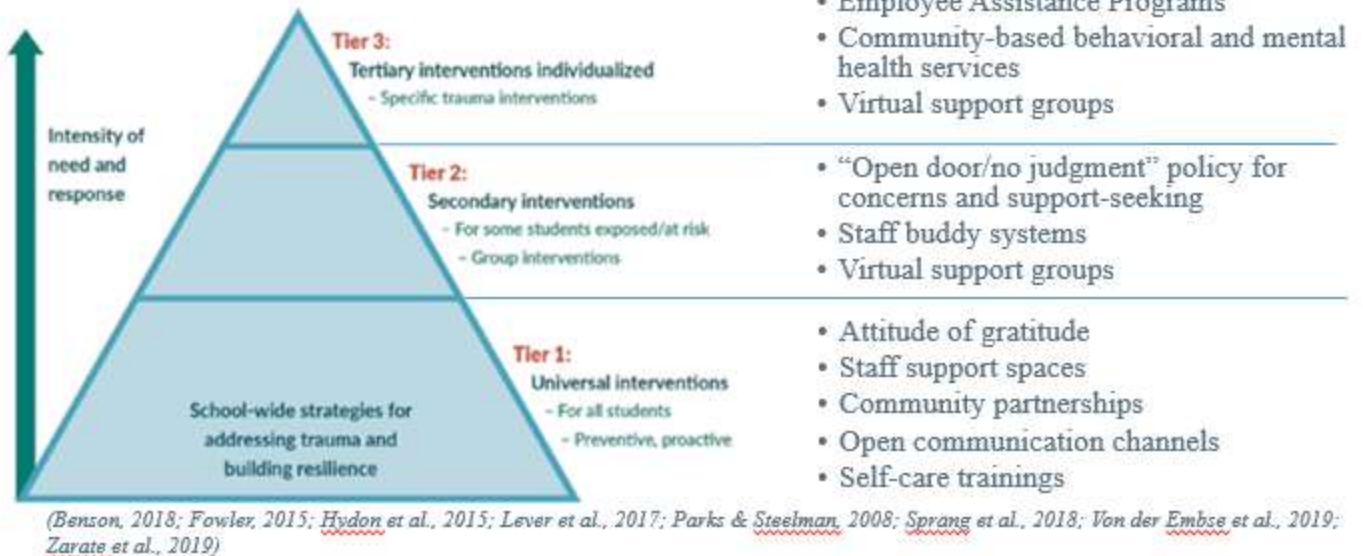


Consider an MTSS approach to supporting staff



CREATING A MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS

- Much in the same way that we envision tiered supports for students, we can use this framework to support school staff.
- In Tier 1, think about the following actions that could create an environment that supports all staff:
 - Attitude of gratitude: Consider initiatives that recognize teachers for the things they do that are part of their job but that they do well. Don't just recognize those that overextend and work past the clock. Consider a monthly op-ed piece in the local paper or something on a local TV station that highlights good things that teachers and staff are doing.
 - Staff support space: Consider spaces in the school that is just for teachers and school staff. Staff can design the space to include furnishings, lighting, and materials that promote relaxation and calm. This is not meant to be a workspace, but a space to re-center and re-connect during free periods or perhaps for a bit of time before heading home.

- Community partnerships: Consider making community-based services accessible that would be helpful for staff and make them feel appreciated. Maybe a community restaurant would like to do a weekly pickup special for teachers and staff that they pick up at a specific time after school. Maybe a local grocery store would like to implement a program where they offer curbside pickup once a week that is reserved for teachers and staff. Encourage businesses to create funds or collections of school supplies so that teachers and staff are not spending out of pocket. These opportunities benefit local businesses and show staff that school leadership and the community appreciate them.
- Open communication channels: Increase direct communication with teachers and staff by instituting “weekly huddles” before school starts. These can be quick Zoom-type meetings where information is shared or simply an opportunity to check in. Let it create an atmosphere of connectedness. Make sure there are ample ways that teachers and staff can communicate with school and county administrators so that staff feel heard.
- Self-care trainings: Consider dedicating at least two trainings a year to topics related to self-care. Consider making one of those trainings a kind of “vacation activity” where teachers may take content home to review but can use the time to engage in a stress-release/bonding activity that they help generate.
- In Tier 2, consider the following for more intensive supports:
 - "Open Door/No Judgment" policy so that staff can bring concerns forward or seek support without judgment or fear of retaliation or punishment. Tier 1 strategies to create a safe and supportive environment for school staff can help to facilitate this strategy.
 - Consider buddy systems for support in classroom work and also for social support. Try to identify “natural helpers” who may be the best candidates who can support those who may be struggling. Consider those teachers and staff who have good self-care skills as sort of “coaches” for new hires and staff who may be struggling with difficult situations. Create this “network” of helpers and assist staff in connecting with this network.
 - Consider virtual support groups as both Tier 2 and Tier 3 options.
- And in Tier 3, consider more individualized approaches:
 - Employee Assistance Programs.
 - Community-based behavioral and mental health services: Local community mental health agencies or private practitioners may be able to set up tele-mental health services that could even be delivered during staffs’ planning periods or

after work hours. Behavioral Health training programs at Universities are often be willing to set up such services as training experiences for graduate students and these services are sometimes offered free of charge. In West Virginia, publicize the utilization of WV411 Help 4 WV services as a way for staff to access local behavioral health services. Above all, provide information that helps staff recognize when they have need of services. Learn the signs of stress and burnout (e.g., referring to the Secondary traumatic stress and self-care packet addressed in the previous slide) and when a staff member is showing these signs, provide options for support.

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