Student Well-Being Framework
A Culture of Well-Being

CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

COMMUNITIES

STUDENTS

EMPLOYEES

SCHOOLS | WORKPLACES

learning | as unique | as every student

Calgary Board
of Education

Student Well-Being Framework

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Introduction

The well-being graphic represents the Calgary Board of Education's (CBE) commitment to sustaining an embedded Culture of Well-Being throughout the organization. Each of the four blades of the pinwheel represents a key element in promoting a Culture of Well-Being within CBE. The Student Well-Being Framework aligns with the three goals of the Education Plan: Learning Excellence, Well-Being, and Truth & Reconciliation, Diversity and Inclusion.

The pinwheel shape invokes a sense of motion; when it spins, the centre remains visible as each element spirals toward the center, contributing to a Culture of Well-Being. When all four elements are balanced and coordinated, students and employees can both thrive. This framework will focus on the student element within CBE's overall commitment to well-being.

Mission & Values

Well-being is an important contributor to success in school, and it is apparent that students need to be healthy to learn (Policy Priorities for Child & Youth Well-Being, 2021). Well-being is central to a student's ability to thrive in education and life. As such, this framework emerges from and is supported by CBE's mission and values:

- Mission | Each student, in keeping with their individual abilities and gifts, will complete high school with a foundation of learning necessary to thrive in life, work and continued learning.
- Values | Students come first – Learning is our central purpose – Public education serves the common good.

With students' success and learning at the centre, CBE values acknowledge the well-being of every person within the organization. Student and employee well-being are essential priorities that are intertwined. In a Culture of Well-Being, students, school-based and service unit employees, parents, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, and community leaders are all included and contribute to their own and others' well-being.

Education Plan: Learning Excellence

Within CBE's Education Plan, the key outcome for Well-Being is that students and employees thrive in a culture of well-being. The continued implementation of the Well-Being Framework will support the learning success and lifelong well-being for all students.

Well-Being

Students and employees thrive in a culture of well-being

Well-Being Core Beliefs

CBE believes:

- a Culture of Well-Being is central to achieving the goals that drive CBE's Education Plan
- holistic, balanced approaches consider the four domains outlined in the Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework: Spirit – To Be; Heart – To Belong; Body – To Do; and, Mind – To Know, which are critical to the well-being of everyone;
- individual and collective well-being are outcomes of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environments; and
- healthy students are more likely to reach their academic and personal potential.

Goals and Outcomes

The goals of this framework are to **advance** a Culture of Well-Being within CBE, explain **why** it is important and suggest **how** to achieve it.

The intended outcomes of this framework are to promote student well-being for lifelong success, to provide professional learning for staff and progress in implementing the Canadian Healthy School Standards.

Defining Well-Being

Well-being moves beyond physical health and dimensions of wellness to encompass feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life. It is the way one views or feels about life, and the extent to which one has a sense of purpose and positivity (Well-Being and Resiliency, 2019; Willms, 2020).

Alberta Education describes wellness as "a balanced state of emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual well-being that enables students to reach their full potential in the school community" (Framework for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Wellness Education, 2009, p. 3).

Furthermore, well-being is holistic and includes factors such as safety and security, a sense of resiliency, supportive and nurturing relationships, a feeling of purpose and belonging within family and community (Well-Being and Resiliency, 2019). Well-being is "one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political beliefs, economic, or social conditions" (Halbreigh et. al., 2019).

- **Determinants** of health are the broad range of individual characteristics and behaviours as well as social, economic and environmental factors that determine an individual's health.
- Wellness is comprised of eight mutually co-dependent **dimensions**: physical, social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, financial, intellectual, and occupational.
- The four **domains** of the Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework (Spirit – To Be, Heart – To Belong, Body – To Do, Mind – To Know) are interconnected and reliant on a holistic, balanced approach to well-being.

- CBE has identified four interrelated **elements** that comprise a Culture of Well-being: Students, Employees, Schools/Workplaces, and Communities.
- Comprehensive School Health addresses four distinct and related **components**: Social and Physical Environment, Teaching and Learning, Policy, Partnerships and Services.
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) **competencies:** self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

In CBE, well-being is understood as a balanced state of being that provides a foundation for resilience, belonging, and purpose in life.

"Students, parents and school authorities have responsibilities for ensuring welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self" (Safe and Caring Schools, 2022, para. 1).


A Culture of Well-Being
Well-Being and Indigenous Ways of Being, Belonging, Doing and Knowing

In developing a Culture of Well-Being, CBE's Student Well-Being Framework, and Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework work in kinship with one another to ensure a holistic balanced approach in support of achievement and well-being for all students.

