

# **Championing Special Educators: Strategies for Recruitment & Retention in Educator Preparation**

**Session 4 – Special Education Candidate Wellness**

**Check-In Question: What do you perceive to be the resources/skills that your candidates need to thrive?**



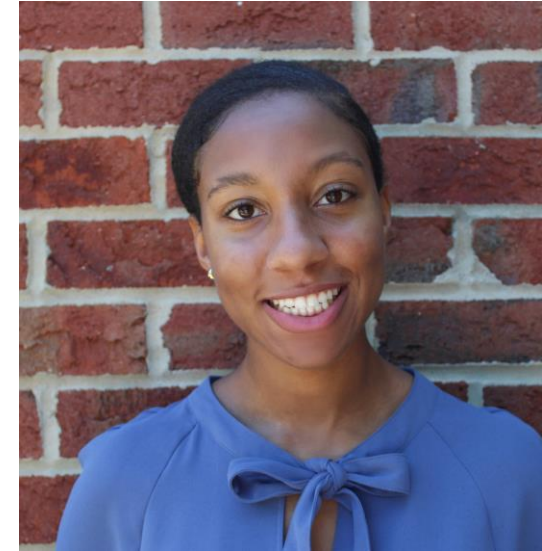
# Introductions



**Weadé James, Ph.D.**  
Vice President,  
Organizational Advancement  
AACTE



**Brooke Evans, M.A.**  
Assistant Director,  
Research & Practice  
AACTE



**Sarah Haynes**  
Engagement Specialist,  
AIR/CEEDAR

# Championing Special Educators: Scope and Sequence

<b>Tues, Oct. 31, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Multiple Pathways Into the Profession</b>
<b>Thurs, Nov. 30, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Making a Special Education Degree Affordable</b>
<b>Tues, Jan. 23, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Clinical Practice Experiences</b>
<b>Thurs, Mar. 28, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Special Education Candidate Wellness</b>
<b>Thurs, Apr. 25, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Benefits of Special Education NIC</b>
<b>Thurs, May 2, 3-4 pm ET</b>	<b>Championing Special Education Through Advocacy</b>



# SpEd 3.0 Network Improvement Community (NIC)

- ‡ A NIC is a "scientific learning community in which researchers, practitioners, and other interested partners come together to address a common problem of practice through a focused, iterative approach." (Institute of Ed. Scienced 2022)
- ‡ SpEd NIC 3.0 Mentor Model: Members will create **systems change** through a **mentor model**, using CEEDAR's existing Cross-State Learning Group structures to **accelerate the adoption of promising recruitment strategies** in the field of special and exceptional education preparation.
- ‡ **AACTE seeks Mentor and Mentee Institutions for partnership 2024-2027.**
- ‡ Affinity group meeting: **April 25, Focus on SpED NIC benefits**

# Resource Overview

- ✧ [Profiles of Early Childhood Special Educator Well-Being \(2022\)](#)
- ✧ [These aren't the kids I signed up for: the lived experience of general education, early childhood preservice teachers in classrooms for children with special needs \(2020\)](#)
- ✧ [What Makes Teachers Well? \(2021\)](#)
- ✧ [How to Grow Teacher Wellbeing in Your Schools](#)
- ✧ [Teachers: Protecting Your Mental Health](#)
- ✧ [Make Educator Well-Being a Priority Now](#)

# Exemplar



**Hallie Fox, Ph.D.**  
Head of Research  
Educators Thriving



**Tyler Hester, Ed.D.**  
CEO  
Educators Thriving



EDUCATORS  
**THRIVING**

# From Surviving to Thriving



**Stakes**



**Solutions**



**Story**





**Stakes**



**Solutions**



**Story**

News

# A third of Americans now show signs of clinical anxiety or depression, Census Bureau finds

Alyssa Fowers and William Wan, The Washington Post

May 26, 2020 | Updated: July 10, 2020 7:04 p.m.





OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS.  
EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS.

About ▾

RAND Campaign

Press Room

Events

RESEARCH ▾

LATEST INSIGHTS ▾

POLICY EXPERT

[RAND](#) > [Published Research](#) > [Research Reports](#) >

# Stress Topped the Reasons Why Public School Teachers Quit, Even Before COVID-19

by [Melissa Kay Diliberti](#), [Heather L. Schwartz](#), [David Grant](#)

Related Topics: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#), [Educational Technology](#), [Elementary Education](#), [Teachers and Teaching](#)



Citation



Embed



View related products



GALLUP BLOG SEPTEMBER 8, 2022

## Putting Out Teacher Burnout

BY MERIA CARSTARPHEN

TEACHING & LEARNING

## The Mental Health Crisis Causing Teachers to Quit

Teachers are leaving careers they love in a last-ditch effort to save their mental health. How did we get here?

