

Hello, Welcome!



Staff First, Students Always:

*A Whole-School Approach to Routines, Relationships,
and Responsive Mental Health Support*

Sep. 11, 2026



Supported by:



**SOWN
TO GROW**



Presented By:



Alisha Rodriguez

TK-3 Counselor
Scholarship Prep
Orange County Site



Dr. Zaia Vera

Executive of Scaled Impact
Sown To Grow
Lecturer, Adult SEL
UC Berkeley

Today We Will..

- 1. Start with adults.** *Establish, through research, the importance of adult well-being and tangible examples to implement in their school sites.*
- 2. Belonging is built through routine.** *Learn about and model Scholarship Prep Community Meeting practices and begin building their own toolkit for belonging-based routines.*
- 3. Trust unlocks identification.** *Explore how to create the trusting conditions for effective screeners and connect them to an action plan for support.*

Scholarship Prep: Our Context



1650

TK-8th grade students



5 Campuses

(and counting)



Reach Higher. Dream Bigger.



98%

HISPANIC/LATINO

88%

SOCIOECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

40%

ENGLISH LEARNERS

22%

YOUTH EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS

14%

STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES

550+ Scholars. 59 Team Members. One Shared Mission.



OUR HISTORY



2016 - ORANGE COUNTY
SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA



2017 - SAN DIEGO COUNTY
OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA



2018 - LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOUTH BAY/WILMINGTON, CALIFORNIA