As described in CBE's Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework, the visual shown below was designed alongside Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to depict and nurture a shared understanding of a holistic, lifelong vision of well-being and learning through Indigenous ways of being, belonging, doing, and knowing. The circle in the centre represents each individual and is enclosed by four interconnected domains:

- **Spirit – To Be**
- **Heart – To Belong**
- **Body – To Do**
- **Mind – To Know**
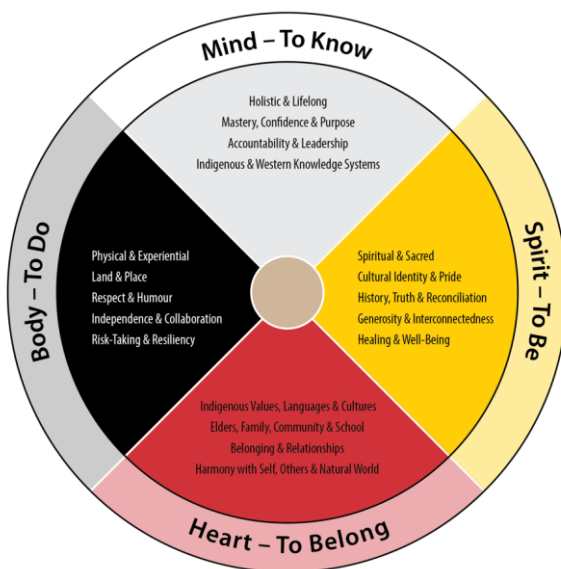
The Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework signifies that all human beings benefit from positive experiences of being, belonging, doing, and knowing. Elders have taught us that well-being begins with each individual connecting to self or "being in spirit" to enable individual responsibility for well-being and learning. Once "in spirit," individuals are then able to pursue on their own or with support, a happy, healthy, balanced life across all four domains: Spirit – To Be, Heart – To Belong, Body – To Do, Mind – To Know. As described in CBE's Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework, these four domains represent "aspects of a human being that makes them whole" (Toulouse, 2016, p. 7). Nurturing the four domains of the Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Framework will support the well-being of all students and staff in the CBE.

"Everyone, no matter where you come from, has a way of starting in spirit. Love, kindness, respect, accountability all live in spirit. Being in spirit is an awareness of who you are. This creates a sense of belonging, hope, peace, and purpose which connects to everything around us." (Elder Kerrie Moore in Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework, p. 11).

Why Well-Being is Important in Education

The determinants of health are defined as a "broad range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health" (Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequalities, 2022, para.1). Education is a determinant of health and is what schools directly influence. There is considerable interdependence between academic success and student well-being. In addition, other factors influencing students, such as their lived experiences, physical environments, social supports, behaviours, gender, culture, and race are also vital health determinants. Working towards a balanced state of well-being supports students to reach their full potential and flourish in life (Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022).

Teachers know that how students feel impacts how they learn. Students who are healthy, safe, rested and cared for are ready to learn. Acknowledging health as a precondition for learning locates well-being within the universal scope of practice of the education system. Schools are settings where child and youth well-being can be learned, modelled, and practiced. This, in turn, improves health literacy, student achievement, and well-being outcomes (Barnekow et. al., 2006; Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022).

> Well-being and achievement should not exist in two different worlds, with different specialists populating them – mathematics and literacy people on one side, mental health specialists on the other. At every level, from the school up to the whole system, it is important to establish clear structures that unite those who have portfolios and responsibilities in curriculum and learning with those who have expertise in well-being and mental health. Leaders themselves need to create, articulate, and repeat clear and compelling narratives that bring achievement and well-being together (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2022, p.150).

Given the relationship between health determinants, educational environments, and social contexts, it is appropriate that intentional actions to promote well-being have become a focus in schools over the last few decades. Research supports the importance and positive impact of preventative, comprehensive health approaches that are applied in school settings (Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequalities, 2022.; Boost Student Success with Comprehensive School Health, n.d).

Welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environments contribute to the well-being of all, and are foundational to our organization. As delineated in Administrative Regulation 6031, "CBE is committed to providing all students and staff with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment consistent with the Education Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Alberta Human Rights Act." In addition, many evidence-based supporting strategies promote and build positive environments and fosters the advancement of skills, such as trauma-informed practices, restorative justice, resiliency skills, and social-emotional learning (Safe and Caring Schools, 2022).
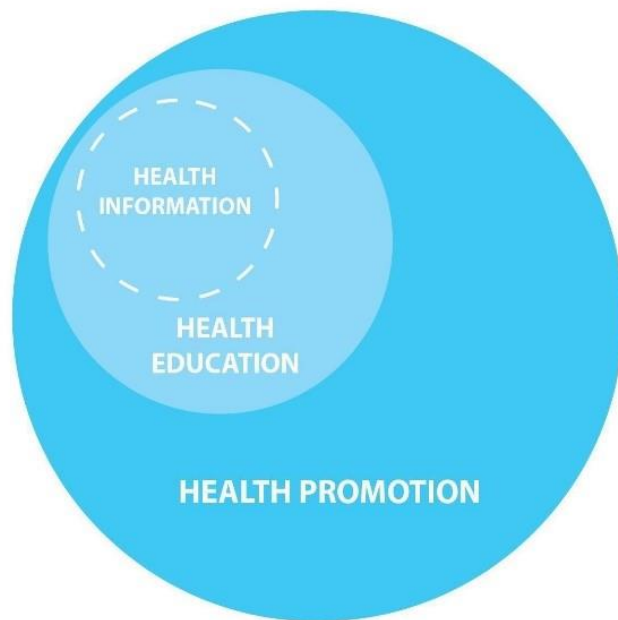

"It is health that is real wealth, not pieces of gold or silver" (Mahatma Gandhi).

