Beyond Burnout: Measuring Educator Well-being Research Report 2023

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EDUCATORS THRIVING

Measuring Educator Well-being

Executive Summary

"I appreciate the opportunity to share what we need for teacher well-being and hope that the conversation continues to support us so that we in turn can support others to thrive."
-AFT Member

The purpose of our research was to establish an updated, educator-generated definition of workplace well-being, and create a survey to measure that updated definition. In this report, we share our approach, the newly minted definition and survey, and preliminary findings from the pilot survey administered to 1,285 educators across the country. We close with recommendations for the future.

Our approach to survey development began and ended with educators. We suspended preconceived notions as to what educators would share and, ultimately, what factors and items would remain on our final scale. Our research methods – grounded theory coding approaches using data from 70+ hours of focus groups, and exploratory factor analysis of the resulting items – forced our team to constantly check potential biases and hypotheses about what matters most to educators' well-being.

That being said, we were surprised that a number of categories items dropped from our scale given their predominance in other measures of workplace or teacher well-being research. Some of these categories appear to be outcomes of, rather than factors influencing, educator well-being (e.g. efficacy with students, meaning, energy level, and JOY in the work). The factors that remain informed the definition of well-being that emerged, evolved, and eventually became the following:

Perceptions of educator well-being are defined by responsiveness and consistency of leadership, personal enthusiasm toward professional growth, acceptance and adaptability, and contributions to the well-being of self and others.

A huge thank you to the local leaders and members who joined us in this endeavor. The investment you put forth with students each day is already incredible; this contribution of time and perspective went above and beyond your professional calling. May the results of our shared effort be used to yield change that will let you rediscover and sustain joyful, impactful work for years to come.

The Problem

"I wish that it was clear to everyone in the US that when it comes to schools, working conditions are learning conditions." –AFT Member

In 20202, for the first time since the National Assessment of Education Progress began testing students in the 1970s, scores in math dropped and reading scores fell by the largest margin seen in 30 years (NAEP, 2022). At the same time, adolescent depression and anxiety have also been on the rise – the Center for Disease Control reported that in 2021, 45% of high schoolers felt so persistently sad and hopeless that they were unable to engage in regular activities (CDC, 2021). The pandemic has had devastating consequences on student development – both academically and socio-emotionally. And as schools and districts scramble for solutions, staff shortages – alarming before the pandemic began – are now at crisis levels. Educator burnout and attrition are rampant, and shortages only fuel the very real challenge of meeting student needs. As one AFT member said:

"We are everything to these kids, not just teaching academics, we are nurses, psychologists. Our well-being is just as important, because we wear a lot of hats."

Addressing these crises will take solutions at multiple levels – but all will require adults, in schools, who are able to reach their full professional potential. Given the critical link between student and teacher relationships, well-being, and outcomes (Harding et al., 2019), it is imperative that educational leaders tend to the well-being of staff so that they may tend to the well-being and learning of students.

Educator Well-being

There is abundant evidence as to why educators leave the profession (e.g. Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2019; Lancu et al., 2018). Until recently, however, there has been less attention paid to capture what facilitates educators' *well-being* and likelihood to stay in the profession (McCallum & Price, 2017; OECD, 2020).

And despite this growing interest in educator well-being, there remains a lack of consensus as to what constitutes educator well-being and how to measure it (Fox, 2021; Hascher & Weber, 2022; McCallum & Price, 2017; OECD, 2020). There is general agreement that educator well-being is a multidimensional construct (Hascher & Weber, 2022; McCallum & Price, 2017; OECD, 2020), but what factors are most critical to educators remains unanswered. Furthermore, definitions and tools that have been put forth have predominantly emerged from theoretical frameworks and not from educators themselves (e.g. Collie et al., 2015 & Renshaw et al., 2015).

Leaders, families, and educators themselves are calling for us to attend to the well-being of our educator workforce, but no consensus exists about what this means. Many of the solutions

suggested (yoga, mindfulness, etc.) alone are inadequate to meet the challenge. While some districts are in fact taking action, too few solutions address the systemic factors contributing to our current challenges.

Research Purpose and Overview of Project

Educators Thriving, in partnership with the AFT, sought to create a shared definition of well-being – and accompanying survey tool – *generated by educators*. To accomplish this, Educators Thriving led a series of focus groups with over 90 educators from across the country and collected over 70 hours of qualitative data. Using a grounded theory approach, we analyzed educator responses to develop a preliminary survey tool based on key themes from focus groups. Questions on the survey stem directly from the voices of focus group participants. Finally, Educators Thriving tested the survey with nearly 1,300 educators to identify key factors and trends related to well-being.

Phase 1: Survey Design

Research Design

Educators Thriving led an exploratory sequential mixed-methods research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Teddlie & Yu, 2007) to develop an educator-generated definition of well-being and subsequent survey. Mixed methods approaches are optimal for survey development as they capitalize on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2010). This exploratory sequential design began with the collection and analysis of qualitative data, followed by design of an instrument based on the qualitative results, and concluded with quantitatively testing the proposed instrument (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Methodology

Recruitment: Educators Thriving partnered with five union locals across the country to recruit members for a series of focus groups. Locals were selected to maximize geographic representation of AFT members and included ABC Federation of Teachers (CA), Nashua Teachers Union (NH), Toledo Federation of Teachers (OH), St. Tammany Federation of Teachers and School Employees (LA), and the Florida Education Association (FL).

To recruit participants, local AFT leaders sent standardized emails to all local union members (all members were eligible). The messaging offered participants $225 to share their perspectives on educator well-being. Prospective participants selected their preferred schedule for a series of three, 90-minute focus groups held on Zoom. They were informed that if selected, they would be paid the full stipend upon completion of all three sessions.

Focus Group Sample: 100 educators drawn from across 5 states were selected to participate in the three part focus group series. 92 of the selected educators attended the first focus group,

and 84 completed all three focus groups in the series (91% retention rate). Although a majority of participants were teachers, Educators Thriving heard from a variety of other school-based roles. See table 1 for demographic breakdown of focus group participants.

Table 1: Focus Group Participant Demographics		
Gender	84% Female 15% Male 1% Non-binary	
Race/Ethnicity	60% White or Caucasian 19% Spanish, Hispanic, or LatinX 12% Black or African American	2% Asian or Asian American 7% *Multiple reported 1% Prefer not to say
Role	76% Teacher 10% Paraeducator 5% Instructional Coach 3% Counselor	2% Speech Language Pathologist 1% Librarian 1% Secretary 1% Maintenance
Local	29% ABCFT 4% Florida Ed. Assoc. 32% Nashua Teachers Union	14% St Tammany 21%Toledo Federation of Teachers
Years of Experience	Avg experience = 16 years 9% 0-5 years 25% 6-10 years	26% 11-19 years 40% 20+ years

Data Collection

Educators Thriving hosted four rounds of focus groups with AFT members. Each of the online focus groups lasted 90 minutes, with group sizes of 4 to 9 participants. Verbatim notes were taken for the duration of all discussion. Notes were anonymized; sessions were not audio or video recorded.

Round 1: In the first round of focus groups, participants shared general perceptions of workplace well-being, described themselves and others when thriving on the job, identified visible signs of burnout, and explored key factors at play that influence educator well-being at their school sites.

Round 2: In the second round of focus groups, participants brought images that represent low and high well-being at work, and described the meaning behind the images to the group. Participants also offered reactions to a preliminary definition of educator well-being based on Focus Group 1 data:

Educator well-being is a dynamic interaction between an educator and their environment that includes feelings of balance, trust (to do the job), safety, efficacy (good at job), support (feedback, acknowledgment, resources), connection, positive emotions (presence, joy) and

motivation to engage in activities that contribute to well-being of self and others. At the end of the workday, a well educator enjoys a full life outside of work.

Further exploration of the emergent themes of trust, support, and appreciation during Focus Group 2 yielded insights around how key stakeholders can facilitate educator well-being.

Round 3: In the third round of focus groups, participants reviewed and ranked potential survey items, and selected which items they felt were most important to keep. Each group reviewed approximately 80 potential items; however, different groups reviewed different categories of survey items, given the breadth of potential items.