2025 - RIVERSIDE COUNTY
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

2016-2026
10 YEARS
FIVE SCHOOLS
FIVE COUNTIES



2025 - SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
UPLAND, CALIFORNIA

SP Mission



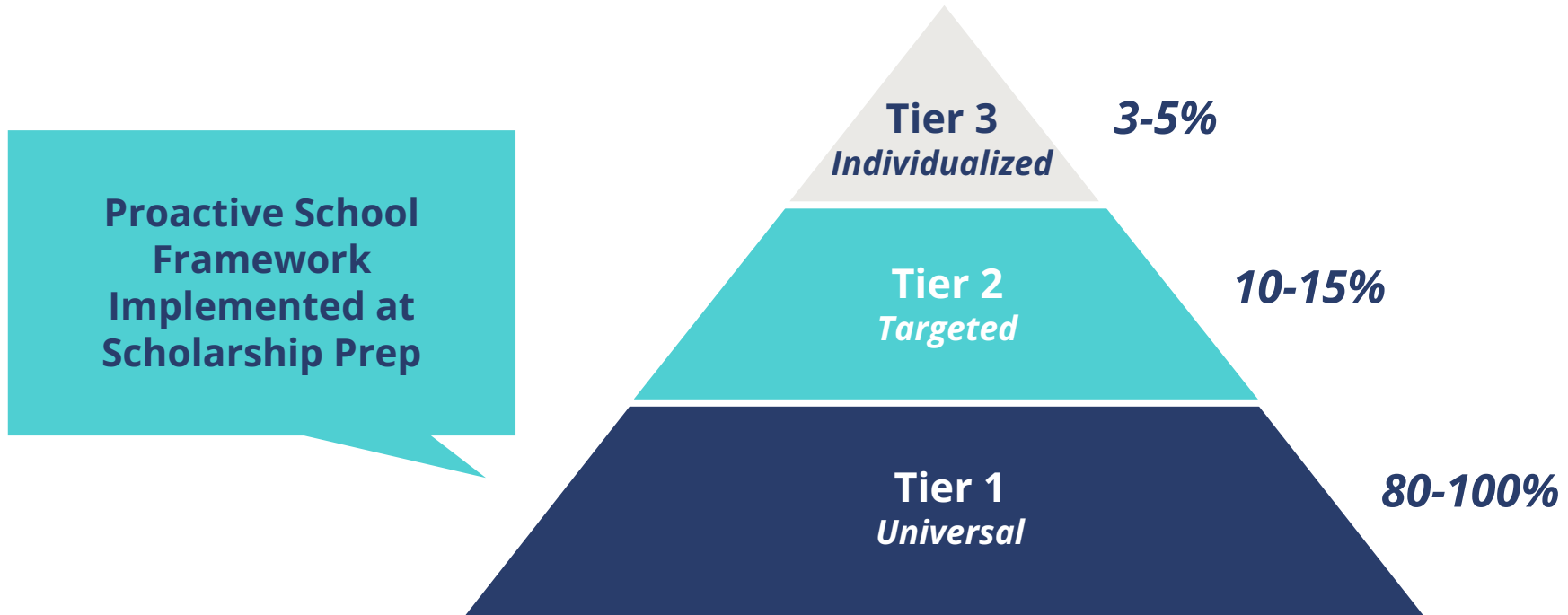
OUR MISSION

We lead with love in trauma-informed, culturally-responsive schools for students who need us the most, including those experiencing homelessness.