Moving Beyond Health Education

Health promotion is a collection of a broad range of activities that consider environmental aspects of the school community. Health education combined with environmental changes will maximize positive well-being. (Comprehensive School Health: In Practice, 2022). According to the World Health Organization, "A health promoting school is one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning, and working" (2022).

Health education and health promotion are critical concepts in educational settings. Relying only on sharing health information, for example, is not enough to change the health behaviours needed to increase well-being in schools. Health education involves learning experiences intended to improve an individual's knowledge and awareness of health. This concept is characterized by information plus action towards health and healthy behaviors (Comprehensive School Health: In Practice, 2022). Developing personal skills through health education is one of the key action areas within the broader concept of health promotion (Foundations of Health Promotion. (2023).

Source: cshhub.com

Well-being positively influences student learning outcomes, and success in learning enhances student well-being. Since good health contributes positively to learning, health must be addressed in education. Teaching and learning is one component which contributes to student well-being and achievement of key outcomes. When actions in all four components (Teaching & Learning, Social & Physical Environments, Policy, and Partnerships & Services) are harmonized, students are supported to realize their full potential as learners—and as healthy, productive members of society. (Comprehensive School Health – Joint Consortium for School Health, n.d.; Canadian Healthy School Standards. 2022).


"Well-being is at the heart of our educational ecosystem. Teaching and learning thrive when we take care of the heart. It is our collective responsibility to intentionally uplift well-being for all. Teachers and students are happier and healthier when every member of our community is made to feel safe, supported and valued" (CBE Teacher, 2022).

Dimensions of Wellness

In building a Culture of Well-Being, it is important to identify areas of strength, growth, and measures to assess effectiveness in achieving desired outcomes. This culture must encompass the whole person and is built with a consideration of all dimensions of wellness. These dimensions are embedded in Alberta Education Physical Education and Wellness curriculum, and drive our pedagogy:
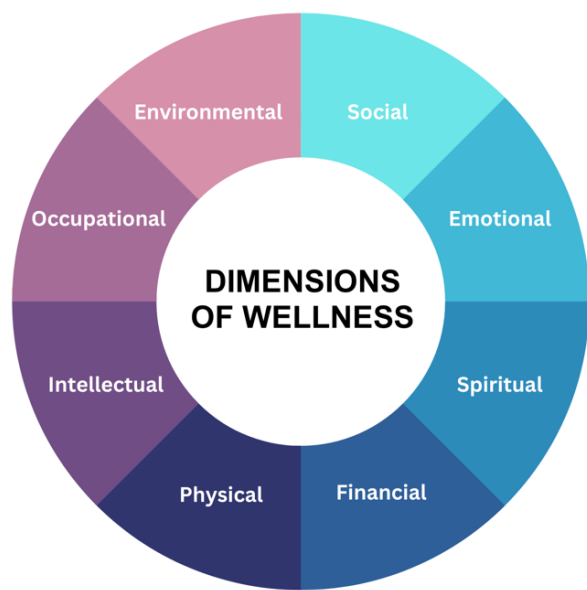
"A healthy school community promotes the holistic development of students in eight dimensions: physical, social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, financial, intellectual, and occupational. While respecting the diversity of each student's unique strengths, talents, and goals… [The curriculum] seeks to empower all learners to positively engage with their peers and community. With a healthy mind, [heart], body, and spirit, students are empowered to experience success at school, with their families, and in their communities" (Physical Education and Wellness, 2022).

Health education is a formalized part of what we do within an education setting through various programs of study such as Health and Life Skills, Physical Education and Wellness, Career and Life Management, and Physical Education. However, all curricula provide key opportunities to discuss and elevate topics related to well-being by integrating health and well-being ideas across core and complementary programming (Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022). For example, this could include exploring well-being through creation and performance in the Arts, writing prompts related to well-being in English Language Arts and identifying the importance of well-being strategies in relation to preparation for learning and assessment in Mathematics. Intentional implementation of well-being goals within CBE School Development Plans (SDPs) establishes the integration of well-being across curricula and is a key component that contributes to a whole-school Culture of Well-Being.

Within CBE, well-being is a long-term investment, which directly influences lifelong student success. It is a collective effort, which requires well-being to be a priority when making decisions to enhance student learning. Together with the Literacy, Mathematics, and Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Frameworks, the Well-Being Framework informs schools in achieving desired outcomes to support all learners. All employees are responsible for creating a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe culture. In 2021, CBE made a commitment to advance equity, anti-racism, and inclusion through CBE CARES. This commitment is vital; creating a sense of belonging directly influences a student's feeling of well-being.

"A healthy school centers holistic health and well-being in its policies, its curriculum, its people, its relationships and its environment" (Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022).

How to Advance a Culture of Well-Being: The Canadian Healthy School Standards

Creating a healthy school culture involves addressing essential conditions necessary to implement a Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach. These conditions are the Canadian Healthy School Standards, which includes both Foundational and Implementation Standards. Reviewing and identifying the extent to which the Canadian Healthy School Standards are present or requiring more attention in a school setting, will assist in determining an area of growth or focus when using the CSH approach to advance a Culture of Well-Being in the school.

