



From Framework to Flourishing: Staff Well-Being Success Stories That Drive Whole Child Health

Welcome to a transformative session where we'll explore how staff well-being forms the foundation of whole child health. Together we'll discover real-world success stories from schools that have revitalized educator morale, strengthened connections, and built resilience—all while aligning with the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model.

Over the next hour, we'll engage in collaborative activities, share experiences, and explore evidence-based strategies that you can implement in your own educational setting.

Our Journey Today

The Why

Understand the research behind staff well-being and its impact on whole child health

The What

Explore the Thriving Schools Initiative framework and continuous improvement process

The How

Discover practical strategies and resources to implement in your school or district

Throughout our session, we'll engage in reflective activities and small group discussions to personalize this journey to your unique school context. Our goal is for you to leave with concrete action steps and a supportive community to help you move forward.

Activity: Personal Reflection

Take a moment to jot down what brought you here today. What specific challenges or opportunities related to staff well-being exist in your school community? Share with your table.

This Is More Than Just Another Initiative



"This program isn't just another checklist or compliance measure—it's an opportunity to spark meaningful change."

When embraced with **fidelity, authenticity, and intentionality**, the Thriving Schools Initiative can transform school culture and dramatically improve outcomes for both staff and students.

Why focus on staff well-being? **Because a school's greatest strength is its people.**

From teachers and counselors to cafeteria workers, custodians, nurses, and bus drivers—every adult who supports students deserves to feel seen, supported, and valued. When staff are thriving, students flourish. When they're not, the learning environment suffers.

The Research Is Clear: Staff Well-Being Can't Wait

The well-being of our educators and school staff is not just a moral imperative, but a critical determinant of student success. Recent 2024 research unequivocally demonstrates that delaying comprehensive support for staff comes at a steep cost.

01

Teacher Burnout Rates

According to a 2022 Gallup study, a staggering **45%** of K-12 teachers report experiencing burnout "always" or "very often".

03

Teacher Turnover

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics indicates that approximately **16%** of public school teachers leave the profession each year, significantly impacting school stability.

The evidence is overwhelming. Investing in staff well-being is not a luxury; it is a strategic necessity that directly impacts the quality of education and the overall school environment. Every moment spent debating or delaying action translates into increased attrition, diminished morale, and, most importantly, compromised learning outcomes for students.

The question isn't whether your school needs staff well-being support—it's how quickly you can begin.

02

Elevated Stress Levels

A Rand study found that teachers are **twice as likely** to report frequent job-related stress compared to other working adults.

04

Impact on Student Outcomes

Furthermore, numerous 2024 studies have established a **direct correlation** between high teacher burnout rates and lower student academic performance.

What The Research Tells Us

Extensive research from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and other leading institutions confirms the powerful impact of educator well-being on school success:

 **Academic & Behavioral Impact**
Higher staff well-being directly improves student behavior and academic achievement by creating more supportive learning environments and increasing student engagement

 **Professional Growth & Retention**
Wellness-focused professional development reduces stress, burnout, and turnover while boosting job performance and instructional quality

 **School Climate & Culture**
Staff wellness is contagious—fueling a collaborative, positive school climate with greater morale, productivity, and commitment while reducing absenteeism

These insights form the foundation for why well-being should be woven into the fabric of school life—not treated as an add-on.

Activity: Mapping Your Well-Being Reality

In groups of 3-4, discuss:

1. What are the current **strengths** in your school related to staff well-being?
2. What are the most significant **challenges** your staff face?
3. How do these factors impact your **school culture** and **student outcomes**?

Be prepared to share one key insight with the larger group.

"What gets measured gets managed. What gets talked about gets addressed."

This activity helps us establish our baseline and identify priority areas for improvement. By acknowledging both strengths and challenges, we can build on what's working while addressing critical needs.



The Universal Support Model

The Orange County Department of Education offers a comprehensive framework to guide districts and schools in creating healthier, happier environments for staff and students alike.

Introductory Meeting

Connect with an OCDE Program Specialist to review data, explore the support guide, and generate initial ideas

Pre-Meeting Tasks

- Create a free Healthier Generation account
- Recruit interested colleagues for your well-being committee
- Collect existing staff well-being data

Follow the 6-Step Process

Engage in a proven continuous improvement cycle designed to create sustainable culture shift

The Universal Support Model meets you where you are and helps you find the actions that are right for your unique school community. Technical assistance and guidance are provided at every step of the journey.

Steps 1-3: Foundation Building

This systematic approach helps create a culture shift, continuous growth, and sustainability in your staff well-being initiatives.

Build Support

Form a diverse team and generate buy-in

Complete Assessment

Use the Thriving Schools Integrated Assessment (TSIA) **AND**

Gather Staff Input

Conduct a customized staff well-being interest survey

Develop Your Action Plan

Use suggested strategies from OCDE and participating sites and add your own steps and benchmarks



Steps 4-6: Implementation & Action

Explore Resources

Explore the existing resources at your site and consider the free resources from Kaiser Permanente, Healthier Generation and OCDE

Take Action

Implement your plan with intentionality and consistency

Celebrate Success

Recognize progress and achievements



Building Support: The Critical First Step

Why This Matters

Like any initiative, staff well-being efforts need diverse voices at the table to shape and drive the work. Without proper support and buy-in, even the best-intentioned programs can fall flat.