Round 4: In an optional fourth round of focus groups, 26 participants from across all five locals reviewed the first draft of the survey, which was consolidated based on feedback from rounds 1-3. These participants were compensated $75 for their time.

Overall, participants reported high satisfaction with their experience and felt "heard." Here is a sample of what they had to say about their participation:

- *"This was such a spectacular group to be a part of. I truly believe this will have an impact for our colleagues, and may even help set precedent for our future!"*
- *"This was one of the most meaningful things I have participated in in this career. I felt that everyone felt heard and as if their contribution was valued (and it did not just feel like another complaining fest, but had meaning and purpose to it). Hearing what my colleagues around the district had to say made me feel connected to them and appreciate all that they do as well."*
- *"Thank you all for allowing us to have a safe space to share our experiences working in a school setting. I feel like I was heard and it means so much."*
- *"The questions were excellent and the facilitators genuinely want to help us be supported and successful in our professions."*
- *"It is nice that other educators are creating a survey for educators and it is not being created by those not in the classroom."*

Qualitative Analysis

Grounded theory approaches require researchers to derive new theories or concepts based on the data rather than applying an existing theory or framework. Using this approach, we independently open coded the first round of focus group data. Then, we applied axial coding methods by grouping codes into a number of broader categories. To organize categories of codes, we compared independent open codes and participant data (quotes) and built consensus around a preliminary codebook. We applied the preliminary codebook to the focus group data sets (focus group 1 and 2). Minor adjustments were made to the codebook before being loaded into Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis software tool. Finally, we applied the codebook to data sets and used code frequency counts to explore trends across participants.

Item Generation

Following qualitative analysis, we developed a comprehensive list of potential survey items using a data matrix that displayed qualitative codes, sample quotes, and code frequency counts. Approximately 600 items were generated from this process. We reviewed items for redundancy, then organized categories of items into 7 short-surveys to share back with participants during Focus Group 3.

Participants took the survey in live-time and provided feedback on item relevance and clarity. We used participant feedback and preliminary survey responses to further refine the item list. A 120 item scale was shared with Focus Group 4 participants. Ultimately, we chose 84 of these items to pilot more broadly based on educator feedback. Items were selected to ensure a wide but relevant spread of categories related to teacher well-being.

Participants reported a positive experience taking the survey, and a sense of balanced feedback:
- *"Overall, I thought it was a fantastic survey... I was able to express my feelings and my professional opinion without being whiny or being a robot. It really was amazing."*
- *"I like how there are many opportunities to say something positive. I don't want to just say all the negatives, I also want to know what we're doing right."*
- *"If we can embed more questions like this [in our survey], it would be taken more seriously because it wouldn't just be seen as 'angry teachers.' This doesn't feel like you're going after somebody."*

Phase 2: Survey Pilot

Phase 2 of the project entailed piloting the educator-generated survey measure with a broader sample of AFT members. The purpose of this phase was to test preliminary reliability and validity of the scale, identify key scale factors and items, and to explore educator well-being trends across the nation.

Methodology

Procedures

To pilot the preliminary measure, Educators Thriving partnered with four locals to distribute a survey in Qualtrics. The locals included:

- St. Tammany Parish Federation of Teachers
- ABC Federation of Teachers
- Nashua Federation of Teachers
- Toledo Federation of Teachers

Members received a standard recruitment email with a Qualtrics link sent from local union presidents with the opportunity to earn $25 for their time (offered to the first 100 participants). The survey was also available to educators attending the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Conference. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Data Collection

The pilot survey included 84 items developed during Phase 1 of the research project (see Appendix D for the full list of pilot items). A number of other external scales were included in the survey as well for preliminary estimates of scale validity.

Job Satisfaction and Job Stress. Single item measures were used to estimate job satisfaction ("*Taking all things together, I am satisfied with my job*") and job stress ("*In general, how stressful do you find your job?*"). Responses were on a Likert scale from 1 to 10.

Physical and Mental Health. Single item measures were also used to estimate physical and mental health ("*In general, how would you rate your physical/mental health?*"). Response categories were on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

Burnout. Select items from the Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators were used to measure burnout, including levels of achievement and emotional exhaustion. Four items were selected from the achievement subscale (e.g., "*I have accomplished many worthwhile things while in this job*"). Two items were selected from the emotional exhaustion subscale (e.g., "*I feel emotionally drained from my work*"). Responses were on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (everyday).

Resilience. One item from the Connor Davidson Resilience scale was selected ("*Having to cope with stress can make me stronger*"). Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

School Connectedness. Three items from the Teacher Subjective Well-being Questionnaire (TSWQ) were selected for measurement. All three items were from the school connectedness subscale (e.g., "*I can really be myself at this school*"). Responses were on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

Subjective Well-being (Flourishing). Five items from the Flourishing scale were selected for measurement. Items asked about participants' subjective well-being in general (e.g., "*My social relationships are supportive and rewarding*"). Responses were on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Emotional Affect (SPANE). The full Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE) was administered. Participants identified the extent to which they generally feel 12 different emotions (e.g., *"good"* or *"angry"*). Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very rarely or never) to 5 (very often or always).

Demographics. Participants were asked to report their union local membership, their age, race/ethnicity, gender identity, grade level (PreK–5th, 6–8th, 9–12th), role (e.g., "teacher" or "paraeducator"), and years of experience. Additionally, we asked participants approximately how many students they serve, how many hours per week they are allocated to collaborate with colleagues, and the number of administrators at their school site. Email addresses were collected for those who wanted to be eligible for the participation stipends.

Sample

A total of 1,565 educators opened the survey link and 1,285 completed the full survey (see Table 2 for survey participant demographics).

Table 2: Pilot Survey Participant Demographics		
Gender	87% Female 11% Male	<1% Non-binary 1% Prefer not to say
Age	Avg = 45.2 years	
Race	1% American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native 4% Asian or Asian American 8% Black or African American 2% Multiple reported	>1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander 4% Other 3% Prefer not to say 78% White
Ethnicity	8% Latinx, Hispanic, or Spanish origin	
Role	75% Teacher 9% Paraeducator 9% Service provider	>1% Librarian >1% Secretary 6% Other
Local	24% St Tammany 18% ABCFT 22% Nashua Teachers Union 33%Toledo Federation of Teachers	1% NIEA Conference Attendee 2% Did not answer
Years of Experience	Avg = 17.1 years 12% 0-5 years 35% 6-15 years	32% 16-25 years 20% 25+ years

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted sequentially using R Studio 2 V 4.0.3 and SPSS 28.

Descriptive Analysis. After coding and cleaning the data, we explored descriptive statistics, including central tendencies, standard deviation, distribution, normality and response frequencies.

Reliability Analysis. Next, we explored internal reliability estimates of the full 84-item scale (and subsequently did so for the other scale models).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). EFA is used to discover potential factor structure of a scale and is particularly useful when there are no hypotheses about the nature of underlying factor structure, as was the case in this study. We used EFA (scree plots, parallel, principal component, and factor analysis) to identify potential factors within the pilot scale. We then compared various scale factor model fits using varimax and oblimin rotations, root mean square of the residuals (RMSR), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and Tucker Lewis Index (TLI). RMSEA values of less than or equal to .05 and .08 were considered evidence of good and adequate fit (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). TLI values of greater than .90 (adequate) or .95 (good) were also used as evidence of fit. Variance explained by each model was evaluated.

Evidence of External Validity (External Measures). We evaluated Pearson's correlations and regressions between the pilot scale and external measures to each version of the scale.

Evidence of External Validity (Demographics). We also explored the extent to which differences emerged between demographic characteristics including ethnicity (white compared to non-white), age, and tenure.

Quantitative Results

Preliminary Fit

The full 84-item scale was slightly negatively skewed (mean item score = 4.25 out of 6, SD = 1.22). See Appendix F for descriptive statistics for all items. The preliminary 84-item model had strong internal reliability (alpha = .97) and first round analysis suggested an 11 factor model fit was best. However, there were a number of cross-loading items, and model parameters suggested we could remove items to improve fit and create a more parsimonious scale with an improved model fit.