Start with adults

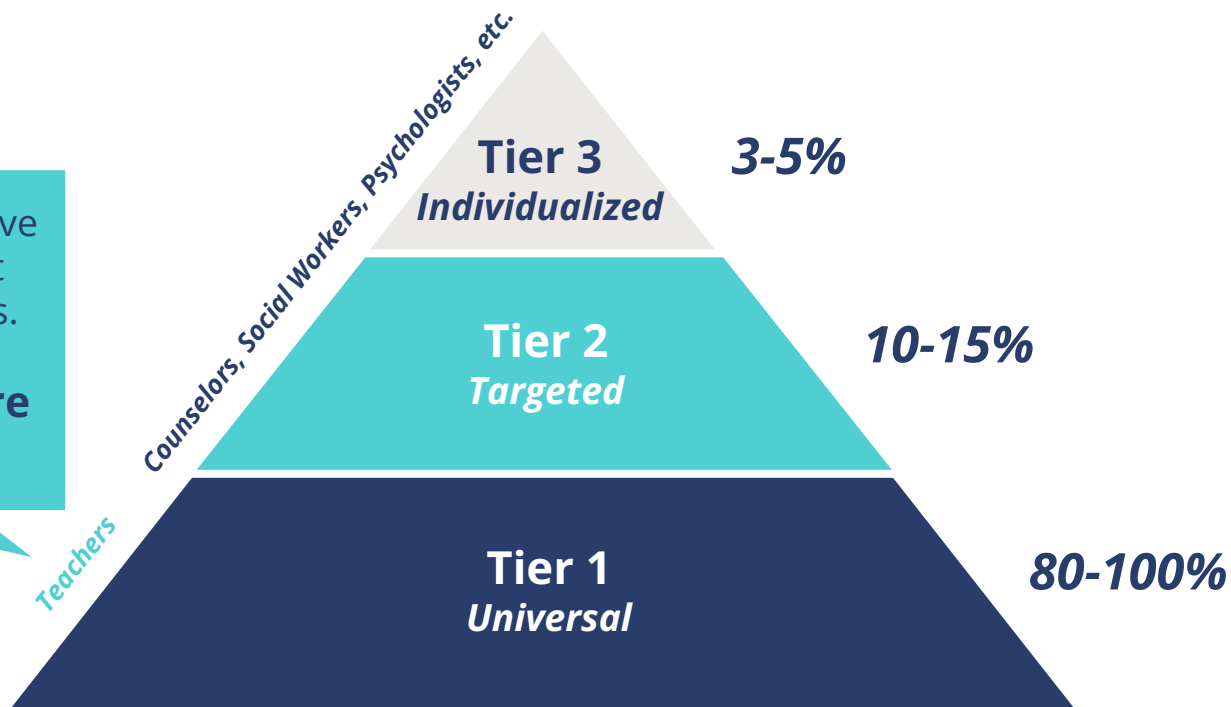
MTSS as We Know It



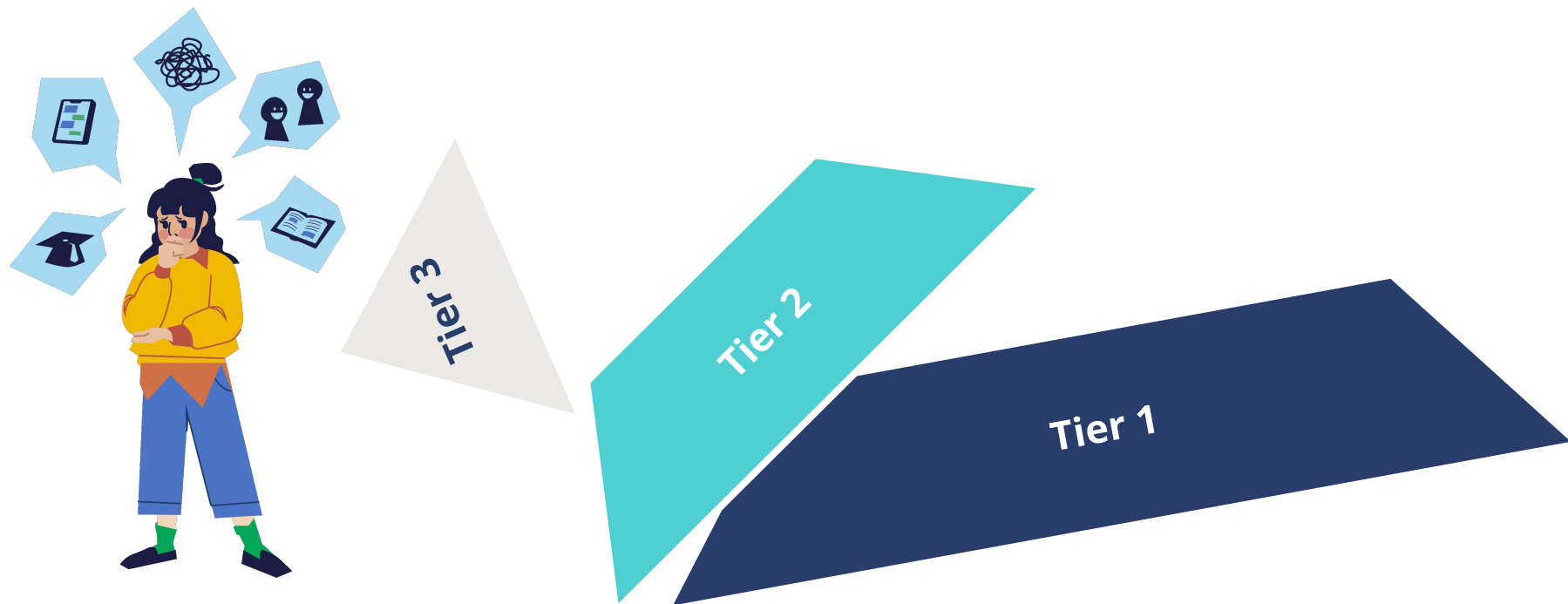
A Whole-School Effort

If Admin & Support staff have to lead Tier 1, you will not reach 80-100% of students.

