

Puget Sound ESD
Early Learning

CONNECTOR



FEBRUARY 2018

PSESD Early Learning: 5-Year Program Goals

*By Kay Lancaster, Associate Superintendent of Early Learning,
and Nelly Mbajah, Early Learning Program Services Director*

As an Early Learning Program, we have a process to develop program goals for the entire program, including all the models of Head Start, ECEAP, and Early Head Start that are offered across our region. Program goals are required for both HS/EHS and ECEAP—yet compliance to standards is only one small part of why we develop these goals.

Our Early Learning Program goals:

- ◆ Are part of our overall program management and quality improvement process
- ◆ Ensure that we are meeting community needs
- ◆ Provide direction in service of our program’s vision and Agency end
- ◆ Support continuous improvement and a starting point for “Plan-Do-Study-Act”
- ◆ Help to monitor program performance

We develop program goals in a 5-year cycle that aligns with the expectations of our Head Start/Early Head Start grants. For 2017-18, we have developed draft goals that were built from the initial 5-year goals identified in 2016-17, and also incorporated input from the 2016-17 Self-Assessment Taskforce and the new EL organizational design. They also align to the PSESD agency End of ensuring success for each child and eliminating the opportunity gap by leading with racial equity.

[Click here to continue reading](#)

PSESD Early Learning

CONNECTOR

EDITOR
Mike Concardo

The Early Learning Connector e-newsletter is produced monthly throughout the school year, providing information for the Puget Sound ESD Early Learning Program.



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WHAT'S NEW FOR FEBRUARY 2018

Early Learning Connector



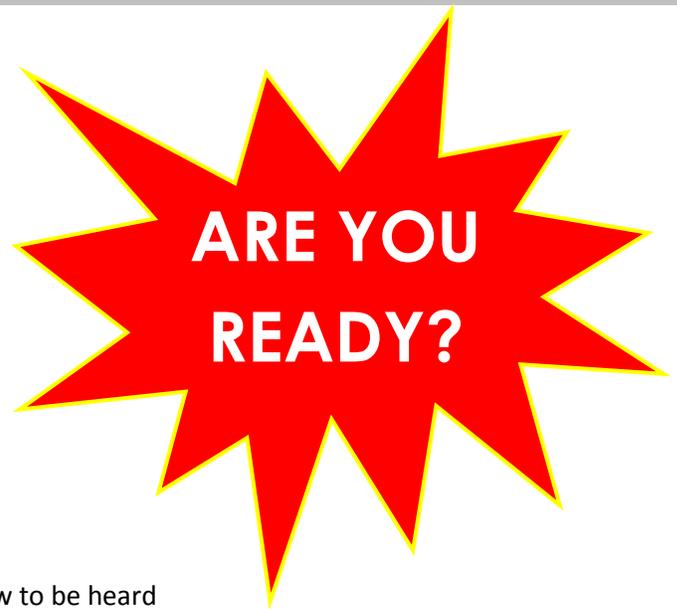
WHAT'S NEW IN GENERAL

PSESD Early Learning

ADVOCACY DAY

Thursday, February 8, 2018

All Parents, Caregivers & Staff
Belong at Advocacy Day 2018!



You can make a difference! How?

1. Recruit and REGISTER parents and caregivers
2. Let parents know
 - ✓ They will learn new ways to have your voice heard
 - ✓ They have the right for their opinion or point of view to be heard
 - ✓ They have the chance to meet and talk with other parents and family members who care about children and early learning education too
3. Support parents and caregivers in Olympia as they share with law makers what HS/ECEAP means to them and their family
4. Wear RED!

February 8, 2018

10:00 am-3:00 pm in Olympia

- Free buses pick up Early Head Start/Head Start/ECEAP parents and staff at 3 locations in King & Pierce Counties!
- Free Lunches for all!
- Interpreters will be there for you!
- Parent Leadership Reimbursement (child care & mileage stipend for parents, one per family)

Still need Advocacy Day Brochures? [Order here](#) or contact Quincy Stone at QStone@psed.org or by calling (425) 917-7875 or (253) 778-7875. Advocacy Day materials are available on the [Advocacy Day webpage](#).