Model Improvement

Using parallel and factor analysis methods we explored various factor model fits while removing items (see Figure 1 and R-script for details) There were several rounds of comparing model fits (RMSR, RMSEA, TLI) as we reduced the number of items to capture the most variance in the

scale. We also removed items with problematic loadings (poor/cross-loadings on multiple factors).

The final version was a 7-factor model, and we retained 6 factors based on the loading threshold. Thus, our analysis suggests a 26-item 6-factor model using varimax rotation as the best overall fit for the well-being construct. Fits for each of these models were adequate, but the best fitting model was a 6-factor 26-item version of the survey.

Hypothesis testing further confirmed that 6 factors are sufficient. The Tucker Lewis Index of factoring reliability was strong (0.96) as was the RMSEA index (0.05; 90% CI 0.04 to 0.051) and RMSR (.01).

Figure 1: Scree Plot (Eigenvalues)
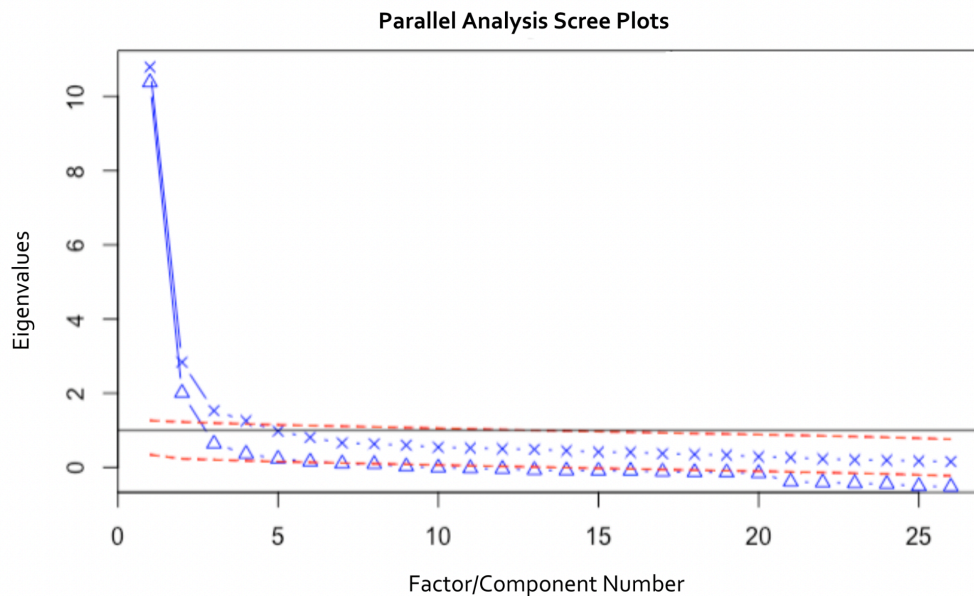
Mean item complexity on the 6-factor scale was 1.6. This model predicted 60% of the overall latent construct and had high (.93) correlations with the full 84-item scale and other abridged versions of the scale, suggesting that using more items did not contribute greatly to our understanding of educator well-being. See Table 3 for factor loadings and Table 4 for item loadings. Internal reliability of the 26-item scale remained high (alpha = .94). Internal reliability of the 6 subscales was also acceptable, even though some subscales had only 2 items (Table 3).

Table 3: Factor Loadings and Variance

	PA 1	PA 2	PA 3	PA 4	PA 5	PA 6	PA 7
SS Loadings	9.38	1.62	1.23	1.18	1.12	1.12	.31
Prop of Var	.36	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.01
Cum Var	.36	.42	.47	.52	.56	.60	.61
Alpha	.96	.73	.75	.69	.63	.70	–

Table 4: Item Loadings for Final 6-Factor Model
Factor loadings based on a principal components analysis with oblimin rotation for 26 items from the Pilot Educator Well-being Scale (n = 1,285)

Item	PA 1	PA 2	PA 3	PA 4	PA 5	PA 6
15: My administrator(s) takes my concerns seriously.	.89					
52: My administrator(s) works to unify staff.	.87					
70: I trust my administrator(s) to do the right thing for students.	.86					
18: My administrator(s) does what they say they will do.	.85					
13: My administrator(s) helps me problem-solve around student needs.	.84					
14: My administrator(s) asks me, "How can I help?"	.84					
27: My administrator(s) integrates others' input on meaningful issues.	.82					
59: My administrator's expectations of staff are consistent.	.81					
17: My administrator(s) responds to my requests directly.	.81					
53: My administrator(s) encourages staff to set healthy boundaries related to work.	.80					
55: The administrator(s) at my school is fair in their discipline processes and procedures with students.	.74					
69: My administrator(s) has told me that they trust me to do my job.	.65					
60: I get the relevant information I need in time to plan.	.64					
28: Staff at my school share their challenges without being judged.	.63					
16: I have the same opportunities to perform up to my full potential as others in my district.	.60					
44: I'm motivated to learn new things at work.		.69				
7: I embrace bringing new strategies into my practice/work.		.66				

81: I continually try to grow as an educator.	.64		
42: I know when not to take something personally at work.	.71		
43: When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed.	.67		
40: I engage in hobbies outside of school that energize me.		.79	
38: I am content with my life outside of work.		.59	
6: At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything.		.70	
24: I'm often so busy thinking about other things that I'm not able to enjoy the moment.		.57	
75: I generally view myself as even-keeled at work.			.68
74: I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.			.63

Evidence of External Validity (Measures)

Results also indicated that both the full 84-item and the 26-item, 6-factor scale had correlations in the expected direction with other external measures. The scale was significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction, mental and physical health, resilience, flourishing, school connectedness, and positive emotions. The scale was significantly negatively correlated with job stress, emotional exhaustion, and negative emotions (see Table 5). Importantly, correlations with external measures were strong, but not so high as to suggest significantly overlapping constructs.

Table 5: Correlations with External Measures											
	84	26	JS	PH	MH	St Cop	Fl	SC	PE	Stress	BO
84-item	–										
26-item	.93	–									
JS	.75	.66	–								
PH	.35	.30	-.33	–							
MH	.50	.44	-.43	.56	–						
St Cop	.35	.29	.47	.26	.32	–					
Fl	.50	.44	.41	.36	.49	.27	–				
SC	.69	.63	.56	.25	.30	.25	.45	–			
SPANE	.67	.60	.66	.42	.61	.57	.57	.51	–		
Stress	-.48	-.43	-.51	-.51	-.43	-.23	-.21	-.25	-.33	–	
BO	-.67	-.59	-.66	-.47	-.63	-.38	-.56	-.45	-.47	.57	–

Note. JS = job satisfaction; PH = physical health; MH = mental health; St Cop = stress coping; Fl = flourishing; SC = school connectedness; SPANE = Scale of Positive and Negative Experience; BO = burnout.

Regression analysis also indicated significant coefficients in the expected direction across all external measures (i.e., our 26-item scale significantly predicted job satisfaction; see Table 6). For example, a one unit increase in well-being is associated with, on average, an additional 1.39 on job satisfaction ($p < 0.001$).

Table 6: Regression Analysis

	JS	Fl	MH	PH	SC	St Cop	Job Str.	BO
Intercept	6.70***	6.00***	3.05***	3.16***	3.04***	3.13***	7.39***	3.37***
26 Item WB Scale	1.39***	0.34***	0.44***	0.28***	0.39***	0.28***	-0.89***	-0.56***
95% CI	[1.30, 1.48]	[0.30, 0.37]	[0.39, 0.49]	[0.23, 0.33]	[0.36, 0.41]	[0.23, 0.33]	[-0.99, -0.79]	[-0.61, -0.62]
R2	0.43	0.19	0.19	0.09	0.39	0.08	0.18	0.35

Note. ***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05. JS = job satisfaction; Fl = flourishing; MH = mental health; PH = physical health; SC = school connectedness; Job Str = job stress; St Cop = stress coping; BO = burnout.

Evidence of External Validity (Demographic Comparisons)

We analyzed participant racial identity and years of experience. To evaluate well-being by race, we collapsed participants into White and Non-white to compare the relationship between race and the full scale. No statistically significant differences emerged between white and non-white educators. However, there was a slight association between years of experience and overall well-being with more experienced educators reporting, on average, lower well-being than those with less experience (β = -0.007, p < 0.01).