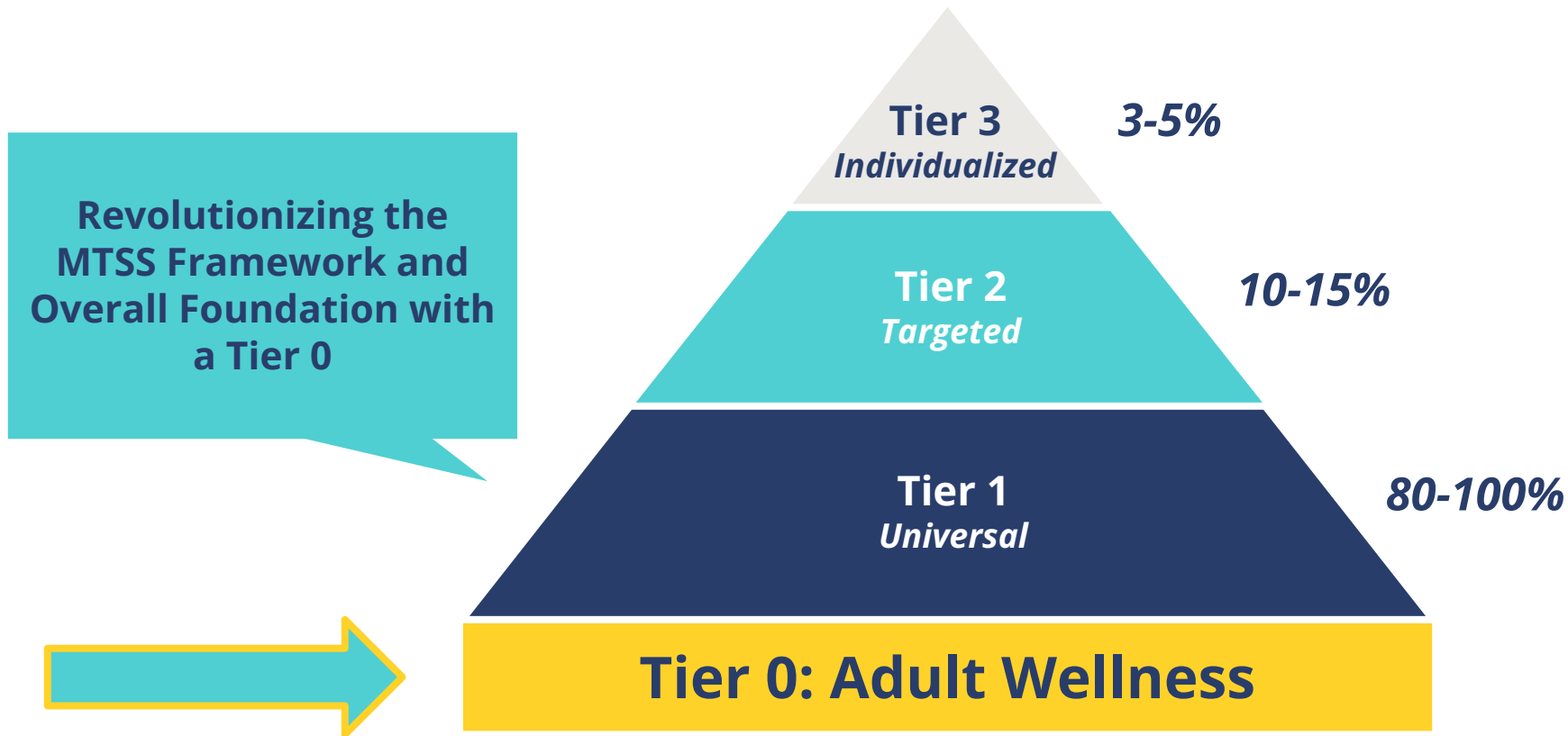
That will result in more Tier 2 & 3 needs



Everything Toples Without the Adults that Make this Work Possible



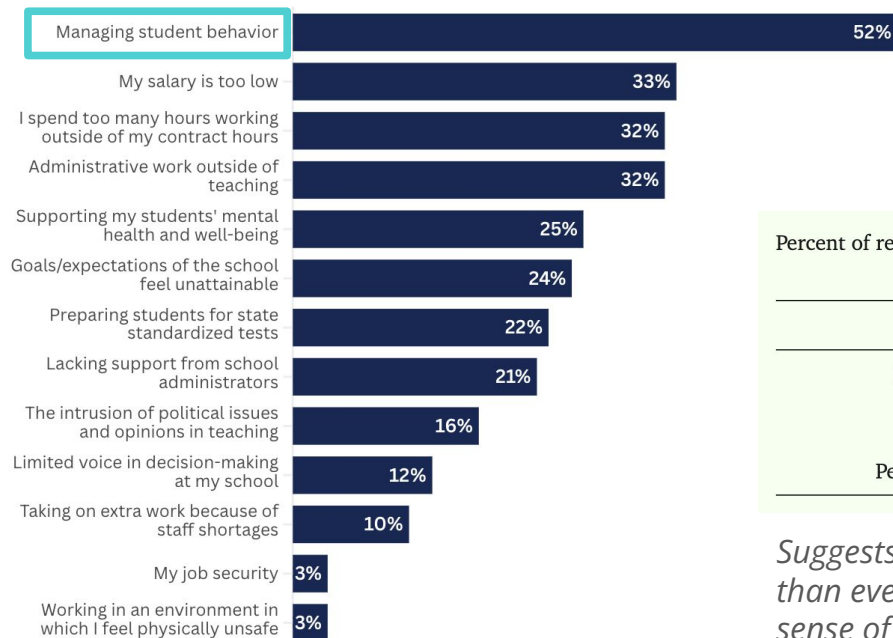
Our Foundation is Crucial



Staff Well-being is a Challenge

Teachers' Top-Ranked Sources of Job-Related Stress

(Respondents ranked up to three sources of stress)