For questions contact Lori Pittman at LPittman@psed.org or by calling (425) 917-7759 or (253) 778-7759 or Quincy Stone at QStone@psed.org or at (425) 917-7875 or (253) 778- 7875.

ECEAP Only – Compliance Related to ECEAP Expansion Application

Talena Dixon, Director of ECEAP and Early Learning Program Operations

We are applying for ECEAP slots so that we can provide additional services to children and families in King and Pierce Counties. DEL will be looking at PSESD's overall compliance level in numerous area, and in order for our application to move forward, we must (as an entire program) be at 80% compliance in all areas. This means that Center Directors and site staff will be hearing from PSESD in the very near future. We ask that you be responsive to these emails and prioritize your efforts to make changes that are needed. Thank you! We know that you're all working very hard. Please know that we appreciate your dedication to ECEAP!

DEL seeks help of licensed child care providers in setting the subsidy rate by taking Market Rate Survey
From the Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL)

The Department of Early Learning needs your help to better serve the needs of licensed child care providers. We have just launched this year's leaner, simplified Market Rate Survey. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete and is open to all licensed providers in Washington state. DEL is required by the federal government to conduct this Market Rate Survey. The results from the survey will be used to inform child care subsidy rates. You can help by taking the survey if you are a licensed provider. Take the survey [here](#).

Job Opportunity: New Full-Time Position at Pierce College

Pierce College is accepting applications for a new position in its Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. The position is titled Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, Residency focus and will support teacher candidates during their residency as Pierce's Early Childhood Education program continues to grow. The position closes March 2. For more information, see the [Pierce College Employment Posting](#).

Job Opportunities

- [Head Start/ECEAP Site Staff Openings](#) - found under the "All Staff Hub" menu at www.EarlyLearningWA.org
- [Puget Sound ESD Openings](#) - found under the "Careers" section at www.psesd.org

WHAT'S NEW FOR CENTER DIRECTORS



Center Directors - Read Other Sections

Read each section of this Connector for important information related to implementing your program.



Monthly To-Do Lists/Deliverables

Use this checklist to ensure that you complete all required deliverables this month.

[February To-Do/Deliverables](#)

Review the E-Alerts for December 2017/January 2018

JANUARY 2018

January 16 — [ECEAP Expansion RFA Due February 16](#)

◇ [DEL Site Approval Form 2017-18](#)

**E-ALERT! ECEAP Expansion RFA
Due February 16**

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Talena Dixon, Director of ECEAP and Early Learning Program Operations

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2017-18 Administrative Monitoring Calendar Change

From Kristyl Riddle, Monitoring and Compliance Coordinator

The Fall round of administrative monitoring was completed in November and results emails were sent in December. We had a high number of checklists with no findings, and most of the others were able to quickly address missing documents and/or incomplete online courses. Great work!

Because of some extenuating circumstances, we're modifying the administrative monitoring calendar a bit for this year. We're combining Winter and Spring monitorings, meaning we'll only formally look at your staffing data one more time this year! You can see exactly what will be monitored on the Winter Staffing Checklists, available on the Monitoring page of ELWA.

Winter monitoring will take place in February and results emails will be sent by the end of the month. Like in the Fall, we're hoping not to spend time writing Action Plans for findings that only require a simple fix (stray paperwork or online course), so you'll have a period of time to correct any items before Action Plans are discussed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at KRiddle@psed.org.

Site Level School Readiness Goals

Kay Lancaster, Associate Superintendent for Early Learning

We are currently working on a process to align this process with our 5-year-goals. If you have already turned in the goals for your site, we will honor what you have submitted. Please stay tuned for more information about the new process in the near future.

ERSEA Re-Design

Talena Dixon, Director ECEAP and Early Learning Program Operations

We are currently re-designing our ERSEA system to be a more streamlined process that better aligns with both Head Start and ECEAP standards. We have gathered a tremendous amount of valuable input from site staff, parents, ESD staff, and Center Directors, and are using it to inform the new process. We are currently vetting our work with a variety of stakeholders. We will be training FS staff later in February and early March. Training will be required prior to enrolling families, and we will need Center Directors to ensure that staff attend the training. Stay tuned for more.