Quantitative Analysis Summary

Preliminary analysis suggests the full 84-item scale was reliable, but due to the length and model fit issues, we refined the scale to create a shorter version that captures a significant amount of the larger 84-item scale variance. We identified an improved model fit with a 26-item, 6 factor scale that was a better fit conceptually and theoretically. The 6-factor model predicted 60% of the overall latent well-being construct and had high correlation with the original 84-item version, suggesting using more items doesn't contribute greatly to our understanding of educator well-being. Additionally, the 26-item scale was correlated in the expected directions with other, valid, external measures.

Integrated Results

Finally, we compared quantitative results to qualitative results to: 1) name the 6 factors and 2) revise our preliminary definition of educator well-being.

Factors

As previously detailed, we applied 75 codes to focus group data. These codes emerged from an open coding process and informed item generation. We then tested an 84-item scale without any preconceived hypotheses as to what factors would emerge within the scale. EFA analysis suggested

the best-fitting version of the scale included 6 factors and 26 items. We reviewed each factor for face validity (i.e., did the items make thematic sense together) and compared each set of items to the original data matrix (See Appendix C) containing qualitative codes, educator quotes, and initial items. This data matrix informed factor-naming.

Factor 1: Leadership & School Support. During focus groups, educators described high well-being when they had "responsive" administrators. This included clear communication, follow through, and a sense of appropriate and timely response to requests. Educators also felt strongly that morale setting – positivity and culture – is top-down. Multiple participants said they felt "well" when their administrator had specifically asked "how can I help?" and told them explicitly: "I trust you to do your job." In absence of responsive school leaders, educators felt anxious, frustrated, and even cynical towards their work. Members shared:

> "We had a principal that would pop into the classrooms, and say 'How are you? Do you need anything?' It was so nice to feel supported and know that you can ask."

> "[These questions] cover the whole admin process - Are you there? Do you listen to my question? Do you do something about my question? ...This offers a very complete picture."

> "The idea is that once I bring something to an administrator... trust that this is my last stop. Trust that if it's at your table or desk, we need to start looking at the higher level solutions."

The items related to this factor reflected responsive leadership approaches (e.g., *"My administrator(s) does what they say they will do"* or *"My administrator(s) takes my concerns seriously"*). Given that this factor predicted 36% of the overall variance in educator well-being – and emerged as a dominant theme across focus groups – it is clear that responsive and consistent leadership matters.

Participants identified that this action, in turn, sets the tone for the rest of the staff:

> "At my school there's a reason for being pleasant; the staff body in that building is amazing. If you're not thriving, you're surviving, people pick up on it quickly and ask how they can help. Custodial, admins, para, everybody is so wonderful doing the best they can for kids. We're there for each other and we do it quickly."

Factor 2: Growth: When we asked participants to describe when they were "thriving" at work, many shared times when they were excited to try new things, implement a new practice, be creative, and improve over time. We heard educators talk about a sense of "energy," excitement, and continuous "tinkering" to improve their craft. This growth and learning orientation happened at various stages of their careers – for some it was during the COVID-19 pandemic as they were forced to embrace new technologies and this helped maintain excitement toward their work. One focus group participant said:

[A thriving educator is] *"Constantly looking for new ways and opportunities to engage, entice, attract, [it] fills them with passion and consumes them."*

Another, talking about their approach to growth during COVID said:

"The district offers us PD, and in COVID showed us all the things we could do on apps. I didn't have time to do all of them...but doing two out of the twenty new things, I was excited."

The items related to this factor included being motivated to learn new things at work, embracing new strategies, and continuous growth efforts.

Factor 3: Acceptance: Educators described their ability to persist in the work and resist burnout as attributed to letting things "roll" and not taking things personally. Many in our groups talked about the inevitable experiences of frustrating student behavior, angry parents, or an upset colleague. They shared that a key to high well-being was being able to "tune out the negative" and maintain a clear, level head by using personal strategies to "reset" during the day. One member shared:

"I acknowledge what's wrong but I don't live there, and I don't let anyone bother me."

The two items that remained in our final scale included *"I know when not to take something personally at work"* and *"When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed."*

Factor 4: Personal Well-being: Our participants felt strongly that an educator who has high well-being at work must also have the opportunity to have high well-being *outside of work*. Educators spoke passionately about the importance of setting clear boundaries and investing time in activities that "filled them up." Many felt they were at their best at work when they took time to prioritize their own needs – connecting with family, taking care of their physical or mental health, going to church, spending time outside, visiting friends, etc. These opportunities to "*recharge*" and have a "*full life*" outside of work were critical to educators across all of our focus groups. One participant shared:

"I can still serve the needs of my students but also can meet mine."

The two items that remained in the shorter scale included "*I engage in hobbies outside of work that energize me*" and "*I am content with my life outside of work.*"

Factor 5: Depletion: Although the focus of our focus groups was on well-being, educators also described what it felt like to experience stress, burnout, or low well-being at work. Participants shared feeling "exhausted" as well as overly anxious and feeling too distracted to pay attention to what students or colleagues really needed. We asked participants to share an image that represented low or high well-being at work and describe it. One person who chose a dying battery image said:

"Low well being, [my] battery [is] empty. That first month and a half of school I'm so burnt out, and quickly. A lot of changes happen in my classroom at the beginning of the year, switching schedules, shifting, kids in and out of your class. I feel like I can't get my bearings."

Two items that we categorized as "depletion" remained on the final scale. They included "*At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything*" and "*I'm often so busy thinking about other things that I'm not able to enjoy the moment.*" Both of these items mirror language on two other scales - the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Mindful Attention and Awareness Scale, but have been slightly adapted to reflect the shared experiences of our focus group participants.

Factor 6: Adaptability: During our first round of focus groups, we asked participants to describe someone they'd known over the course of their careers who they would consider to have high workplace well-being. We heard a common theme of someone who is calm, flexible, and understands when they might need to make shifts in their mindset, expectations, or practice. Speaking of this mindset, two participants said:

"*I can be more flexible. When I have a challenging child, I feel like I can be more patient to meet their needs, and be more thoughtful about how I can approach a situation to get the best outcome.*"

"*As educators we're always trying something new before we meet the kids and then we reevaluate once we meet them and adjust again.*"

The two items in this factor include: "*I generally view myself as even-keeled at work*" and "*I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.*"

Defining Well-being

We reviewed the preliminary definition of educator well-being against focus group feedback and factor analysis. Our preliminary definition was:

Educator well-being is a dynamic interaction between an educator and their environment that includes feelings of balance, trust (to do the job), safety, efficacy (good at job), support (feedback, acknowledgment, resources), connection, positive emotions (presence, joy) and motivation to engage in activities that contribute to well-being of self and others. At the end of the workday, a well educator enjoys a full life outside of work.

Although comprehensive, we aimed to create a more refined and aligned definition that mirrored the survey measure. Thus, the updated definition of educator well-being is:

Perceptions of educator well-being are defined by responsiveness and consistency of leadership, personal enthusiasm toward professional growth, acceptance and adaptability, and contributions to the well-being of self and others.

What "Dropped"

As described throughout this report, our approach to survey development began and ended with educators. We let go of any preconceived notions as to what educators would share and ultimately, what factors and items would remain on our final scale. Our research methods – grounded theory/open coding approaches and exploratory factor analysis – forced our team to constantly check potential biases or hypotheses about what matters most to educators' well-being. That being said, we were surprised that a number of categories and items were dropped from our scale given their predominance in other measures of workplace or teacher well-being research in general.

Our final scale is missing a few notable factors previously studied at length in well-being literature. Specifically, items related to self-efficacy, compensation, collaboration, and collegial relationships were dropped due to poor fit and item performance among our sample.

1. Efficacy. A majority of educators have a high sense of efficacy. 91% of participants believe that students they work with are growing, 98% of participants agreed with the statement "I find ways to communicate with students when they're having a hard time," 97% agreed that they have "strong classroom management skills," and 99% agreed that they "clearly communicate expectations to students." Efficacy has been explored as a key component of educator well-being and retention (e.g., Renshaw et al., 2015) but it quickly dropped from our model.