By Stephen Noonoo May 2, 2022

## IT'S TIME TO TAKE Teacher Burnout Seriously. Here's How.

By Tim Klein and Della Lippa June 15, 2022

Businessweek + Equality  
America's Broken Education System

## Part 1: Why Teachers Are Quitting

## Educators say burnout is leading to more staffing shortages

The National Education Association calls the shortages in schools a "five-alarm crisis."

**'I dread every day': Overworked and under pressure, our teachers are in the midst of a mental health crisis**

## Burnout Is Educators' Top Concern. Here Are 4 Ways To Help

Expert Viewpoint

## 5 Ways to Reduce Teacher Burnout and Increase Retention

By Becca Hughes | 08/30/22

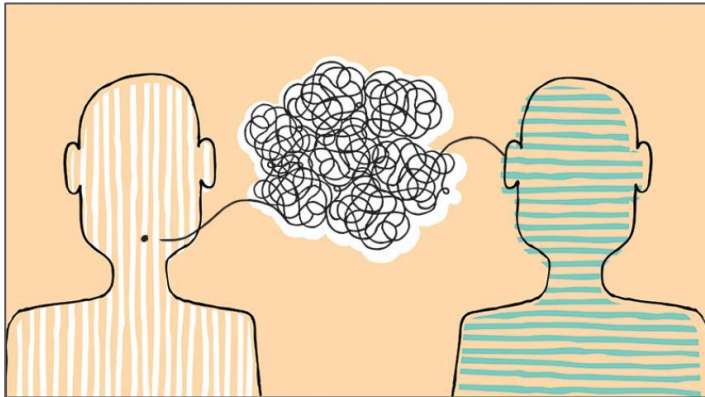


1. Overwhelm

# THE FIVE PITFALLS



2. Personal Neglect



3. Conflict



4. Unexpected  
Challenges



5. Isolation





**Stakes**



**Solutions**



**Story**





Higher levels of **educator well-being** have been associated with:

- Higher student **well-being** (Harding et al., 2019)
- Lower student **distress** (Harding et al., 2019)
- Lower student **stress** and morning **cortisol** (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016)
- Higher **math** scores (McClellan & Connor, 2015)
- Higher **secondary student achievement** (Briner & Dewberry, 2007)



“ PROMOTING TEACHER WELL-BEING IS A VALID AND APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY FOR THE PROFESSION AS IT ENHANCES THE CAPACITY OF SCHOOLS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE POPULATIONS. ”

Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing—Teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin?. *Educational and child psychology*, 29(4), 8.





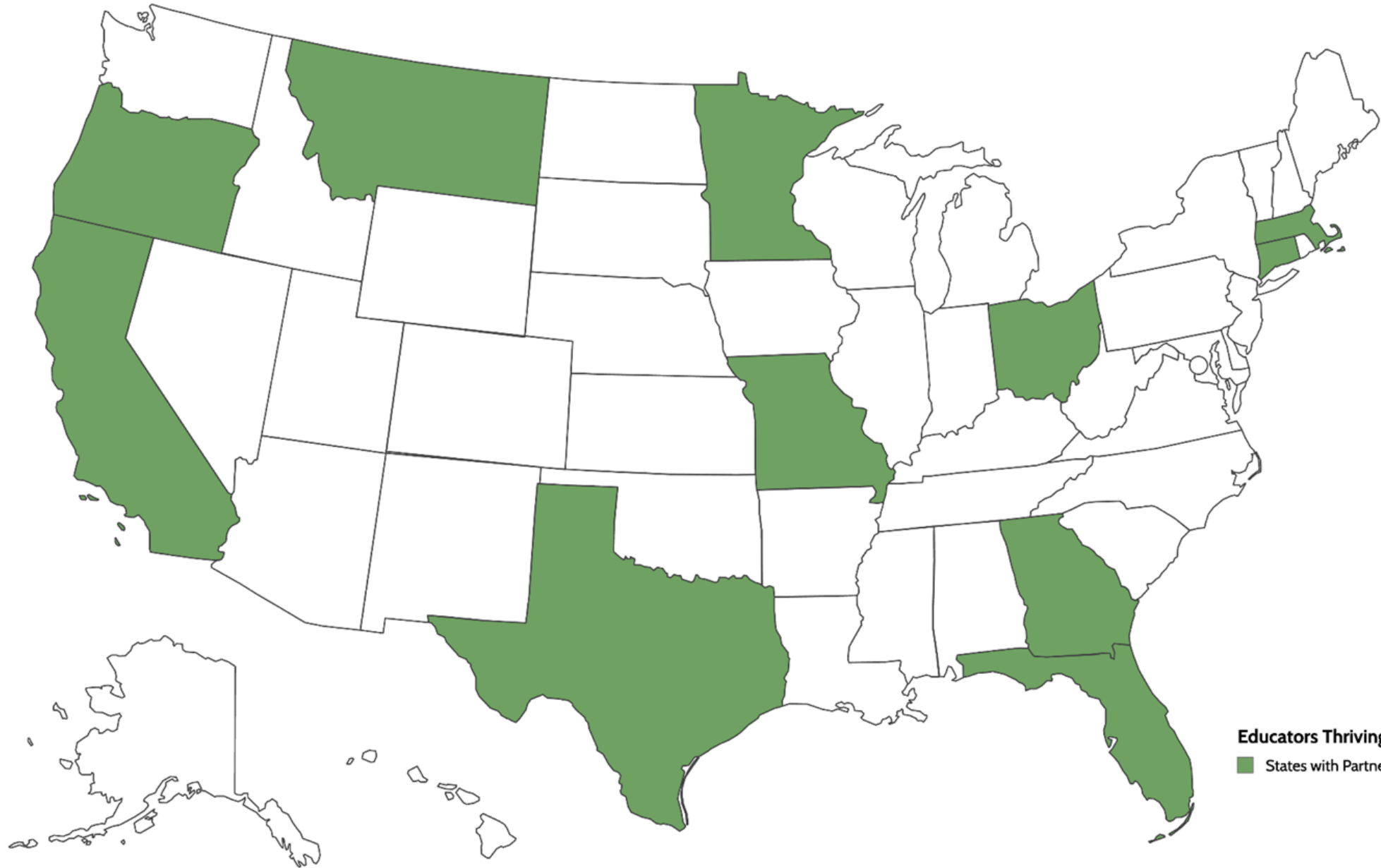
Every educator **experiences well-being** and reaches their full potential – and works in a system that **makes this possible.**