Creative Curriculum Training for Preschool Head Start and ECEAP Teachers

From Cheryl Habgood, Professional Learning Systems Manager

Due to staff transition here at the ESD, we no longer have certified trainers on staff for the Creative Curriculum. Because this training is required for both ECEAP and Head Start teachers, we have reached out to the CC trainers at the Washington State Department of Early Learning, and they have agreed to provide one training for us (because it was already on our schedule). It is the “official” two full-day training they typically provide, which means our published training schedule has been changed. It was originally planned to be a three-part training, on 1/19, 2/16 and 3/16.

The new schedule is as follows:

- 1/19/18 CANCELLED
- 2/16/18 Now scheduled to run all day, from 8:15 am (for check in and 8:30 start) to 4:00 pm with a 1-hour lunch on your own.
- 3/16/18 Now scheduled to run all day, from 8:15 am (for check in and 8:30 start) to 4:00 pm with a 1-hour lunch on your own.

It is important for us to know how many participants will attend, so please register for this new schedule by following this link: <http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=rmxccleab&oeidk=a07ef0g9h6ja2eab6c7>

Performance Standards for both ECEAP and Head Start require official training in the curriculum used within our program. Attending both days of this training will meet that requirement, as well as ensure that the children in your classroom will have the best chance at strong learning gains due to your knowledge and application of the Creative Curriculum.

We’re in the process of determining next steps for the provision of this training in the future, which means I can’t share with you any future dates that would meet the requirements of receiving training within the first year of employment. ECEAP staff are always able to access the trainings provided periodically by DEL staff. We will publicize those dates when we get that information in our monthly communication from DEL.

If you have questions about this, please contact Cheryl Habgood at CHabgood@psed.org.

Curriculum Fidelity Monitoring Observations starting in February

“Implementing Curriculum to Fidelity” is a new approach for our program that moves us beyond compliance and into a cycle of continuous improvement: Plan-Do-Study-Act. Read more about it on page this on page 6.

DEL seeks help of licensed child care providers in setting the subsidy rate by taking Market Rate Survey

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Staffing Changes?

Do you have changes in staffing at your center? New staff, staff who have left or retired, or staff who have changed jobs? Please take a moment to fill out an [online form](#) that keeps us apprised of the changes at your center, so that we can make sure information is routed to the right staff!

Please fill in all fields of the online form and check that all of the information entered is correct. This will help us ensure that our systems are as accurate as possible.

Staff Information Forms

- **New Staff**
- **Change: Contact Information**
- **Change: Position or Location**
- **Staff Departure**

WHAT'S NEW IN EDUCATION



Center Directors - Read Other Sections

Read each section of this Connector for important information related to implementing your program.



Monthly To-Do Lists/Deliverables

Use this checklist to ensure that you complete all required deliverables this month.

[February To-Do/Deliverables](#)

Additional Limited Restraint Practices Training Added

From Cheryl Habgood, Professional Learning Systems Manager

To assist in ensuring that all Teaching staff and Family Support staff who have regular contact with children meet the requirement to be trained in Limited Restraint Practices, we have added two sessions. This is a one-time requirement.

- **Friday, March 9 at Bates South Campus in Tacoma, from 9:00 am -12:30 pm.** [Register here](#) for this training session.
- **Monday, April 23 at Auburn School District Administration Office from 12:30 pm –3:30 pm.** [Register here](#) for this training session.

Creative Curriculum Training for Preschool Head Start and ECEAP Teachers

Due to staff transition here at the ESD, we no longer have certified trainers on staff for the Creative Curriculum. Because this training is required for both ECEAP and Head Start teachers, we have reached out to the CC trainers at the Washington State Department of Early Learning, and they have agreed to provide one training for us (because it was already on our schedule). Read more about this on page 3.

Curriculum Fidelity Monitoring Observations starting in February

From Nubia Lopez, Monitoring and Compliance Program Manager

“Implementing Curriculum to Fidelity” is a new approach for our program that moves us beyond compliance and into a cycle of continuous improvement: Plan-Do-Study-Act. Implementing Creative Curriculum with fidelity will be a multi-year endeavor; below is an outline for the 2017-2018 program year.