   Sense of efficacy is likely an important determinant to a small percentage of educators who have low efficacy (i.e., those in their first year of teaching), but may not be as critical an input into educator well-being as previously assumed. The relationship between efficacy and well-being is likely bidirectional, but our survey findings suggest other factors may be more important to educators' overall sense of well-being.

2. Compensation and Staffing. Our focus groups and survey findings confirm educators are not satisfied with their compensation. Given the decades-long attention on teacher pay, it was surprising that this item was dropped from our full scale. Our hypothesis is that this is because the vast majority of educators are dissatisfied, this item did not predict variations in educator well-being (only 2% of participants strongly agreed with the item: "*My total compensation package (salary, benefits, pension, leave) is adequate for the work that I do*"). Compensation is a foundational need and critical structural component that allows people to enter and remain in education, however it may not necessarily predict well-being even if it does predict other factors like retention. We recommend that compensation is always considered in conversations about educator well-being, but acknowledge that there are many other resources at our disposal to support educators.

   Relatedly, staff shortages are a persistent challenge in schools. Only 12% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they "*the staff we need to adequately meet student needs.*" In focus groups, we heard from many educators that subbing continues to be a significant burden on

staff and that service provider caseloads are often maxed out. Educators described deep concern for students' overall well-being given limited staffing. Similar to compensation, adequate staffing is a baseline need for educators to do their job. Lack of staffing will only heighten educator burnout.

3. Collaboration. Educators in our group talked about collaboration being important to their work, but how and when it happened was critical. We asked (as an independent variable) how much collaboration time educators were allotted each week. Having zero hours negatively predicted well-being, and the more hours allotted, the more satisfied educators seemed to be. However, schools need to think about quality (not just quantity) – and that involves listening to teachers about when, about what, and with whom they want to collaborate. Simply mandating time sometimes means that "collaboration" could turn into an unproductive hour with colleagues that could have been spent on more urgent and important tasks.

4. Relationships. Many workplace well-being scales ask about collegial relationships (e.g., Kern et al., 2012; Renshaw et al., 2015) and social support at work. We heard in focus groups that having a support network and trusting relationships at work was important and our survey confirmed this - 96% of participants said that they "*connect with a few of their colleagues on a personal level.*" Although relevant, collegial relationships ended up predicting less than the factors that remained. What we also heard in focus groups was that personal relationships at work can develop even in spite of poor leadership or working conditions – and it is often the leader who "sets the tone" for a positive working environment. If strong, supportive leadership is in place, and an administrator works to truly unify the staff, then strong relationships likely follow.

Additional Recommended Items

Although these items did not function well in our exploratory factor analysis, they could be included alongside demographic questions due to their long-term relevance to educator recruitment and retention. We consider these items to be baseline structural factors for adequate working conditions:

- *My total compensation (benefits, salary, pension, leave policies) is adequate for the work I do.*
- *We have the staff we need to adequately meet student needs.*
- *The professional development opportunities I am offered meet my needs.*
- *How many hours per week are you allotted for collaboration with colleagues?*

Pilot Survey Well-being Findings

In our final stage of analysis, we explored well-being across all participants and among subgroups of educators. See Appendix F for item level details.

Well-being by Local

Among locals, Local 4 reported lower levels of well-being in all categories and higher levels of depletion as compared to other locals. Local 2 educators reported slightly higher levels of well-being (leadership and school culture, growth, acceptance, personal well-being) and lower levels of depletion than other locals.

Table 7: Averages by Local (Scale of 1–6)						
	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion *(lower is better)*	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
Local 1 (n = 226)	4.3	5.1	4.3	4.8	3.9	5.0
Local 2 (n = 283)	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.3	4.8
Local 3 (n = 423)	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.9	3.9	4.9
Local 4 (n = 314)	3.9	4.9	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.9

Well-being by Race/Ethnicity

Differences by race and ethnicity were marginal. Survey respondents were overly represented by White-identifying educators (77%), although percentages mirrored national teacher demographics (80%). Hispanic/LatinX identifying educators and those who identified a "other race/ethnicity" reported lower levels of responsive leadership and culture and higher levels of depletion than other subgroups. Black/African American identifying educators reported overall higher levels of well-being and lower levels of depletion than other educators across all.

Table 8: Averages by Local (Scale of 1–6)						
	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion *(lower is better)*	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
Am Ind/Nat Am (n = 15)	4.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	3.9	5.0
Asian (n = 42)	4.2	5.1	4.5	4.9	4.1	5.0
Black or Af Am (n = 101)	4.3	5.2	4.7	5.0	3.7	5.1
Hispanic/Latin X (n = 105)	3.8	5.0	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.9

White (n = 1,024)	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.3
Other (n = 38)	3.5	4.9	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.9

Well-being by Years of Experience

Educators with the least experience (1-5 years) reported higher levels of satisfaction with leadership and school culture as compared to those with more experience. This is not surprising given the attention we tend to pay towards newer educators and support tends to drop off with more years of experience. However, educators with the most experience reported slightly higher levels of personal well-being than those with less.

Table 9: Averages by Years of Experience (Scale of 1-6)						
	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion *(lower is better)*	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
1-5 years (n = 156)	4.3	5.1	4.4	4.7	4.0	5.0
6-15 years (n = 453)	4.2	5.0	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.9
16-25 years (n = 417)	4.0	4.9	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
26+ years (n = 252)	3.9	4.9	4.3	4.8	4.1	5.0

Well-being by Grade Level

We compared elementary (PreK-5th) to secondary (6-8th) educators. Elementary educators reported slightly higher levels of depletion (avg = 4.2) as compared to secondary educators (avg = 4.0). Other factors suggested relatively similar patterns of experiences across grade levels.

Table 10: Averages by Grade Level (Scale of 1-6)						
	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion *(lower is better)*	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
PreK-5th (n = 630)	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.2	4.9
6th-8th (n = 586)	4.1	5.0	4.3	4.7	4.0	4.9

Well-being by Role

Although a majority of survey respondents were teachers, we compared teachers to non-teachers. Teachers, in general, reported lower levels of well-being (with the exception of growth) and higher levels of depletion than non-teachers. Other roles included paraprofessionals, service providers (i.e., SLPs), librarians, school counselors, and maintenance staff.

Table 11: Averages by Role (Scale of 1-6)	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion (lower is better)	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
Teacher (n = 956)	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.2	4.9
Other Role* (n = 317)	4.2	5.1	4.4	4.9	3.8	5.0

*Other roles included paraeducators, school nurses, librarians, secretaries, service providers, and maintenance staff

Well-being by Reported Collaboration Time

We asked participants how much time they had each week to collaborate with colleagues – o hours, 1-2 hours, or 3+ hours. Those with 0 hours of collaboration reported lower levels of acceptance, adaptability, growth, personal well-being, and leadership and school culture and higher levels of depletion than those with more hours of collaboration. Those with 3+ hours of collaboration reported much lower levels of depletion and much higher levels of satisfaction with leadership and school culture than those with fewer hours.

These findings suggest that having dedicated time with colleagues may be an important contributor to overall well-being. However, as we heard in focus groups though, meaningful collaboration is different from mandated collaboration time – it is important to educators that their time be well spent to problem solve and share the work rather.

Table 12: Averages by Collaboration Time (Scale of 1-6)	Leadership & School Culture	Growth	Acceptance	Personal well-being	Depletion (lower is better)	Adaptability
ALL	4.0	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.9
0 hours (n = 372)	3.7	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.4	4.9
1-2 hours (n = 621)	4.2	5.0	4.3	4.8	4.1	4.9

| 3+ hours (n = 174) | 4.4 | 5.1 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 3.9 | 5.0 |

Limitations

Although survey participants included a variety of roles and regions, our sample disproportionately consisted of mid-career educators. This led to underrepresentation specifically of classroom teachers with less than five years of experience. Given the nationwide focus on supporting and retaining educators with five years of experience or less, further testing of the preliminary measure with early career educators is recommended.