55% of teachers reported frequent job-related stress, compared to **34%** of similar working adults.

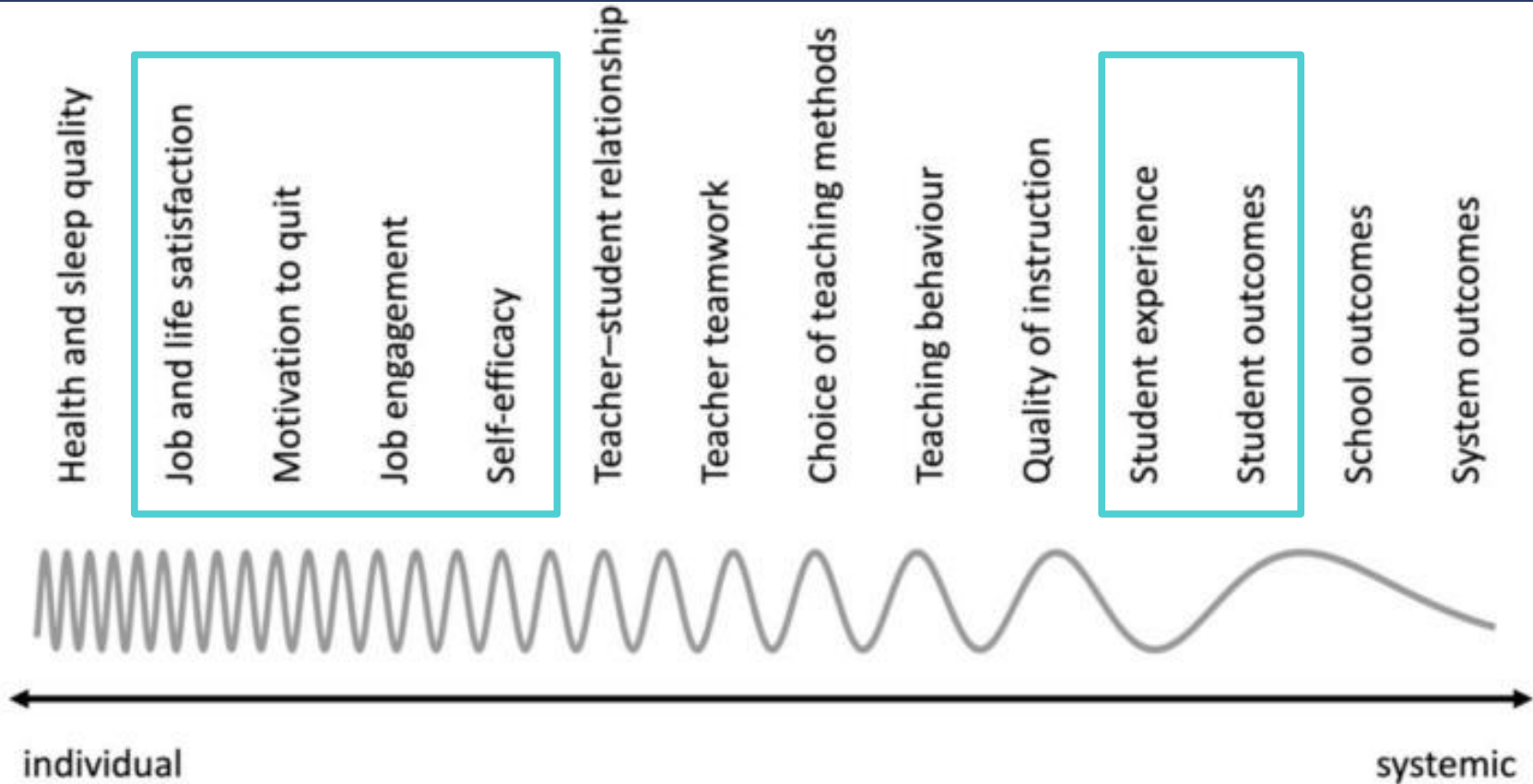
For School Mental Health Professionals

Percent of respondents classified with low, moderate, and high levels of burnout by category.