- Increase educator well-being through research-based personal development
- Sustain educator well-being through system measurement & continuous improvement



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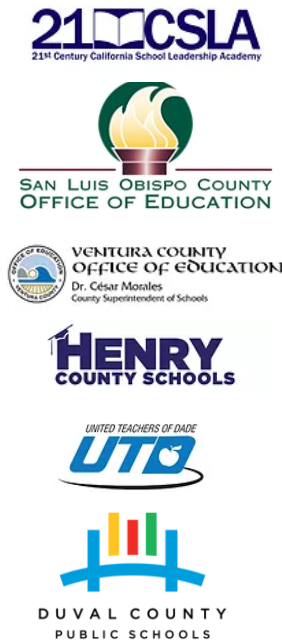


**Educators Thriving Partners**  
■ States with Partner Orgs



Kern County Superintendent of Schools  
Office of Mary C. Barlow ...advocates for children

TEACHER INDUCTION! PROGRAM



2018 - 19



2019 -



2020 -



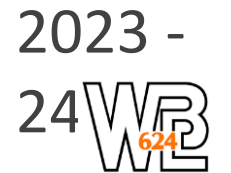
2021 -



22



2022 -



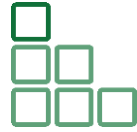
2023 -



## Session Options



THE FIVE PITFALLS



PRIORITIZING



CORE VALUES



PURPOSE, VISION & GOALS



STRENGTHS



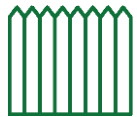
HABITS



DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS



RELATIONSHIPS



BOUNDARIES



TIME MANAGEMENT



MINDFULNESS



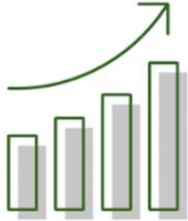
APPRECIATION



APOLOGY

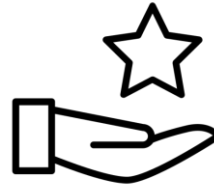


Personal development happens **interpersonally**.



### RESEARCH-LED

proven strategies,  
ongoing program  
impact evaluation



### RECOGNIZED

stipends, units,  
integrated into  
induction or ongoing  
professional  
development