In addition, the demographics of respondents was generally representative of the current teaching force and support staff, but not of the broader population of the United States. Many districts and states are working to ensure that educators generally represent the communities that they serve and specifically recruit and retain teachers of color. To ensure that this measure captures well-being for a representative sample of educators, based on the broader US population, additional research with intentional recruitment of a more diverse sample of educators is recommended.

Key Takeaways

Although educators have been asked to respond to crisis after crisis, our focus groups and survey data show that in spite of the very real challenges, most educators fundamentally want to enjoy their jobs and remain committed to the field. In short, it's not all bad out there. As one member told us:

"I cannot wait to get back into the classroom – I love what I do. No one seems to get the joy we have for doing what we do. It really does form the basis for my actions, my behaviors, my decisions, and I wish people knew."

There are, in fact, a lot of tools at our disposal to improve educator well-being. We have heard from a number of educators how surprised they are when looking at the final items "how much is actually in our control."

Throughout this process, we reaffirmed a number of key principles.

- Listen first. Educator voices and perspectives matter. Throughout this process, we centered educator experiences to define well-being. The outcome itself is significant, but the process itself also allowed educators to feel heard, connected, and empowered. Our definition and survey tool is not only grounded in rigorous research, but it is also deeply meaningful to educators themselves.

"Everyone felt heard and as if their contribution was valued (and it did not just feel like another complaining fest). Hearing what my colleagues had to say made me feel connected to them and appreciate all that they do."

- Measure what matters. If we aim to improve educator well-being – and ultimately working and learning conditions – it is important we measure what actually matters most to educators. We identified a number of things that matter to educators and six key factors that predicted their overall well-being. Among our final items are clear, actionable strategies to help schools and districts support educators. School leadership teams can work towards meeting staff needs related to responsiveness and support. Mentors or professional development programs can support teachers with mindsets proven to support well-being, namely acceptance, adaptability, and continuous learning. Districts can evaluate levels of depletion and consider what should be prioritized and when to allow for greater employee flexibility.

"If we can embed more questions like this [in our survey], it would be taken more seriously because it wouldn't just be seen as "angry teachers." This doesn't feel like you're going after somebody."

- Chart the path forward. Educators are depleted, but want to believe in a better path forward where they will feel energized again. They desire joy, connectedness, and meaning – things that drew them into the profession to begin with – and search for these small moments in the midst of the chaos that has defined their jobs over the past few years. As one member shared:

"Never lose sight of who you are...because you can get lost in this world of teaching. After 23 years, I have to go back and remember why I chose to be a teacher. If I don't lose sight of that person, I can continue to do this. If I look at the person from the past year, I would quit today. I sometimes reread my mission that I wrote, and I'm that person. I know I can get back to that happy place."

Improving well-being takes focus on leadership and culture, but also personal mindsets and dispositions. Collaborative conversations around these areas can help chart a clear path forward.

- Share the work. Too often we feel paralyzed by the magnitude of the challenges education faces – the system, many argue, is inherently flawed. What we heard from educators however, is that there are in fact many ways to move forward, collectively. As one member said:

"It doesn't take a lot to help educators have a good experience, and that's what I would want everyone to know, that these little things make a big difference. Having a cohesive team, getting a response from admin, all those things will make such a better healthier environment."
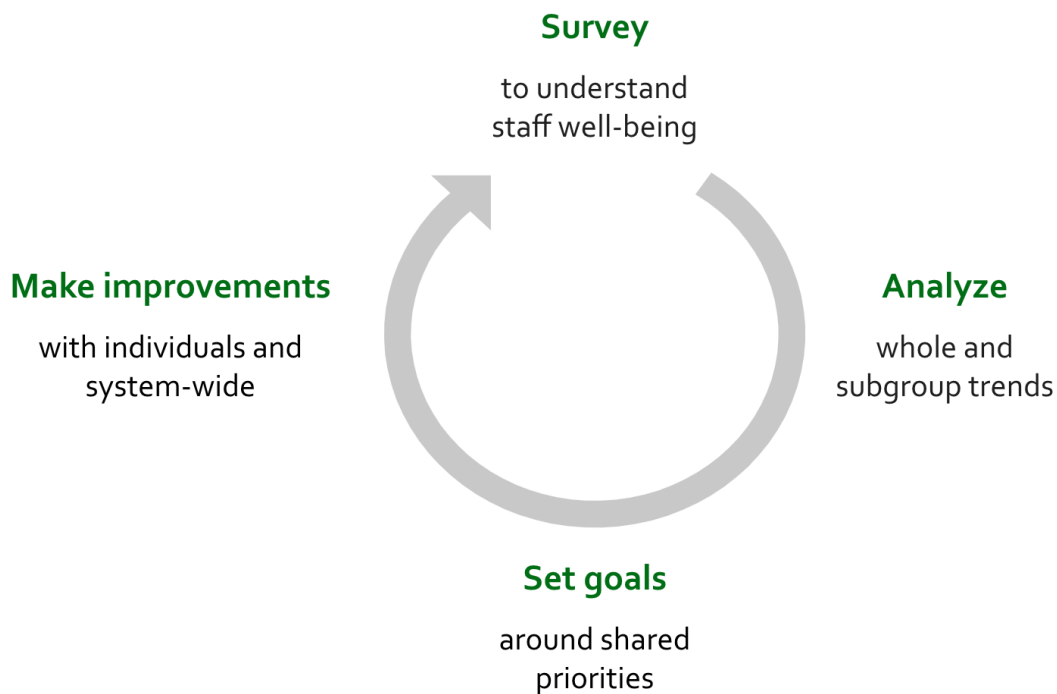
Future Research

Preliminary analysis and validation suggests that this 26-item scale is a reliable and robust measure of educator well-being. That being said, it will be important to test this scale with a more diverse sample of educators and consider additional elements of predictive and external validity, such as how this scale correlates to job retention over time.

Given the importance of school site administrators to staff well-being, it would also be worthwhile to explore administrator well-being. Focus group participants had tremendous empathy for their administrators and understood that many constraints prevented them from being as responsive and supportive as educators desired.

Finally, it will be important to continue to establish the link between educator well-being and student outcomes. Common sense suggests that educators are most able to fulfill their professional potential when they have a high degree of workplace well-being, but additional research is needed to confirm this empirical link.

Implications for Practice

Now that we have a definition of educator well-being, and a tool to measure it, our aim is to collectively work towards improving what matters. By analyzing whole and subgroup trends, districts can identify measurable goals and make improvements with individuals and across the system.

Survey

to understand
staff well-being

Make improvements

with individuals and
system-wide

Analyze

whole and
subgroup trends

Set goals

around shared
priorities

In partnership with each local, we shared our survey process and the results of our work to union and district leadership. As these conversations have unfolded, what has become clear is that with a shared

understanding of what we mean by "educator well-being," and actionable ways to improve it (driven by survey items and data), there are opportunities to both celebrate and collaborate towards system wide improvements.

Conclusion

"I wish everyone knew how easy it is to take part in [educator well-being]. Show appreciation...just send a small word... It's not that hard to participate if you want to show appreciation or make a teacher's day."

When we began this project, we were uncertain whether and if educators would be willing to join our efforts and if they could articulate what it means to be "well" given the surmounting obstacles schools have faced in recent years. It is hard to escape the predominant headlines of burnout, turnover, and staff shortages. What we found, however, was that educators are deeply passionate about their work and they want to stay committed to their profession. Now we have a better understanding of how to help them do that.

Educators requests – and our analysis – suggests that there are many tools at our disposal to improve educator well-being. Leaders can tune in to the needs of their staff and simply ask "how can I help," mentors can check in with newer staff around personal well-being habits, educators can connect with one another to process difficult emotions and find ways to move forward. There is a lot within our locus of control.

May the results of our shared effort be used to yield change that will let educators sustain joyful, impactful work for years to come.

Appendix A: Focus Group Protocols

Focus Group 1

How do you define well-being? You can share your definition in the chat.
- Follow up: We generally define well-being as multi-dimensional, a state of total physical, psychological, emotional and social well-being. Based on what you heard, is there anything else you would add or change about your definition? You can share your ideas with the whole group.