The world has seen a global awakening that has uncovered the inequities inherent within Canada's colonial educational institutions. A review of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action further identifies Healthy Schools as an "interlinked process with reconciliation". The Canadian Healthy School Standards recognize the responsibility to deconstruct the Eurocentric mainstream approach to Healthy Schools and honor the Indigenous inclusive and holistic approach to wellbeing, which focuses on the "relationships and responsibilities held across the environment, families, the tribe and ancestors" (Tagalick, S., 2010).

The Standards promote strengths-based approaches focused on deepening the strengths within the school community, and moving towards a comprehensive, system-wide approach that supports well-being across school communities (Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022).

Foundational Standards

The Foundational Standards are underlying concepts that must be present for the Implementation Standards to be successful. There are three Foundational Standards:

- **Whole School Approach**
- **Well-Being is Integrated Across all Curricula**
- **Chart a Unique Plan**

Each standard is necessary for the successful implementation of the CSH approach.

Implementation Standards

The Implementation Standards provide an opportunity for schools to create their own unique plan that leverages contextual resources to address the needs of the school. They also provide an internal process check to ensure, while using a CSH approach, that the standards are being met. There are eight Implementation Standards:

- **Students as Change Makers**
- **School-Specific Autonomy**
- **Demonstrated Administrative Leadership**
- **Higher-Level Support**
- **Dedicated Champion(s) to engage School Community**
- **Community Support**
- **Quality and Use of Evidence**
- **Professional Learning**

The Canadian Healthy School Standards aim to be the catalyst for school communities to come together to elevate a systemic approach to enhance well-being in schools (Canadian Healthy School Standards, 2022).

Comprehensive School Health

To achieve a Culture of Well-Being, CBE promotes engagement through Comprehensive School Health (CSH), which is an evidence-based whole-school approach. CSH is "for building healthy school communities that support students in reaching their full potential as learners—and as healthy, productive members of society. The CSH approach can be used to include other evidence-informed practices into the school environment" (Comprehensive School Health: Overview, 2022, para 1-2).

The Joint Consortium for School Health defines Comprehensive School Health as an internationally recognized approach that seeks to address well-being in education environments in a planned, integrated and holistic way, in order to improve both health and learning outcomes. The CSH approach positively influences well- being in many ways. For example, it can improve academic achievement, increase positive behaviours, improve well-being, build social-emotional skills, strengthen motivation to learn, improve attendance, and develop self-regulation (Boost Student Success with Comprehensive School Health, n.d.).

Furthermore, CSH engages a variety of interest-holders, important for student success. It focuses on student health promotion, embraces student voice, participation, and engagement, and is reciprocally beneficial for employees.

The four components of CSH are:

- **Teaching and learning**
- **Policy (e.g., guidelines and regulations)**
- **Partnerships and services**
- **Social and physical environment**

In CBE, the CSH approach provides schools with a solid understanding and clear processes of how to support a thriving Culture of Well-Being. Specifically, these tools will support School Development Plan (SDP) goals and a variety of well-being related initiatives in schools. There are many assessment strategies and measures for evaluating the effectiveness of well-being goals and outcomes connected to these tools. In creating SDP's, the CSH implementation process will be essential.
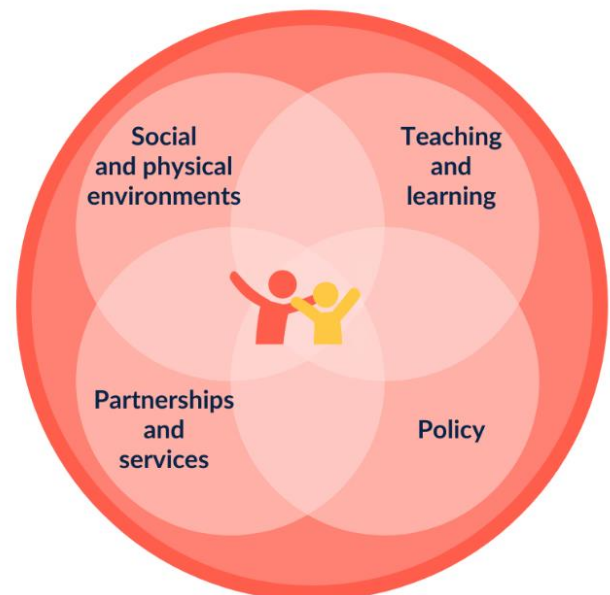
Source: School Health and Wellness Alberta Health Services

Implementation Process

The five-step process of implementing CSH is a strategic approach to achieve a school's well-being goal within their SDP goals. The five-step process includes:

- **Engage and Connect**
- **Understand your School Community**
- **Prioritize and Plan**
- **Take Action and Track Progress**
- **Sustain, Improve, and Share**

This approach, applied across our system, will continue to align our work and support the achievement of our goal of advancing a culture of well-being in CBE. For more information on this process, see the Student Well-Being Framework Companion Guide.

Social Emotional Learning

Source: CASEL Wheel, 2022

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has developed a framework to support the implementation, and understanding of, social and emotional learning (SEL). The CASEL Framework underlines the importance of a school-wide approach and connections made between students, schools, families and communities (key settings). According to CASEL, SEL is the "process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible, caring decisions" (CASEL, 2023). Using SEL approaches consistently within school and classroom settings is an evidence-based strategy to increase student well-being.