### RELATIONAL

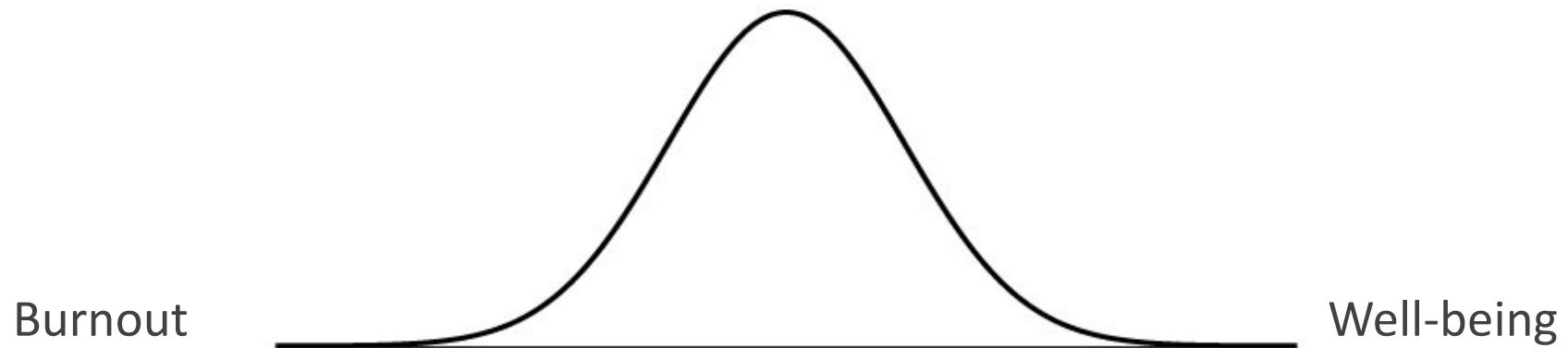
small group,  
discussion-based  
in person or on  
Zoom





Every educator **experiences well-being** and reaches their full potential – and works in a system that **makes this possible.**

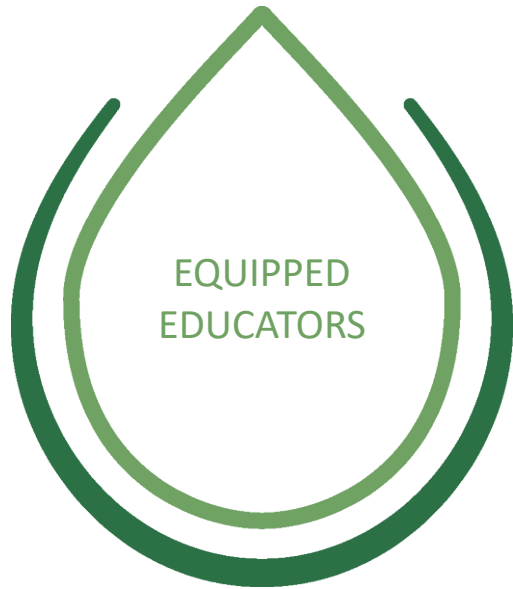
- Increase educator well-being through research-based personal development
- Sustain educator well-being through system measurement & continuous improvement



...but what is educator **well-being**?



## The 6 Most Predictive Factors of Educator Well-being



RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP +  
SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

- 1 Responsive Leadership & Supportive Culture
- 2 Acceptance
- 3 Growth Orientation
- 4 Personal Well-being
- 5 Adaptability
- 6 (Absence of) Depletion

What stands out?

What questions do you have?



**EDUCATOR WELL-BEING MEASURE**

Directions: Respond to each item on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

FACTOR	ITEMS
<b>RESPONSIVE LEADERSHIP &amp; SUPPORTIVE CULTURE</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>GROWTH</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>ACCEPTANCE</b>	<p>I know when not to take something personally at work. When I feel difficult emotions, I accept them without being derailed.</p>
<b>PERSONAL WELL-BEING</b>	<p>I engage in hobbies outside of school that energize me. I am content with my life outside of work.</p>
<b>DEPLETION</b>	<p>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.</p>
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b>	<p>I generally view myself as even-keeled at work. I can be flexible even when things don't go my way.</p>



[www.educatorsthiving.org](http://www.educatorsthiving.org)

# Exemplar



**Alicia Drelick, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Rowan University



**Casey Woodfield, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor  
Rowan University  
Faculty Fellow  
Rowan's Center for Neurodiversity



# Supports for Preservice Special Education Teachers



DRS. CASEY WOODFIELD & ALICIA DRELICK

with

DRS. MICHELLE DAMIANI & BRIE MORETTINI

# AGENDA

1

OVERVIEW

2

LEVELED  
SUPPORTS

3

ACTION STEPS

# Why focus on PRESERVICE SPECIAL EDUCATORS



## MENTAL HEALTH PRIORITIES

Rates of documented mental health concerns at a peak ([Healthy Minds](#))

- This is consistent across demographic groups (BIPOC students least likely to access treatment)



## PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Special Ed. often requires additional program components/certifications

- i.e.: New Jersey (TOSD Endorsement):  
Students master subject/grade-specific content and special education practices and policies



