itself.

#### Roles

Facilitator/timekeeper (who also participates); participants

#### Process

1. Sit in a circle and identify a facilitator/timekeeper.
2. If participants have not done so ahead of time, have them read the text and identify passages that they feel may have important implications for their work.
3. Do 1-3 rounds. A round consists of:
  - One person using up to 3 minutes to:
    - Level 1: Read aloud the passage she/he has selected
    - Level 2: Say what she/he thinks about the passage (interpretation, connection to past experiences, etc.)
    - Level 3: Say what she/he sees as the implications for her/his work.
  - The group responds (for a **total** of up to 2 minutes) to what has been said.
4. After all rounds have been completed, debrief the process.

(The UFT Teacher Center, n.d.)

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## SECTION FIVE

### Research Question

At the start of this capstone project, I thought, how can a book study be used to support strategies for teacher wellbeing? First, I researched components of wellbeing and found: social and emotional learning, self-care, resilience, self-efficacy, and social support. Then, I researched effective and preferred forms of professional development and determined that a professional development book study would support one of the found components of wellbeing, social support. I decided that it was important for teachers to have choice in the book they are reading, so I previewed many books about teacher wellbeing and decided to compile a list of five books that address at least four of the five found components of teacher wellbeing. Finally, I created a book study to promote teacher wellbeing using the PLC Book Study Guide (FLDOE, n.d.) and Professional Book Study (UFT Teacher Center, n.d.) frameworks. Teacher leaders can implement this curriculum to help teachers manage stress and avoid teacher burnout.

### Curriculum Strengths and Weaknesses

The curriculum created includes many strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of this curriculum include, the books are pre-selected and readings are organized. This book study encourages collaboration among teachers, it is a relevant topic for teachers, and teachers can immediately implement strategies learned from readings or discussions. When teachers participate, they are already implementing two of the five found components of wellbeing: self-care and social support. Since the book study is voluntary, teachers won't feel obligated to participate if it feels like they are adding something additional to their already overwhelming workload. Finally, this curriculum requires few materials, just the books and papers for notes that can be shared in a hard copy or digitally.

In contrast, a weakness in the curriculum is that books are not already purchased and provided within the curriculum and teachers may feel like it is adding something to their already overwhelming workload. Teacher leaders wanting to implement this professional development book study will need to work with administrators, teachers, parent-teacher organizations, or libraries to borrow or purchase books for the book study. Another weakness to consider is, not all books selected for the book study cover all five found components of teacher wellbeing and it could be argued that there are other components of wellbeing that are not addressed in the books or discussion. Since teachers are invited to voluntarily participate in this book study, it could be considered a weakness because it's possible only one person would want to participate.

### **Next Steps and Future Research**

Next steps will be to implement the book study and ask for feedback from teachers during and after the book study to make changes for future book studies. Future research can include continuing to research new books about teacher wellbeing as they are published. Other components of teacher wellbeing can also be researched. Another idea is to survey teacher wellbeing before the book study, implement the book study, then survey teachers again after the book study to study effectiveness.

### **Dissemination and Implementation**

I am on the professional development committee at my school and I plan to share this with my committee to consider for implementation. I plan to share my found components of wellbeing with my co-workers and will share wellbeing books with teachers.

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