Schoolwide SEL involves 10 Indicators of Schoolwide SEL Implementation and centers SEL around five competencies. These competencies are interrelated and can be taught at various developmental stages and across diverse contexts.

The five SEL competencies are:

- **Self-awareness**
- **Self-management**
- **Social awareness**
- **Relationship skills**
- **Responsible decision-making**

The benefits of SEL are wide-ranging and research informed. Universal SEL approaches are consistent with all demographic groups suggesting "social and emotional assets promoted in SEL can support the positive development of students from diverse family backgrounds and geographic contexts" (Taylor et al., 2017). This underlines the inclusivity of an SEL approach in schools. Additionally, benefits of SEL have led to improved academic success, prosocial behaviours, and improved long-term outcomes in the areas of well-being and mental health. (Taylor 2017; Durlak et al. 2011; Jones et al. 2015)

By prioritizing SEL, CBE works with all interest-holders to create welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning and working environments that support all persons in reaching their full potential. For more information on SEL and the 10 Indicators for Schoolwide Implementation, see the Student Well-Being Framework Companion Guide.

Four Key Themes

Diversity and Inclusion	School Connectedness and Belonging	Regulation	Resilience and Mental Health
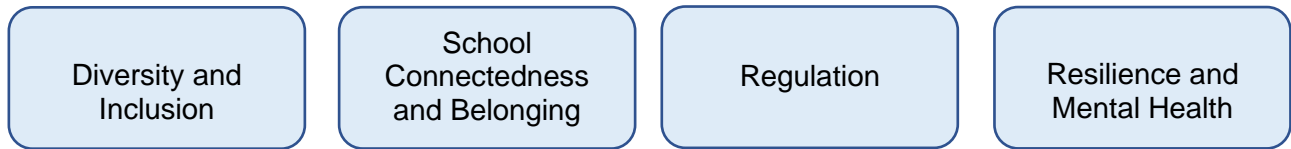
The Student Well-Being Framework identifies four key themes to advance well-being in CBE:

- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **School Connectedness and Belonging**
- **Regulation**
- **Resilience and Mental Health**

These themes have been identified from current research and literature regarding well-being. Data from our national, provincial, and system surveys, insights from our School Development Plans, and input from our system, Area, and school-based teams will inform the continuum of supports related to the four key themes. Actioning these 4 key themes using the Comprehensive School Health (CHS) Approach and Implementation Process will advance well-being in your setting in a planned, integrated, collaborative and holistic manner.

Diversity and Inclusion

We promote the inclusion of all backgrounds, perspectives, and abilities. CBE seeks to celebrate all aspects of intersecting identities to foster life-long learners. The CBE Board of Trustees has defined diversity as "the full range of uniqueness within humanity" (Results 3E, p.3). By providing universal strategies highlighting the spectrum of identification in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability, and other unique qualities and ways of being, we create conditions to support and nurture welcoming, caring, respectful and safe, learning environments.

Equity, diversity and inclusion take the form of creating anti-racist environments, increasing representation in texts and resources, eliminating unnecessarily gendered language and spaces, and recognizing that ableism is a barrier to inclusive environments. Culturally responsive approaches to teaching and learning support the development of a Culture of Well-Being. We seek to celebrate the diverse backgrounds of all those who comprise the CBE (CBE School Culture & Environment. n.d).

School Connectedness and Sense of Belonging

An effective strategy to improve student achievement and well-being is to focus on improving relationships within the school community: "For students in particular, healthy relationships are the foundation for all positive social interactions; they help students feel connected to others and to the school community. Experiencing healthy relationships also contributes to students' sense of belonging, engagement with learning and academic success. In addition, healthy relationships are reciprocal. They benefit not only students, but also the adults who participate in them." (Relationships Matter, 2021).

School Connectedness is the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals. Research in school connectedness suggests that investing in healthy relationships in schools lead to improved learning and life outcomes (Relationships Matter, 2021). "Students who feel connected to their schools are also more apt to have better academic achievement, to maintain better school attendance, and to stay in school longer" (Joint Consortium for School Health- Positive Mental Health Toolkit, 2016, p.4).

Regulation

Regulation skills are central to student learning and lifelong success. It is essential to underline that behavioural regulation is de-emphasized and understanding includes awareness and strategies of cognitive regulation that include more than inhibitory control. "Self-regulation involves attention skills, working memory, and cognitive flexibility – qualities that provide the underpinning for essential skills needed throughout life, such as planning and problem-solving (Pascal, 2009a, p. 4 as cited in Government of Ontario, n.d.).

The skills required to improve regulation contribute to positive social interactions and help establish constructive patterns of behaviour that will be useful throughout a student's lifespan (Ponitz et al., 2009 as cited in Government of Ontario, n.d.). Regulation involves strengthening the SEL competencies that help to set limits and manage emotions, attention, and behaviour – supporting the development of emotional well-being and supportive mental habits such as persistence and curiosity, that create the foundations for lifelong learning.