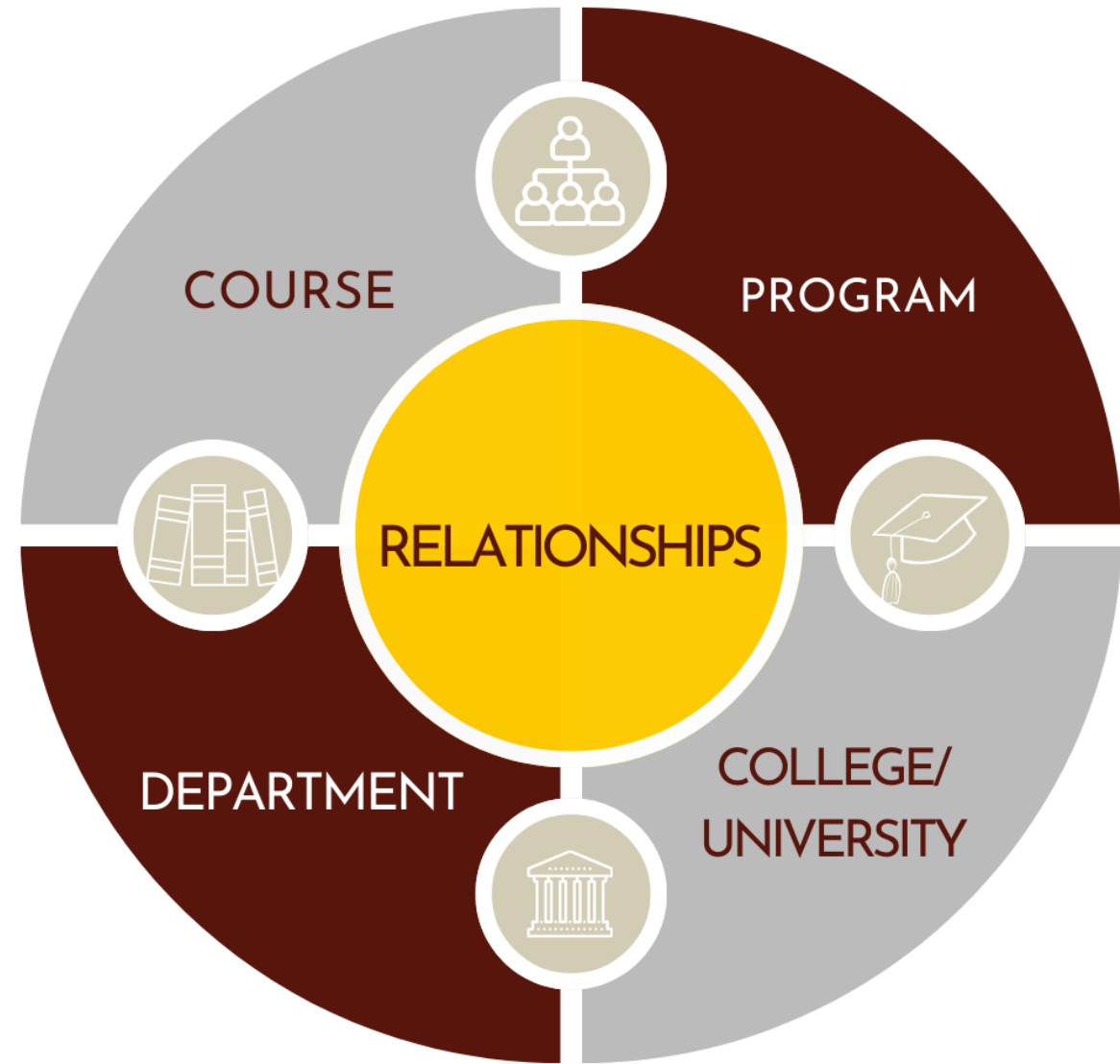
## ATTRITION TRENDS

Special Education teachers experience high attrition when entering the field due to stressors around:

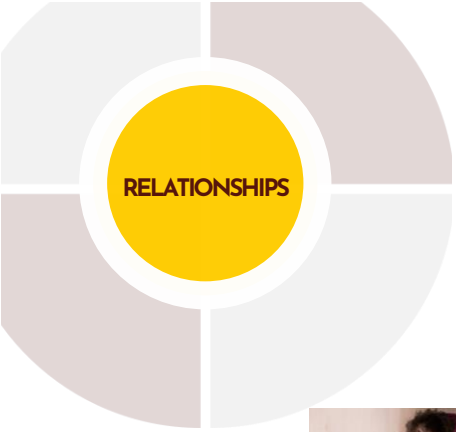
- Role
- Interpersonal dynamics
- Social emotional needs
- Personal experiences (Hester et al., 2020)

# Leveled Supports

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## CONNECTION BY DESIGN



COHORT MODEL

- **Community** of learners
- Potential for increased **engagement** and efficacy leading to higher retention (Shields & Jesup, 2017)
- Life-long **relationships** for future networking



MULTIPLE LAYERS OF FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

- Co-teaching
- Research
- Looping with students



BRIDGING MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Former student highlights
  - Featured speakers
  - Publications and presentations
- Alumni as models and/mentors

