Staff Culture and Wellness
Creating a Culture of Healing and Care

CA School Health Alliance Conference
April 17, 2023

Center for Healthy Schools and Communities
Alameda County, Health Care Services Agency
Staff Culture and Wellness Workshop Objectives

1. Recognize the impacts of trauma and stress on staff and the organization or school itself

2. Develop an understanding of compassion fatigue

3. Introduce a framework for building staff wellness at three levels
Why Staff Culture and Wellness?

How does staff culture and staff wellness affect the organizational and/or school community?
Stressors in the System that We Hold
Why? Staff Wellness and …

1. Student Achievement
Factors including resilience, confidence, and relational trust are competencies of individual teacher efficacy and organizational efficacy, and valid predictors of student achievement

2. Retention and burnout
Guess the research-based determinants of job satisfaction

3. Role of collegial support, leadership & culture
75% of resilient teachers rated supportive relationships with their colleagues as a positive critical influence on their capacity to maintain their call to teach

• University of Virginia, Curry School of Education
• John F. Kain, Steven G. Rivkin and Eric A. Hanushek, The Revolving Door, A study of teachers reveals that working conditions matter more than salary. Education Next, Winter, 2004
Compassion Fatigue
Compassion Fatigue

• Compassion fatigue has been described as the “cost of caring” for others in emotional pain

• Decrease in a person’s capacity to empathize and have compassion with those who are suffering

• Profound emotional and physical erosion when helpers are unable to refuel and regenerate

• Compassion fatigue can affect entire organizations and systems

Adapted from Compassion Resilience Toolkit, Wisconsin and Eric Gentry © 2020, Alameda County Center for Healthy Schools and Communities
Stressors in the System that We Hold
Compassion Fatigue’s Path

Compassion Resilience

Leave Profession

Renewal vs Burn-out

Zealot

Irritability

Zombie

Withdrawal

Compassion Resilience Toolkit, Wisconsin and Eric Gentry
Small Group Activity

Read the description and discuss…
Renewal and Resilience: Staff Wellness
Staff Wellness: Our Approach

Self Care

Staff Culture

Structures & Protocols

© 2020, Alameda County Center for Healthy Schools and Communities
If “form follows function,” what form do schools and districts need to support staff culture and wellness?
Staff Culture

Connecting with colleagues in ways that heal and help

- “Culture of Wellness”
- Compassionate Culture or Relationship Building
- Healthy Boundaries (not too fluid, not too rigid)
Self-Care: Resiliency Factors

- Nature
- Spiritual-ity (greater than oneself)
- Relation-ships
- Collective Movement Music, Drumming
- Make Greater Meaning of the Crisis
- Creativ-ity
- Animals
- Imagination
- Ability to Help During Crisis

Adapted from generative somatics
© 2020, Alameda County Center for Healthy Schools and Communities
Spirituality (greater than oneself)

Nature

Relation-ships

Creativity

Make Greater Meaning of the Crisis

Imagination

Animals

Collective Movement Music, Drumming

Ability to Help During Crisis

What factor can you (re)connect with to build your resilience?

Adapted from generative somatics
© 2020, Alameda County Center for Healthy Schools and Communities