Regulation involves the strategies utilized to skillfully navigate life and respond to challenges in a way that promotes or restricts growth, learning and well-being, and is a result of both internal physiological processes as well as interpersonal social processes (Siegel, 2015; The MEHRIT Centre, 2021). As cited above, "A healthy school community promotes the holistic development of students in eight dimensions… With a healthy mind, [heart], body, and spirit, students are empowered to experience success at school, with their families, and in their communities" (Physical Education and Wellness, 2022). Planning for intentional regulation strategies through a whole-school approach, and when addressing the whole-child, has significant implications for both the social-emotional and academic components of a student's readiness to learn and engage with others (Harrington, E.M et al., 2020).

Resilience and Mental Health

Students require skills of emotional regulation to navigate life's challenges and be able to plan and problem-solve. Research indicates the foundations of such resiliency skills allow children to navigate challenges and develop positive mental health (Alberta Family Wellness Initiative, n.d.). Therefore, in a Culture of Well-Being, schools must consider how to positively impact the resilience of their students.

In the presence of adversity, Dr. Michael Ungar (2019) defines resilience as the ability to navigate available resources in order to sustain individual and collective well-being. The emphasis is on utilizing resources; psychological, social, cultural and physical resources, in order to bounce back after experiencing stress. Resilience is not an inherent quality; rather, it can be learned, and is a collective endeavor.

The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (n.d.) provides a clear and succinct summary of the importance of resilience in life. The following excerpt assist in understanding the contributions we can make to support the development of resilience:

> *...The foundations of resilience are the skills and abilities that allow children to cope with significant challenges...We all have a role to play in helping build resilience in children: while parents and extended family are a key source of this support, other adults can also act as supportive caregivers to a child. A responsive childcare worker, teacher, or coach can make a world of difference in buffering a child from the toxic effects of ongoing stress. (para. 9-10)*

A person's resilience scale is a good predictor of health outcomes. When there are more experiences that fall on the positive side of the scale, a person is more likely to experience good health, academic success, strong relationships, and economic security.

Source: albertafamilywellness.org

Key actions outlined by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (n.d.) that foster resilience in youth include supporting responsive relationships, providing safe environments, engaging in core skills building (emotional regulation, problem solving, and coping), and seeking ways to reduce stressors. These actions are part of a continuum of supports, which enhance the individual and collective well-being of students. These protective factors can "shift the fulcrum", providing leverage for further positive experiences (para. 4).

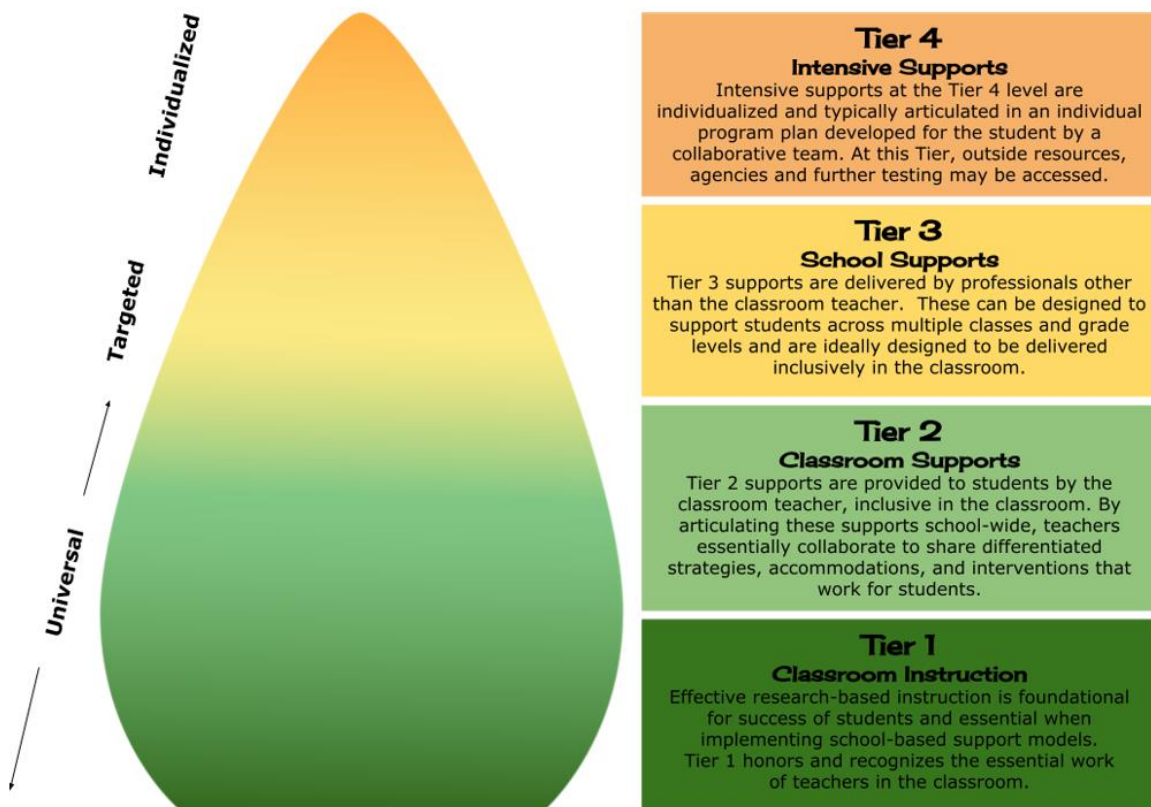The Alberta Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan (n.d.) makes recommendation to recognize and enhance the essential role of schools in interdisciplinary, wraparound services and supports for mental health and well-being of students. The objective of this particular recommendation is to re-affirm and improve the ability of schools as an important avenue to provide essential mental health and well-being supports for Alberta children.