# COMMITMENT TO UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

COURSE



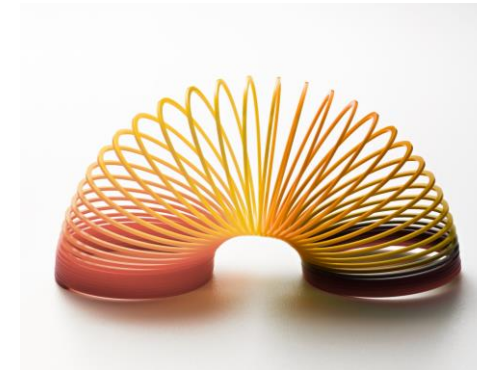
COURSE  
DESIGN

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Choice and options for:

- accessing content
- engaging with materials & peers
- demonstrating knowledge

Inclusivity statements that center well-being as part of a UDL approach

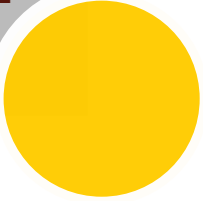


REFRAMING  
ACCOMMODATIONS

- 
- Flexible deadlines
  - No time limits on tests/quizzes
  - Open use of technology
  - Access to class notes or recorded lectures
  - Communication options




# INTENTIONAL SUPPORTS THROUGH LEARNING ACTIVITIES

COURSE



- Critical friends groups
- Autobiography of dis/ability
- **Embedding SEL and wellness into assignments and class interaction**
  - Ex: SEL openers
- Transparent pedagogy
- Unpacking field experiences



<p>1  ...something to brighten up the day:</p> <p>Write, draw, sing, doodle, paint, sew, knit, cook, collage, etc. <b>(Optional:</b> Share on your slide deck)</p>	<p>2 </p> <p>Email to individually check in with your professor</p>
<p>4 </p> <p>Do something kind for yourself or someone you care about.</p>	<p>ONE THIRD OF A CHOICE BOARD ASSIGNMENT</p>

# INTENTIONAL SUPPORTS THROUGH LEARNING ACTIVITIES

COURSE



## EMBEDDED FORMATIVE SUPPORTS

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- Learning Inventory for students
  - Example questions
- Mid-semester check ins

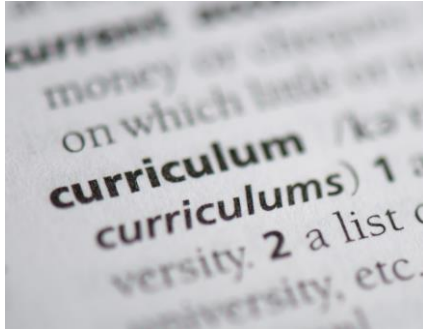


- What helps you **feel safe** in a classroom setting?
- What sort of teaching approaches or activities have **helped you learn in the past** (e.g. group work, notes, reminders)
- What kinds of **activities do not work well** for you (e.g. group work, notes, reminders)?
- What do you **need me to know about you** in order to teach you effectively?
- Is there **anything else** I should know about you as your teacher (student athlete, commuter, busy schedule, working student, etc.)?



## PROGRAM

# PROGRAM DESIGN



### INTENTIONAL CURRICULUM

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- Foundation of Inclusive Education
- Working with Families & Communities
- Trauma-informed Practices for Educators



### STRUCTURAL COMPONENTS

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- **Hybrid and online** course offerings
- Fully **open days** to allow students to work



### CONSISTENT & STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

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- **Program-wide Announcements**
  - In class, advisors, electronically
- **Reminders about** Deadlines and Opportunities
- **Connections to** University level supports for student success, neurodiversity, wellness, food insecurity, identity-based affinity groups



# RESPONSIVE APPROACH TO PROGRAM SUPPORT



PROGRAM MEETINGS & SUPPORT SESSIONS

- Cohort wellness meetings
- Supported Writing days



COLLABORATIONS ACROSS ROLES

- Advisors, Office of Clinical Placement, and Program Faculty



Example:  
Time Management Workshop series



# STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

## TEACHER TALK



### What?

- Informal, confidential one-on-one virtual consultations with counselors from the Wellness Center via Webex.
- These sessions are tailored to Rowan's College of Ed Pre-Service & Clinical Practice Teachers & Future Educators.



### Why?

- Becoming a teacher or educator can be overwhelming.
- Sometimes just talking to someone can make a difference.



### When?

- Tuesdays 4 pm - 5 pm
- Scan QR Code to Register



### Questions?

- Contact the Wellness Center at 856-256-4333

### NOTE

- Teacher Talk is not a substitute for psychotherapy or formal counseling and does not constitute mental health treatment.
- If appropriate, Teacher Talk counselors can help students determine if formal counseling is something to consider and assist in making an appointment.

- Funds go to Wellness counselors
- **Purpose:** To provide free, informal counseling for students tailored for future educators.