Why are we conducting Curriculum Fidelity Observations?

1. **Big Picture: Children do better!** Research shows implementing a curriculum to fidelity leads to increased outcomes for children, as there is consistent quality across the program regardless of which classroom a child is in, who their teacher is, or the needs of the other children in the classroom. When teachers are implementing a curriculum to fidelity, they are better able to individualize and assure that every child is receiving high quality instruction.
2. **Baseline assessment for whole program & center level trends:** Our goal in developing and implementing a Curriculum Fidelity Tool in 2017-2018 is to provide our program with general information about how we are doing as a program to implement a curriculum to fidelity. This process will:
 - a. Provide a baseline assessment for the whole program. This information will inform training/professional learning and inform other supports, e.g. materials, coaching, etc., for the years ahead.
 - b. Begin to identify center-level trends which can be used to inform our professional learning and coaching approaches and planning at the center-level.

What to expect: At the sites what can you expect from PSESD Early Learning Staff?

- Our Education Monitors (Lisa Vamvas and Ezra Stoker-Graham) will start scheduling their observations for the beginning of February.
- To help us build our internal capacity, the Education Monitors may be accompanied by one or two Education and/or DLL coaches.
- Observations will take between 90 minutes to 2 hours.

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WHAT'S NEW IN EDUCATION — Continued

Continued from Page 6 — CURRICULUM FIDELITY MONITORING OBSERVATIONS STARTING IN FEBRUARY

- We will start the scheduling observations with teachers who have been trained on the Creative Curriculum in previous years first, and newer teachers towards the end of the assessment period.
- Our goal is to observe each teaching team by the end of the program year (June 2018 for part-year and August 2018 for full-year programs). We will start observations with part-year programs, full-year programs may not be assessed until the summer.
- The Curriculum Fidelity tool is comprehensive and includes many items which were previously found in multiple education monitoring checklists in the past. The tool can be found [here](#).
- Because this is our baseline assessment year these observations will not result in CAPs and the data will be used for program-wide trends.

Follow-up and Next steps:

- Throughout this process Education Coaches and Education Monitors will come together to identify trends across the program and begin to identify areas of need.
- As we build out our multi-year plan we will have conversations with center directors and site staff to seek input on how to move curriculum implementation forward.

If you have any questions about the Curriculum Fidelity Observations, please contact Nubia Lopez at NLopez@psed.org.

CLASS Observations

We will be conducting CLASS Observations this winter/spring in all of our pre-K classrooms (HS and ECEAP). To assist with this endeavor we have hired Jennifer Hurlburt as a CLASS Consultant. She will be reaching out to sites to start scheduling CLASS Observations starting in February.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on what matters—the classroom interactions that boost children’s learning. The CLASS tool focuses on effective teaching and helps teachers recognize and understand the power of their interactions with children. The CLASS tool helps increase teacher effectiveness. Children in classrooms with higher CLASS scores achieve at higher levels than their peers in classrooms with lower CLASS scores.

The CLASS tool measures interactions that support learning. These developmentally appropriate interactions are organized into domains and dimensions:

Age	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Pre-K 3-5 year olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive Climate• Negative Climate• Teacher Sensitivity• Regard for Student Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavior Management• Productivity• Instructional Learning Formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concept Development• Quality of Feedback• Language Modeling

For more information about the CLASS assessment tool go to: <http://www.teachstone.org>

If you have questions about CLASS observations, please contact Nubia Lopez at NLopez@psed.org.

WHAT'S NEW IN FAMILY SUPPORT



Center Directors - Read Other Sections

Read each section of this Connector for important information related to implementing your program.



Monthly To-Do Lists/Deliverables

Use this checklist to ensure that you complete all required deliverables this month.