Continuum of Supports for Student Well-Being

Schools and school authorities in Alberta currently have a robust continuum of mental health and well-being supports and services, reflective of their context, and the strengths and needs of their school community (Four Tier Support Overview, 2021). Similarly, a continuum of supports (see figure below) focuses on simultaneously promoting well-being for all students, while providing interventions for those experiencing significant well-being concerns. By increasing the protective factors and reducing risk factors through this continuum of supports and services, students can thrive.

The following figure identifies and shows the continuum of supports to ensure the success of all students:

Tier 4
Intensive Supports
Intensive supports at the Tier 4 level are individualized and typically articulated in an individual program plan developed for the student by a collaborative team. At this Tier, outside resources, agencies and further testing may be accessed.

Tier 3
School Supports
Tier 3 supports are delivered by professionals other than the classroom teacher. These can be designed to support students across multiple classes and grade levels and are ideally designed to be delivered inclusively in the classroom.

Tier 2
Classroom Supports
Tier 2 supports are provided to students by the classroom teacher, inclusive in the classroom. By articulating these supports school-wide, teachers essentially collaborate to share differentiated strategies, accommodations, and interventions that work for students.

Tier 1
Classroom Instruction
Effective research-based instruction is foundational for success of students and essential when implementing school-based support models. Tier 1 honors and recognizes the essential work of teachers in the classroom.

Courtesy of Jigsaw Learning Inc.

Universal Supports (Tier 1 & 2)

Universal supports are the focus of this framework. School-based staff are ideally positioned to inform, educate, and promote well-being by creating universal conditions for all students to thrive. Schools are optimal settings to support the health and well-being of students. School-based staff are critical in supporting student well-being; however, it is not their role to provide health interventions beyond the Tier 2 level of support. Rather, targeted, and individualized supports rely on the expertise of other professionals and centralized multidisciplinary teams. As referenced earlier, Indigenous ways of being, belonging, doing, and knowing detailed in the Indigenous Education Holistic Lifelong Learning Framework also offer universal, proactive approaches to the well-being of all students. Tier 1 & 2 examples include:

- Using a Comprehensive School Health approach to build welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environments (e.g., positive behaviour supports, restorative practices, trauma-informed practices, focus on social-emotional learning).
- Implementing a schoolwide Social Emotional Learning approach to unify understanding, language, strategies and learning experiences to increase SEL competencies for all to address belonging, regulation and resilience (e.g., culturally responsive tasks, encourage creativity, cooperative learning, project-based learning, collaborative problem-solving, Indigenous land-based learning).
- Prioritizing school connectedness and healthy relationships, including mentoring between students and other school-based staff.
- Using natural supports (Natural Supports: In Conversation with Dr. Erik Carter, n.d.) that occur in everyday life, which can include family members, friends, Elders, clergy or other spiritual leaders and coaches.
- Invite Indigenous Elders and community members to share knowledge with all students across learning disciplines (Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Fine Arts, etc.).
- Creating a positive learning and working environment that promotes respect, provides mutual support, and honours equity, diversity, and inclusion which values differences and eliminates discrimination.
- Create physical spaces where students and staff can engage in spiritual and sacred ways of being, belonging, doing, and knowing (e.g., smudge).
- Design student learning tasks that intentionally activate their spirit (connecting to self).
- Using Talking Circles creates balanced opportunities for students to get to know one another, share feelings and their unique stories, and build communication skills. Talking Circles can also be used to create opportunities for problem solving together about general classroom or school issues.
- Providing co-curricular opportunities to develop and support healthy relationships (e.g., interdisciplinary work, reading buddies, cross-age groupings, service learning, and community volunteering).
- Providing leadership opportunities for students (voice and choice).

School Supports (Tier 3)

Professionals other than the classroom teacher can also provide supports. At this level, these supports can reach across multiple classes and grade levels and are ideally designed to be delivered inclusively in the classroom. The School Learning Team is the structure that allows teachers to bring forward all students who may require additional strategies and interventions for them to be successful. These strategies and interventions are delivered in the classroom, outside of the classroom, or in small group settings (Hewson & Hewson, 2022). Tier 3 examples include:

- Providing small group support to teach resiliency skills
- Engaging with a school resource teacher/counsellor to provide individualized support for a student
- Creating and providing support to diverse groups and Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) within the school setting.
- Organizing staff mentorship and connection opportunities
- Providing after school peer support opportunities identifying and using transitional supports, which are purposeful, coordinated, and outcome oriented. These approaches are designed to help students successfully transition from grade to grade, school-to-school, or school to post-secondary education or employment (Managing School Transitions: Promising Practices in Alberta's Schools, 2009)

Intensive Supports (Tier 4)