ASSUME GOOD

Visit the form linked below to share a story about how you've modeled or experienced others' efforts to "assume good" within WISE

<https://tinyurl.com/AssumeGood>

- No funds required. Built **time** into: dept. meetings, office spaces & newsletters
- **Purpose:** To model a caring, kind, and supportive space where faculty, staff and students assume the best in one another.

BREATHE STRATEGIES ROWAN RESOURCES WISE WORDS

WISE STUDENT SUPPORT  
*Stress Management*

Read More

Box Breathing Technique

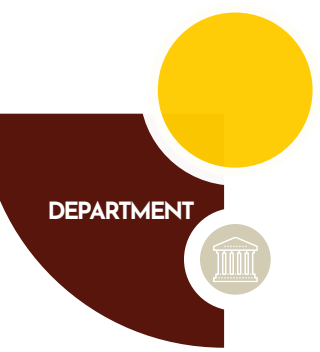
Breathe out  
1 2 3 4  
Breathe in  
1 2 3 4  
Breathe in  
1 2 3 4  
Breathe out  
1 2 3 4

START HERE

"The body benefits from movement, and the mind benefits from stillness."  
-Sakyong Mipham

Rowan University  
College of Education

- No funds required
- **Purpose:** To curate resources that both directly reach students and start conversations with faculty and staff about supportive practices.



# STUDENT SUPPORT COMMITTEE WORK



## SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

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- Connecting BAIE students with College, University and Dept. Specific opportunities



## STUDENT HARDSHIP FUNDS

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- All funds go directly to students
- **Purpose:** To support students facing financial hardship that cannot be resolved through personal resources, Financial Aid, or Dean of Students.
- **Request**, not application



## ONE DEPARTMENT, ONE BOOK

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- Covered cost of books and author visit honorarium
- **Purpose:** To foster a culture of care by building common knowledge and language around trauma and resilience.
- Open to students **and** faculty





# SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES



## FUNDING

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- Praxis funds
- Student teaching stipend (state funded)



## ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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- Praxis workshops & virtual support
- Clearances
- Resumes
- Mock interview
- Job fairs



## FACULTY SUPPORTS FOR WELL-BEING

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- [University-Wide Faculty Guide for Supporting Student Well-being](#)
- Progress Update system connecting to advisors and mentors (Starfish)
- Wellness Center and CARES report process

# ACTION STEPS: GETTING STARTED

1

Update courses to incorporate UDL

We recommend a +1 approach  
(Tobin & Behling, 2018)

2

Establish/refine system for consistent communication and support

3

Collaborate with advisors and placement office focusing on student needs

4

Department-wide training on supporting mental health and wellness

...with continuous discussion about culture and resources

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Thank you! QUESTIONS?