[February To-Do/Deliverables](#)

E-ALERT (January 24) to Family Support Staff and Center Leaders

From Talena Dixon and the ERSEA Re-Design Team

We are continuing our work on the ERSEA Re-Design, and the theme [#weheardyou](#) is holding strong! As you can imagine, re-designing a big system like ERSEA is a huge undertaking, and we want do our best to make sure that the changes we propose address the problems of practice that you told us are the most impactful. PSESD staff are really digging into the work, and as part of this, we've been reaching out to site staff, Policy Council, and our funders for input and feedback. As you know, our plan is to train all site staff in February and early March. We are in the process of looking at all subcontractor calendars so that we offer training dates when sites are in session. More information about training is coming soon. In the meantime, please **PAUSE** on the following actions:

Should I?	Can I move forward?	What work is happening in the re-design?
Give out 2017-18 Applications for families who want to apply for 2018-19?	 No Please create a list to track anyone who needs the 2018-19 Application, and send out as soon as it is published.	We are streamlining and simplifying the current Application.
Copy current ELPM documents to use for the 2018-19 program year?	 No Please use the current forms, including the 2017-18 Application, to enroll children ONLY during the current program year.	We are streamlining, simplifying and eliminating forms.
Use the new Federal Poverty Level (FPL) guidelines that just released by the federal govt?	 No Please use the current FPL guidelines when enrolling children for 2017-18. The FPL guidelines will be used for 2018-19.	The new FPL guidelines will be included in the re-designed 2018-19 ERSEA system.

If you have questions about any of this information, please contact your Family Engagement Coach. Thank you for your outstanding work with families!

Advocacy Day is February 8!

Advocacy Day is fast approaching. Read about the details on page 2.

Additional Limited Restraint Practices Training Added

From Cheryl Habgood, Professional Learning Systems Manager

To assist in ensuring that all Teaching staff and Family Support staff who have regular contact with children meet the requirement to be trained in Limited Restraint Practices, we have added two sessions. This is a one-time requirement.

- **Friday, March 9** at Bates South Campus in Tacoma, from 9:00 am -12:30 pm. [Register here](#) for this training session.
- **Monday, April 23** at Auburn School District Administration Office from 12:30 pm –3:30 pm. [Register here](#) for this training session.

Peer Programs: Schedule your Teachback today!

From Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Parents participating in the first session of Peer Programs training (Health and Literacy) are engaged and learning! We are entering Week 4 of the training and parents are feeling welcomed, informed, and valued. Have scheduled teachbacks for your center?

Continued on Page 9

WHAT'S NEW IN FAMILY SUPPORT — Continued

Continued from Page 8 — PEER PROGRAMS: SCHEDULE YOUR TEACHBACK TODAY!

The trained parents are excited about the opportunity to travel to centers where they facilitate a teachback (presentation). A teachback is an opportunity to share information and distribute tools parents can use right away to help their children and families succeed in school and life. Support our trained parent presenters and schedule your teachbacks today! Note: You do not need to have a trained presenter from your site to host a teachback.

Have you referred parents for the second session of Peer Programs training (Peer Math and Peer Money)? Referrals are due no later than March 8. Training begins March 29 and runs for eight consecutive Thursday evenings from 5:00 pm to 8:30 pm at the Renton ESD building. Parents will be reimbursed for their mileage and \$5/hour of training plus 2 hours for travel time.

If you have questions, or would like more information, please contact Quincy Stone (Parent Leadership Manager) at QStone@psed.org or 425-917-7875.

Policy Council Corner

From Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

The February edition of the Policy Council Corner Newsletter is available on the [Policy Council page](#) at www.EarlyLearningWA.org in English and Spanish. Please be sure to pass them out to parents! Policy Council brochures can still be requested here.

If you have questions, or would like more information, please contact Quincy Stone (Parent Leadership Manager) at QStone@psed.org or 425-917-7875.

WHAT'S NEW IN HEALTH AND NUTRITION



Center Directors - Read Other Sections

Read each section of this Connector for important information related to implementing your program.



Monthly To-Do Lists/Deliverables

Use this checklist to ensure that you complete all required deliverables this month.

[February To-Do/Deliverables](#)

New Email Addresses: Health Line and Menu Line

For sending documents to the Health Line, use the new email address: health@psed.org.

For sending menus and Special Diet Lists to the Menu Line, use the new email address: menus@psed.org. You may also continue to upload your own menus [here](#).