Intensive supports are individualized and typically articulated in an individual program plan and/or a student support plan developed for the student by a collaborative team. Outside resources, agencies, and further testing may be accessed at this tier, relying upon support and expertise from staff outside the school (Hewson & Hewson, 2022). Tier 4 examples include:

- Accessing community agencies to connect with a family for additional support
- Collaborating with a School Family Liaison or a Diversity & Learning Support Advisor to support students' success
- Collaborating with an Indigenous community agency to offer support with any of the four tiers
- Referring a student for psychological services for observation and support
- Bringing in a member of the CBE multi-disciplinary team to provide direct support for a student and their family

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"A health promoting schools approach integrates the curriculum, a healthy school environment, health services, and parent and community involvement in a coordinated fashion for the benefit of both students and staff. [...] the health promoting schools approach aims to contribute to improved learning. Furthermore, in a dynamic and vibrant health promoting school, participation, empowerment, equity, and democratic processes are emphasized. Students and staff take active responsibility for their own health and that of the school environment. In so doing, they are practicing citizenship in their school community and contributing directly to the core mission of schools" (Roberts, G., 2009).

Strategic Actions to Advance Student Well-Being

Each of the four blades of the pinwheel represents a key element in promoting a Culture of Well-Being within CBE. Students are central to this framework, and to our daily work in CBE. The Student Well-Being Framework is designed to be realized by focusing on strategic actions that connect all schools and service units to support the achievement of well-being in CBE. Each of these actions plays a vital role for all interest-holders of CBE and are interwoven throughout our everyday work to advance student achievement. They provide the infrastructure to leverage existing strengths as a system and identify growth opportunities. These strategic actions are realized in:

- **System Coordination**
  CBE is Western Canada's largest school board with many service units, and strategic initiatives providing leadership and support to our schools. As a result, broad knowledge, understanding, and strong communication channels of well-being support and available resources are critical to effectively support the three goals of the Education Plan: Learning Excellence, Well-Being, and Truth and Reconciliation, Diversity and Inclusion. For example, coordinated assessment through an adjustment cycle of well-being across CBE supports a Culture of Well-Being (The Data Wise Improvement Process, 2016). CBE's Well-Being Steering Committee, CBE's Well-Being Stewardship Group, and well-being professional learning networks function in support of well-being in each of the essential elements.

  - The ***CBE Well-Being Steering Committee*** gathers senior leaders whose scope of work rests in the advancement of well-being within CBE. Meeting regularly, the Committee provides thought leadership and steering to the CBE Well-Being Stewardship Group in emergent well-being priorities within CBE.

  - The ***CBE Well-Being Stewardship Group*** gathers teams and individuals whose scope of work advances the culture of well-being in CBE. The intended outcome of this group is system coordination and collective impact. The Stewardship Group meets regularly to discuss and implement direction from the CBE Well-Being Steering Committee and, in turn, provides updates back to the Steering Committee for further direction.

- **Professional Learning and Development**
  Employees need to be well in order to cope with life's challenges and to positively influence student health and well-being. Research demonstrates that when employees are healthy and experience well-being, students benefit. The same actions often support employee and student well-being. For example, whole school actions to improve student well-being, such as social and emotional learning, are also proven to positively impact the well-being of school-based employees (Barnekow et. al., 2006). Building employee professional capacity relies on professional learning. To advance student well-being, employees must have access to professional learning to develop a common language and understanding of well-being concepts and strategies, which results in providing equitable access to this learning throughout the CBE. As such, the professional learning and well-being of all employees must be a priority.

- **Schools**
  CBE schools are focal points that locate and connect large populations of educational interest-holders. The School Development Plan (SDP) is a key entry point for supporting a Culture of Well-Being. Intentional implementation of well-being goals, integration of well-being across all curricula, and establishing school well-being teams, which include student voice, work together to build CBE's Culture of Well-Being. In schools, developing, implementing, and assessing an evidenced-based SDP provides one measure of accountability in supporting a Culture of Well-Being.

- **Strategic Resourcing**
  The allocation of time and resources for well-being is necessary to achieve system and school leadership priorities. In utilizing a whole-system approach to well-being, resources must be carefully and strategically aligned to ensure success. CBE optimizes available financial, technical, human, and physical resources in support of student and system success. As emphasized throughout this Framework, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environments need to be embedded in the organizational culture of each school/worksite in order for students and staff to thrive.

- **Collaborative Partnerships**
  CBE has a long-standing history of collaborating with non-profit organizations, businesses, and government agencies to enhance and support student learning and well-being. Our partners provide programs, services, learning opportunities, resources and expertise in a variety of fields that align with the Alberta Programs of Study, CBE's Education Plan and support the complex facets of our work in the development of a Culture of Well-Being. By developing strong mutually beneficial partnerships focused on well-being, CBE is enhancing each student's ability to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

Next Steps

This Framework **advances** a Culture of Well-Being within CBE, **explains why** it is important and suggests **how** to achieve it. To learn more about implementing Comprehensive School Health and specific, strategic actions for schools to advance student well-being, staff can consult the [Student Well-Being Companion Guide](#).

"We don't need each other, we are each other. And without each other, we cannot succeed"
(Pueblo, 2022).

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