

Workplace Well-Being in K-12 Schools: What does it mean to “flourish” at work?

Facing growing levels of stress and burnout, K-12 staff require a supportive workplace that encourages them to find ways to “flourish” within their school community. While flourishing may look different to staff members depending on what makes them personally feel most valued and connected to their work, a flourishing school environment generally has three main components:



Figure: Conceptual Model for Flourishing in Schools

1. Subjective Well-Being: positive emotions, positive relationships, and a sense of making a difference are all aspects that contribute to a staff member’s sense of flourishing.

2. Adaptive Community: an environment where staff are encouraged to communicate openly with colleagues, be creative, and resolve team conflicts when they arise.

3. Leaderful Mindsets: staff are able to identify ways that their work contributes to the larger, shared goals of the school community, which provides a greater sense of ownership, engagement, and shared leadership.

Along with these components, staff in flourishing school communities generally demonstrate key “professional virtues,” including:

- 1. Compassion:** noticing and wanting to help ease the stress of others, and being aware of how their thoughts and actions impact their colleagues.
- 2. Trust:** having the support and autonomy to take creative risks and innovate, which is reflective of having positive relationships with colleagues.
- 3. Hope:** striving to improve the school environment as a whole-school community by recognizing both strengths and challenges, while building a shared vision for improvement.

While schools come in all shapes and sizes, a flourishing school community is supportive and provides staff members with a sense of purpose and belonging where they feel seen, valued, and ultimately find meaning in their work.

For online resources and references, please visit:
edcan.ca/wellatwork

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