How would you describe yourself when you have felt like you are thriving at work?
- Outside of work?
- When your well-being has been "high," how do you think, feel, and act?

How would you describe an educator who you see is thriving - someone who seems really engaged, healthy, and connected to their work. What do you see that makes you think they're doing well?
- How do you know they are thriving?
- What do you hear them say? (about students, other staff members, families, admin)
- What do you see them do (to manage their well-being, stress, work)?

Burnout happens when we feel overwhelmed by our work. We characterize burnout as a combination of emotional exhaustion (I'm used up at the end of the day), depersonalization (difficulty caring or connecting), and lack of achievement (I'm not good at my job). How would you describe a burned out educator?

Describe when you're at your best as an educator. What's going on for you at that time?

Describe a well school - or, describe a school that might score high on a wellness measure. What's going on at that school?

We've talked about individual well-being and school level well-being, but what's going on in the communities around the school to *support* well-being?

Focus Group 2

[Share screen with presentation containing the images of low/high well being that participants submitted in advance]. What stood out to you about these images?

Based on what you shared in the first focus group, we have created a preliminary definition of educator well being. [Screen share preliminary definition]

How does this resonate? What would you add or revise?

Let's look at this definition with each career phase in mind. Our well-being needs tend to evolve, and we're curious to hear if that has been true for you. When you look back, how have your well-being needs changed over the course of your career?

- Consider Early career, Developing, Mastering, and Legacy.

There is one big area we would like to learn more about from Focus Group 1: what support looks like from a variety of people around you. We hear a lot about trust, support and appreciation. Those are three VERY important, and distinct, factors that sound like they increase your well-being.

- How can stakeholders fulfill these needs (admin, families, colleagues, community, students, or the district)?

We heard a lot about people having a high sense of well-being when they felt successful at work. If there was one thing you could change heading into next year in order to feel better at your job, what would it be?

What are you doing to recharge this summer?

Focus Group 3

In our conversations with educators across the country, a number of themes emerged [*screen share image of word cloud*] - the larger words are themes that came up the most.

- What resonates with you on this word cloud? Any questions?
- What is one thing you wish everyone in the U.S. knew about educator well-being?

We will begin with a survey that contains sample questions for the big survey we're creating out of your perspectives. These questions and others will shape a more accurate, rigorous conversation about professional well-being.

We will go section by section. You'll see about 7 potential questions per theme. You'll answer them, then we'll pause to talk about the questions before moving on to the next theme.

Answer as if you were actually taking the survey, but also think about any feedback you have.

[After all participants have completed a section]

- What item(s) did you like best?
- Were any items confusing?
- Was anything missing?
- Any other suggestions?

There were a number of other themes that came up across all of our focus groups. We don't have time to get through all of them, but we'd like you to select your top five in this next survey.

- Of this list what stands out to you as being most important to your well-being?

Focus Group 4

Please tell us a story about something that has gone well at work in the past week. Since we are in a new group this week, please also share your name, role, and what state you're in.

In the last focus group you participated in, you completed a survey (but not all of you completed the same one) that contained a selection of potential items for the final measure. We analyzed all of your feedback on those potential items, and used it to consolidate our list of potential items down to a preliminary survey.

Please open this survey. Answer the questions as if you were taking a normal survey. Have a pen and paper handy, and jot notes about any questions / reactions / observations as you go along.

- How do you feel after taking this?
- What are you thinking?
- Review section by section.

We now want to spend time talking about the application of the instrument. [Display Sample Report]

- Who would you want to show this to?
- What might you do if you saw this at your school site? What would you hope a school leader would do with this information?
- What kinds of conversations would you have with your union?
- What discussions would you hope this would spark?
- What avenues do you currently have to review or discuss data like these?
- Can you imagine any of this being feasible to move?
- Which of these jump out at you as feasible to move? Which areas seem harder?

Appendix B: Code List

Exhausted
Accountability
Physical health
Time pressure
Proactive admin
Student needs
Balance
Boundaries
Acceptance
Tune out negative
Adaptability
Presence
Clarity of thought
Self-awareness
Contentment
Self-care Routines
Self-care rituals
Resetting
Efficacy
Expertise
Trying new things
Iterative improvements
Problem-solving
Want to be there
Energized
Organizational skills
Prioritization

Positive mood
Positive attitude/outlook
Positive emotions
Feeling light
Evidence of impact
Classroom expectations
Meaningful external
expectations
Specific feedback
Appreciation - general
Appreciation from
administrators
Appreciation from
community
Can be myself
Physical safety
Student connection
Student engagement
Responsiveness from admin
Leader sets the tone
Stable context
Adequate staffing
Community and family
support
Tools and materials
Physical environment
Job stability

Sharing resources and
ideas
Open doors
Admin in classrooms
Positive story telling
Cohesive team
Meaningful collaboration
time
Strong collaborators/
co-teachers
Have my back
Expert advice
Socializing
Deep connections
Others want my input
Feeling heard
Autonomy
Trust to do the job
Productive venting
Relevant PD
Paid PD
Role clarity
Role importance
Blame
Persistent negativity
Lonely
Overwhelmed
Student behavior

Appendix C: Data Matrix

Data Matrix Below is a sample of the data matrix used to inform item development based on focus group data and qualitative analysis.

Sample Code	Sample Quotes	Sample Items
Leader Sets the Tone	"Admin can work to unite or divide the faculty."	My building administrators work to unify the staff.
	"Principal said, 'I'm going to shut off after my Friday meeting till Sunday'...that was a good model for what we should do."	My building administrators encourage staff to set boundaries related to work.
	"It doesn't feel like they're administrators, [it] feels like they're peers. We're a family now, we're people, they're inviting me into pieces of their lives; but also felt like I wasn't othered."	The leaders at my school help people feel like they belong.
Acceptance	"I've worked at this, trying to separate more from my work and home life, and what I can and can't control."	I know what I can and can't control in my work.
	"Not taking things personal."	I know when not to take something personally at work.
	"Have to ride the waves, otherwise you'll drown."	I'm able to adjust when things are challenging.
Energized	"You are able to take more risks...when you're feeling good, you want to try more things to grow in your profession."	I embrace bringing new elements into my practice.
	"Someone who is thriving is offering help and support to others."	I feel like I have the capacity to offer support to my colleagues.
	"Would come home, fall asleep and wouldn't wake up till 7. Being completely mentally done for the day."	At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything.

Appendix D: Survey Measures

All questions are on a 6-point scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

Full Preliminary Survey Measure (84 items)

Focus Group Theme	Survey Item
Efficacy	I have strong classroom management skills. I'm confident that the students I work with are growing. I find ways to communicate differently with students when they're having a hard time.
Energized	I have the capacity to offer support to my colleagues. I look forward to going to work. At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything. I embrace bringing new strategies into my practice/work.
Boundaries	I know when I cannot take on another project, even when I might want to. I am able to get to a comfortable stopping point at the end of the work day. I can let go of my job at the end of the work day.
Responsive Admin	My administrator(s) helps me problem-solve around student needs. My administrator(s) asks me, "How can I help?" My administrator(s) takes my concerns seriously. I have the same opportunities to perform up to my full potential as others in my district. My administrator(s) responds to my requests directly. My administrator(s) does what they say they will do.
Community & Family Support	I feel appreciated by families in my school community. There is a sense of pride in the community for my school.
Cohesive Team	I have a strong support network at my school. My colleagues want one another to succeed.
Presence	I'm aware of how my mood impacts the way I engage with students. I'm often so busy thinking about other things that I'm not able to enjoy the moment.
Feeling Heard	The union takes my concerns seriously. I have a voice in school wide decision making. My administrator(s) integrate others' input on meaningful issues.
Strong Collaborators	Staff at my school share their challenges without being judged.
Overwhelmed	I am asked to do tasks and duties that are beyond the scope of my role. I feel burned out.
Positive Emotions	I have fun at work with students and colleagues. In general, my school atmosphere is positive. I frequently feel anxious at school.
Outlook	I learn from things that don't go well at work.