Key Actions

- Recruit a diverse well-being committee representing all staff groups
- Share compelling research and success stories
- Connect well-being to existing priorities and initiatives
- Secure leadership endorsement and active participation



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

Activity: Overcoming Implementation Barriers

"We don't have time for one more thing."

How might you address the perception that well-being initiatives add to workload rather than alleviating it?

"This feels like a passing fad."

How can you demonstrate that staff well-being is a fundamental priority, not just a temporary trend?

"Only a few people will participate."

What strategies could increase engagement across diverse staff groups with different needs and interests?

In your table groups, select one of these common barriers and brainstorm practical solutions. Consider how you might use data, storytelling, or strategic alignment to overcome resistance.

We'll share ideas as a whole group after 8 minutes of discussion.

Success Story: Professional Learning on Staff Well-Being

SWB-S4: Offering Continuous Professional Learning



One of the most popular goals among participating schools focuses on providing professional learning that is:

- Available for **all staff** (including non-instructional)
- Inclusive of content on **self-care, boundaries, and stress management**
- Aligned with school improvement efforts
- Job-embedded, with coaching supports

Implementation Strategies

- Initial 60-90 minute foundational training (available from OCDE)
- Follow-up e-learning modules like "Filling Your Cup: Comprehensive Self-Care for Educators"
- Monthly reflection worksheets and self-assessments
- Peer coaching and accountability partnerships

Success Story: Physical Activity Programs for Staff

SWB-S14: Offering Accessible Physical Activity Opportunities

Another highly popular goal focuses on providing physical activity programs for staff by:

- Assessing staff preferences at least once per year
- Offering **free or low-cost physical activity programs** on campus that align with staff interests
- Surveying staff to inform program improvements annually

Implementation Examples

Staff-led walking clubs during lunch breaks

Before/after school yoga or fitness classes taught by qualified staff members

Partnerships with local fitness instructors for special workshops

Step challenges and friendly fitness competitions



Physical activity programs have dual benefits: they improve staff health while modeling healthy behaviors for students.

Critical Implementation Principles



Consistency & Intentionality

One-off events produce minimal impact. Create a regular cadence of offerings and make staff fully aware of the program.



Staff-Driven Initiatives

The best programs are led by staff. Regular feedback through empathy interviews, surveys, and discussions ensures relevance.



Inclusivity & Accessibility

Offer variety in activities, timing, and modalities to ensure all staff can participate regardless of role, ability, or schedule.



Community Partnerships

Leverage expertise from local organizations that may donate time or provide low-cost options for events and programs.

Remember: Staff well-being initiatives should **reduce** stress, not add to it. Design programs that fit naturally into your school's rhythm and respect the time and energy of your staff.



Orange County Department of Education Staff Well-Being Initiative

FY 2024 - 2025 Project Highlights

Kat Satterley, Program Specialist

Leadership Activity Highlights



 Gamma embed



Orange County Department of Education Staff Well-Being Initiative

FY 2024 - 2025 Project Highlights Kat Satterley, Program Specialist Leadership Activity Highlights
Conducted District Level Professional Learning Orange Unified School District (all school counselors)...

Success Stories!

Activity: Action Planning

Individual Reflection (5 minutes)

Based on everything we've discussed today:

1. What **one aspect** of staff well-being would have the greatest positive impact in your school?
2. What **first step** could you take in the next week to begin addressing this need?
3. Who are **3 people** you could invite to join your well-being committee?



Partner Discussion (5 minutes)

Share your reflections with a partner and offer each other feedback:

- Is the focus area specific enough?
- Is the first step realistic and achievable?
- Are the potential committee members diverse?

This initial plan will serve as the foundation for your next steps after today's session. The OCDE team is available to help you refine and implement your ideas.

Resources To Support Your Journey

KP and Healthier Generation Websites

- Free Thriving Schools Integrated Assessment
- Customizable online dashboard
- Built-in resources
- Printable reports and data insights



Kp Thriving Schools Site



Healthier Generation's site

OCDE Support

- Technical Support Docs including the UNIVERSAL SUPPORT GUIDE
- Staff Well-Being Resources
- Action Plan Guides
- Success stories



Community Partnerships

- St. Jude Hospital collaboration "Move More, Eat Healthy" initiative
- Mood Boost program
- Local wellness provider network

The extensive digital resource library includes ready-to-use assessments, guides, and worksheets on topics ranging from stress management to building meaningful relationships to building staff lounges

Contact **Kat Satterley, Program Specialist for Staff Well-Being** at ksatterley@ocde.us to access these resources and begin your journey.

From Framework to Flourishing: Your Next Steps

"Let's build a culture where wellness is woven into every day, for everyone."

Thank you for your participation and commitment to enhancing staff well-being in your school community. Remember that this work is not just another initiative—it's a fundamental shift in how we approach education.

Next Steps:

01

Create your free account on the Healthier Generation website

03

Identify potential **well-being committee members** at your school

02

Access the Universal Support Guide and Various Resources reach out via email with your questions

04

Begin the **6-step continuous improvement process**

We're excited to walk alongside you on this journey toward a healthier, more vibrant school community where both staff and students can truly flourish.