ChildPlus and Health: Please read carefully (HS/EHS only)

Guide for what needs to be uploaded and/or entered in Child Plus:

DOCUMENT	ACTION REQUIRED
Immunizations	Attach in ChildPlus only; do not code or enter any other information.
Health Histories (ALL types)	Must be fully completed with parent/guardian, reviewed and signed by parent and staff; Attach and Enter Event-using the dated reviewed with parent Status=Completed
Child Health Plans-PLT and Non-PLT	Attach and Enter Event; see instructions
Parent/Guardian Consent for Emergency Treatment	Attach only
Physical Exams	Attach and Enter Event; see instructions
Dentals	Upload all dental exam forms EXCEPT Sea Mar and Community Health Care forms

Injury Report Form (Licensed Centers)

There is a new required [Injury Report Form from DEL](#) for child care sites. All licensed sites do **not** need to complete two different Injury Report Forms.

- Use the DEL Injury Report Form only.
- Continue using the PSED [Injury/Illness Log](#) to track ongoing.
- Complete an [Incident Report Form](#) for any very serious injuries—along with reporting serious injuries to PSED that require medical attention beyond basic First Aid from site staff.

There are two items that are not spelled out on the DEL Form as being needed—so we want to be sure that the information gets documented:

- 1) The form asks the staff person to record “Professional Medical Attention”. One of the check boxes says “first aid” under this category. There is no other place to indicate what treatment the child received unless it is written out in the description of how the injury occurred.
- 2) The form also does not have a place (as our current form does) to indicate what steps will be taken to mitigate another injury like this from happening—such as if the child tripped on something, pinched their fingers, etc. We would want this to be added somewhere on the form.

Please follow this process. We will be adopting the use of the DEL Injury Form with some adaptations. We are in contact with DEL and have shared this information.

Reminders about Dietary Accommodations

Most sites have children, parents or medical professionals requesting dietary accommodations. Should the parents, the site, or the food service facility provide the specialty foods for the children? The answer depends on certain criteria.

Program site or their food service provides food substitution:

1. **Doctor Note for a Medical Condition:** If the child has a note from a medical professional then the program site or their food service must provide the dietary accommodation. The signed note or doctor-signed child health plan must include which foods to avoid and which foods to substitute. If food service is unable to provide the dietary accommodations then the program site needs to purchase and provide foods ordered by the doctor. For example, one child has a note from the doctor to eliminate cow's milk and substitute soy milk. In this case, food service may be able to provide soy milk with every meal. However, if food service does not provide it, then the program must use funds to supply the soy milk.
2. **Parent preference for a religious or cultural reason:** If the parent requests a food substitution for a religious or cultural reason then the program site or their food service must provide the dietary accommodation. For example, a parent requests vegetarian meals to honor their religious belief. Food service or the program must provide meat alternatives on the menu. This must be done whenever possible and if staff feel like they need to make an exception for parent-provided foods—please consult with your Health/Nutrition/Safety Coach before arranging this with a parent.

Parents provide dietary substitutions:

1. **Parent preference for reasons other than religious/cultural:** If the parent requests a specific food preference then the parent must provide the dietary accommodation. The meal remains claimable if the parent provides only ONE meal component that meets CACFP guidelines. [Almond, rice, coconut, hemp milk do not meet CACFP guidelines] If the parent provides more than one food component or the food does not meet CACFP guidelines then the meal is not claimable. For safety and equity issues, it is best practice to discourage parents providing food from outside the classroom. The Special Diet List must be used to communicate to the ESD any time a parent is providing food in the classroom.

Resources Change

The [“How to Handle Injury and Illness at School”](#) booklet is no longer available for us to order. You can download your own copy (at the above link) and print to post on the classroom Emergency Board as needed.



Read Other Sections

Read the Education section and the Family Support section of the Connector for important information related to your work.

To promote mental wellness for children and families, we must promote our own mental wellness

From Nicole Johanson Senior Coordinator (Mental Health Services), and Kristin Wells, Mental Health Consultant

The following article was written by Elena Aguilar and was published in the October 17, 2017 edition of Edutopia. There is a cost to working in a caring profession and teaching is definitely a profession that is vulnerable to stress. We promote mental wellness for children and families in our programs and in order to do that, we must promote our own mental wellness.