Positive Storytelling	I'm proud to be an educator.
	Even if I have a hard day, I am hopeful about the future.
	Others at my school express uplifting stories related to work.
	When something great happens, I share it with a colleague.
Balance & Acceptance	I am content with my life outside of work.
	I can serve the needs of students but also meet mine.
	I engage in hobbies outside of school that energize me.
	I know what I can and can't control in my work.
	I know when not to take something personally at work.
	When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed.
Focus & Adaptability	I maintain reasonable expectations for myself.
	I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.
Clarity of Thought	I generally view myself as even-keeled at work.
	I use strategies to help me stay clear headed throughout the work day.
Taking Care of Self	I engage in habits that improve my well-being.
	I often reflect on the good things that happened at work.
	If I get thrown off during the work day, I know how to reset.
Expertise & Role Importance	I have opportunities to share my expertise with others.
	I continually try to grow as an educator.
	Staff at my school respect one another's roles and expertise.
	I know who to go to when I need help at work.
	I have the chance to work with a coach or mentor to help me grow.
Trying new things	I'm motivated to learn new things at work.
Organizational Skills	I have a hard time staying organized at work.
Classroom Expectations	I clearly communicate expectations to my students.
	I view partnering with families as an essential practice.
Feedback & Appreciation	I receive specific feedback or acknowledgement related to my practice.
	I'm often told that I am doing a good job at work.
	There is someone I can go to for non-evaluative, constructive feedback.
	I feel valued by others at my school.
Leader sets the tone	My administrator(s) works to unify the staff.
	My administrator(s) encourages staff to set healthy boundaries related to work.
	I feel like I belong at my school site.
	The administrator(s) at my school are fair in their discipline processes and procedures.
Context & Materials	My performance evaluation discussions encourage an exchange of information and produce better results.
	My total compensation (benefits, salary, pension, leave policies) is adequate for the work I do.
	We have the staff we need to adequately meet student needs.
	My administrators' expectations of staff are consistent.

	I get the relevant information I need in time to plan.
	I'm stressed about the lack of stability at my school.
	I receive the materials I need to do my job well in a timely manner.
	Our school building feels physically and emotionally safe.
	The professional development opportunities I am offered meet my needs.
	I am able to provide students learning opportunities outside our usual environment (field trips, library visits, etc.).
Relationships	I connect with a few of my colleagues on a personal level.
	We celebrate one another at my school (birthdays, milestones, accomplishments).
Autonomy & Trust	I have a lot of freedom in this job to decide how to pursue my goals.
	When something isn't working for me or my students, I am able to make changes.
	My administrator(s) has told me that they trust me to do my job.
	I trust my administrator(s) to do the right thing for students.
Blame & Exhaustion	When things go wrong at my school, people are quick to blame others.
	I feel alone in managing negative student behavior.

Final 26-Item Survey Measure

Factor	Survey Item
Acceptance	I know when not to take something personally at work.
	When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed.
Adaptability	I generally view myself as even-keeled at work.
	I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.
Depletion	At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything.
	I'm often so busy thinking about other things that I'm not able to enjoy the moment.
Growth	I'm motivated to learn new things at work.
	I embrace bringing new strategies into my practice/work.
	I continually try to grow as an educator.
Leadership & Staff Culture	My administrator(s) takes my concerns seriously.
	My administrator(s) works to unify the staff.
	I trust my administrator(s) to do the right thing for students.
	My administrator(s) does what they say they will do.
	My administrator(s) helps me problem-solve around student needs.
	My administrator(s) asks me, "How can I help?"
	My administrator(s) integrates others' input on meaningful issues.
	My administrator's expectations of staff are consistent.
	My administrator(s) responds to my requests directly.
	My administrator(s) encourages staff to set healthy boundaries related to work.
	The administrator(s) at my school is fair in their discipline processes and procedures with students.
	My administrator(s) has told me that they trust me to do my job.

	I get the relevant information I need in time to plan.
	Staff at my school share their challenges without being judged.
	I have the same opportunities to perform up to my full potential as others in my district.
Personal Well-being	I engage in hobbies outside of school that energize me.
	I am content with my life outside of work.

Additional demographic questions include race/ethnicity, gender, role, tenure, and grade level. We also asked approximately how many students do you serve, how many administrators do you work with at your site, and how many allotted hours of collaboration time do you have weekly to meet with colleagues.

Appendix E: R-Script

For full R-Script and analysis, see output here.

```
## -- Attaching packages ------------------------------------- tidyverse 1.3.0 --
## v ggplot2 3.3.3 v dplyr 1.0.2
## v tibble 3.0.4 v stringr 1.4.0
## v tidyr 1.1.2 v forcats 0.5.0
## v purrr 0.3.4
## -- Conflicts ---------------------------------------- tidyverse_conflicts() --
## x dplyr::filter() masks stats::filter()
## x dplyr::lag() masks stats::lag()
library(psych)
##
## Attaching package: 'psych'
```

Appendix F: Pilot Survey Findings

Factor	Item (scale 1-6)	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Acceptance	I know when not to take something personally at work.	4.33	1.15	0.02	0.06	0.12	0.3	0.37	0.13
Acceptance	When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed.	4.22	1.06	0.02	0.06	0.13	0.35	0.37	0.07
Adaptability	I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.	4.97	0.78	0.003	0.007	0.02	0.17	0.57	0.23
Adaptability	I generally view myself as even-keeled at work.	4.95	0.83	0.002	0.02	0.04	0.2	0.56	0.18
Depletion	At the end of the day I'm too exhausted to do anything.	4.43	1.32	0.02	0.09	0.09	0.32	0.21	0.27
Depletion	I'm often so busy thinking about other things that I'm not able to enjoy the moment.	3.77	1.35	0.05	0.16	0.17	0.31	0.21	0.1
Growth	I embrace bringing new strategies into my practice/work.	4.86	0.92	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.24	0.47	0.23
Growth	I'm motivated to learn new things at work.	4.87	1.02	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.19	0.45	0.28
Growth	I continually try to grow as an educator.	5.23	0.76	0.002	0.003	0.015	0.11	0.48	0.39
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) helps me problem-solve around student needs.	4.09	1.38	0.06	0.09	0.12	0.28	0.31	0.14
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) asks me, "How can I help?"	3.94	1.54	0.1	0.11	0.12	0.24	0.27	0.16
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) takes my concerns seriously.	4.17	1.42	0.07	0.09	0.1	0.27	0.3	0.17
Leadership & Culture	I have the same opportunities to perform up to my full potential as others in my district.	4.11	1.36	0.07	0.08	0.12	0.24	0.37	0.12
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) responds to my requests directly.	4.38	1.32	0.04	0.07	0.09	0.24	0.36	0.2
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) does what they say they will do.	4.26	1.31	0.05	0.06	0.11	0.29	0.33	0.16
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) integrates others' input on meaningful issues.	3.95	1.31	0.07	0.08	0.14	0.33	0.3	0.08
Leadership & Culture	Staff at my school share their challenges without being judged.	3.83	1.35	0.08	0.11	0.17	0.29	0.27	0.08

Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) works to unify the staff.	3.95	1.49	0.1	0.1	0.11	0.27	0.28	0.14
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) encourages staff to set healthy boundaries related to work.	3.86	1.45	0.09	0.12	0.15	0.27	0.26	0.11
Leadership & Culture	The administrator(s) at my school is fair in their discipline processes and procedures with students.	3.95	1.52	0.11	0.1	0.12	0.23	0.31	0.14
Leadership & Culture	My administrator's expectations of staff are consistent.	3.89	1.48	0.1	0.11	0.14	0.22	0.33	0.1
Leadership & Culture	I get the relevant information I need in time to plan.	3.57	1.41	0.11	0.14	0.18	0.28	0.23	0.06
Leadership & Culture	My administrator(s) has told me that they trust me to do my job.	4.44	1.44	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.18	0.38	0.23
Leadership & Culture	I trust my administrator(s) to do the right thing for students.	4.38	1.37	0.06	0.06	0.09	0.23	0.37	0.2
Personal Well-being	I am content with my life outside of work.	4.93	1.09	0.01	0.03	0.06	0.15	0.41	0.34
Personal Well-being	I engage in hobbies outside of school that energize me.	4.52	1.24	0.03	0.06	0.08	0.26	0.35	0.22