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**100**  
YEARS

ROWAN UNIVERSITY

**College of Education**

1923-2023

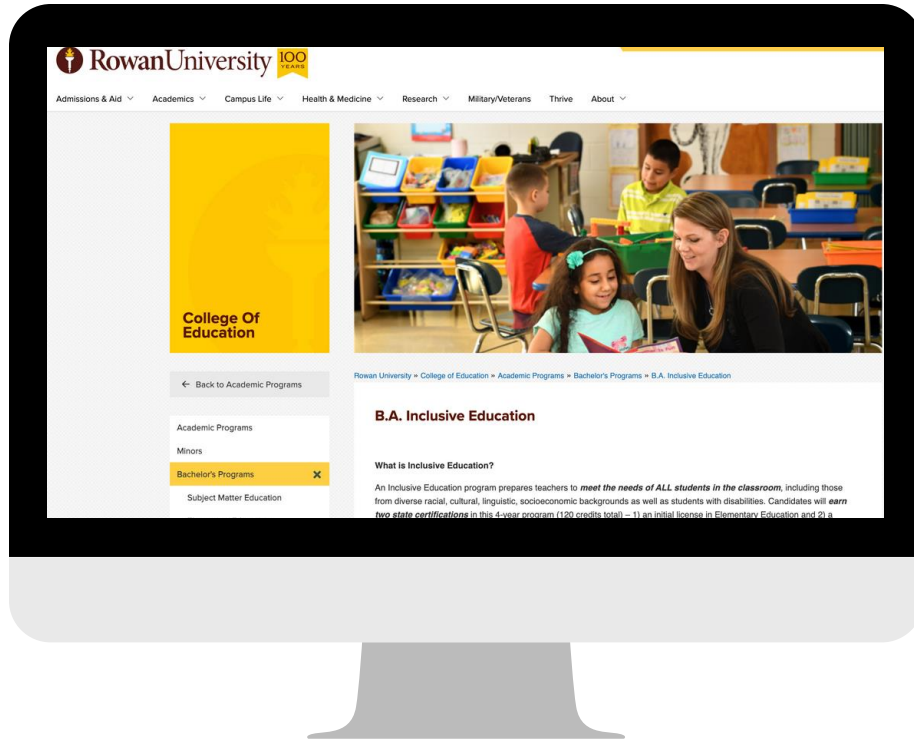
# REFERENCES

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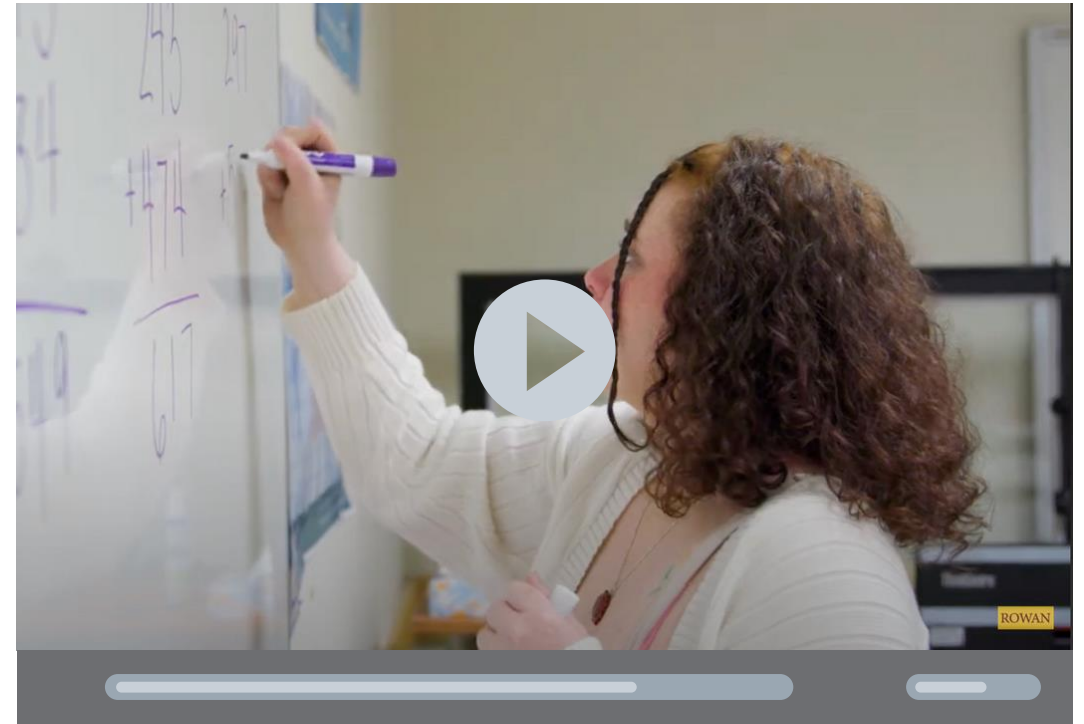
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- Flannery, M. E. (2023, March 29). The mental health crisis on college campuses. National Education Association. <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/mental-health-crisis-college-campuses>
- Freedman, J. E., & Drelick, A. M. (2021). Strive for “Beyond Compliance” through Collaborative Universal Design. *The National Teaching & Learning Forum*, 30(4), 10–11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ntlf.30288>
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- Shields, S. S., & Jesup, C. (2017). Building communities of practice: Pre-service teachers as content architects. *International Journal of Education through Art*, 13(3), 385–394. <https://doi.org/10.1386/eta.13.3.38>
- Tobin, & Behling (2018). *Reach everyone, teach everyone: Universal design for learning in higher education*. West Virginia University Press.

# INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE B.A. IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT ROWAN UNIVERSITY?

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[Click here for the BAIE Program Website](#)



[Click here to watch a 2-min video about our program](#)

# Breakout Groups

- What are some of the wellness strategies that you are already using with your special education candidates?
- Based on our exemplars, what strategies and tools will you take back to your organization?





# Closing & Next Steps

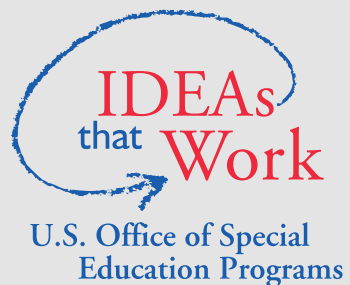


- ✧ Please take our end-of-session survey
- ✧ Next meeting
  - Benefits of Special Education Network Improvement Collaboration (NIC)
  - April 25th, 3-4pm ET

The background features a light blue gradient with several pairs of hands in various shades of blue and purple. Some hands are clapping, with short lines radiating from them to indicate motion. Other hands are giving thumbs up. The hands are positioned around the central text box, creating a sense of collective appreciation.

**Thank You**

# Disclaimer



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