Burnout is physical and emotional exhaustion. It can manifest as low-level depression. It's what happens as a result of unrelenting stress—both physical and emotional. And you can prevent it. You can recognize the indicators of burnout, you can boost your emotional resilience, and you can draw boundaries around what you do so that you can tend to your physical and emotional well-being.

Taking Action

Whether you're in your first or 15th year of teaching, here are 10 tips for staying energized, at any point in the school year:

1. **Care for your body.** Prioritize sleep above all else. Aim for eight hours a night. There are many connections between sleep and emotional wellness. Eat nutritious food. Move your body. You know this, but I need to remind you.
2. **Carve out downtime and honor it religiously.** Make sure you take at least one weekend day off. During the week, be sure to stop working by 8 pm. You need to rest. Working yourself to the bone or martyring yourself to the cause is useless. It won't ultimately serve you or your students.
3. **Build in micro-moments of renewal during the day.** Every hour, or at least a couple times a day, sit still for one minute. Close your eyes. Imagine all your stress draining out of the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet.
4. **Cultivate realistic optimism.** Resilient people are optimistic. Remember that challenge and struggle are temporary, not permanent. Being optimistic has nothing to do with being a Pollyanna or denying reality. It's about holding to the belief that positive change is always possible. It's about seeing the glass as half full and half empty.
5. **Hold a growth mindset.** Whatever the challenge is that you're facing—and for teachers there are endless challenges—ask yourself, "What can I learn from this?" This question puts you in a learner mindset and reminds you that you can always learn. Just because you can't do something today doesn't mean you won't be able to do it next week.
6. **Anchor in your why.** Resilient people are driven by purpose. Why are you teaching? What do you want your legacy to be? What motivates you to get up every day? Get clear on your why and use it as an anchor.
7. **Be patient.** Patience is a disposition of the resilient. Be patient with yourself, your students, your colleagues, and your administrators. Patience has nothing to do with complacency, it's just an acceptance that we aren't the master rulers of time and all things and that we can only do what we can do.
8. **Have tea or coffee with a colleague.** Or host a BBQ for your students and their families. Or eat lunch in the staff room. Build your community. In moments of stress, those who thrive are those who strengthen relationships with others.

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WHAT'S NEW IN MENTAL HEALTH — Continued

Continued from Page 12 — PROMOTING OUR OWN MENTAL WELLNESS

9. **Learn to see what you're doing well.** When we get exhausted, and when we're trying really hard to do something well, we have a hard time seeing what's working. Maybe you have an instructional coach, mentor, or administrator who helps you with this, but it's equally important for you to hone your ability to spot your own successes. After all, you're the only one watching you every day. Spend a day being your own best friend, ban your critical self-talk from uttering a word all day, and spend the day narrating your successes: "You got your first-period class focused on the 'Do Now' within 30 seconds! You weren't triggered by Johnny's attitude! You ate breakfast!"
10. **Ask for help.** When you're really struggling, ask colleagues, friends, neighbors, supervisors, mentors, coaches, and partners for help. Ask for all the kinds of help you need. Tell people you're having a hard time. Keep asking until you get what you need. And if you're ever in doubt, even the tiniest bit, about your mental or physical well-being, please seek professional help. Rates of depression and anxiety among teachers are higher than in the general public. Teaching is extremely stressful. If in doubt, get help.

Supporting Ourselves, Supporting Others

High levels of stress and burnout among teachers are symptomatic of a dysfunctional system. As teachers, we need to individually take responsibility for our emotional well-being by cultivating our resilience, so we feel better and can meet the needs of kids. We will then have the energy to better address the underlying conditions and root causes of stress.

Education leaders also need to take responsibility for creating conditions in which teachers thrive. School administrators can help teachers by:

- Giving teachers positive feedback regularly.
- Helping teachers see their impact and efficacy.
- Addressing conflicts between staff.
- Facilitating meaningful professional development so that teachers can continue honing their craft.

If you have any questions on how to support mental wellness for children, families or staff, feel free to contact:

Nicole Johanson, Early Learning, Mental Health, Consultant
Kristin Wells, Early Learning, Mental Health, Consultant

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