Burnout Type	Low	Moderate	High	
Emotional Exhaustion	10.0%	25.8%	64.2%	90%
Depersonalization	33.3%	39.2%	22.5%	
Personal Accomplishment	11.7%	33.3%	55.0%	

Suggests School Mental Health Professionals are carrying more than ever and it is taking a toll. Yet their care for students and sense of purpose in this work remains strong...for now.

Well-being Improves Educator Relationship to Work & Student Outcomes



How We Support Staff Well-being

Type of Support	Definition	Examples of Strategies
Self-care	Actions an individual completes on their own to improve their own health.	• Mindfulness, in which an individual is aware of their feelings, thoughts, and body • Exercise • Journaling
Support from & supporting others	Supports colleagues can provide to one another. Just as the MTSS framework emphasizes the importance of students developing meaningful relationships with peers and trusted adults, educators also need to develop and maintain meaningful and productive relationships with each other to create a sense of belonging.	• Mentoring • Developing and maintaining relationships • Giving supportive feedback
Supportive environment	Structures, policies, and systems education leaders can put in place to create a work environment that is safe, supportive, and conducive to growth and that addresses the root causes of stress for teachers.	• Leadership is sensitive to mental health concerns and promotes mental health resources for educators • Leadership clearly communicates and encourages staff to ask for help • Work/life balance is encouraged and supported

Staff Well-Being at Scholarship Prep



Scholarship Prep is partnering with HearYou.org to provide staff with confidential & timely online counseling at no cost to you.

- 

1) Get Started
No lengthy questionnaires or surveys. Share only what you're comfortable with.
- 

2) Get Matched
A Care Coordinator will connect you with a HearYou.org counselor who's right for you.
- 

3) Be Heard
Meet with your counselor online via secure video when it's best for your schedule.
- 

4) Feel Better
Visit HearYou.org to schedule your covered sessions.

ACCESSIBLE | TIMELY | CONFIDENTIAL

- Access 10 50-minute sessions with HearYou.org
- Connect with a Care Coordinator to be paired with a counselor
- Affordable counseling options are available after covered sessions are completed



SCAN OR
CLICK ME

hearyou.org | 1-833-HEAR-YOU (1-833-432-7968) | info@hearyou.org

 Anonymous  Confidential  Free Care Connection

24/7/365 Mental Health Care Coordination Service for **Scholarship Prep Public Schools** Students, Staff, and their Families

Getting help can be a daunting process. Let our Care Companions™ find the help you need for depression, anxiety, stress, and more.

 Call Now

 Search On Your Own

In partnership with Scholarship Prep Public Schools.

Welcome staff to the 2023-24 school year! The Business Office has implemented a more streamlined procedure on health and wellness reimbursements. See below for procedures.

Acceptable Purchases

- Health club membership
- Fitness classes, including Yoga, Pilates, Zumba, "Boot Camp"
- Nutrition classes
- Dance classes
- Personal/strength training
- Entry, registration, participation, and fees for sports leagues
- Foot race entry fees
- Bicycle race entry fees
- Sports lessons
- Healthy eating and cooking classes to support health related goals
- Weight loss coaching

Expenditures for mental health/counseling include, but are not limited to the following:

- Mental health/counseling
- Selected phone/computer applications

Think. Pair. Share.

- *How do you practice self care?*
- *What are other wellness supports or resources your school offers?*
- *What do you want to take back to your school?*



**Belonging is built
through routine**

We Break the Cycle or it Breaks Us

75% listed student behavior as their top challenge heading into the 2026-27 school year (*1,000 surveyed teachers & admin*)

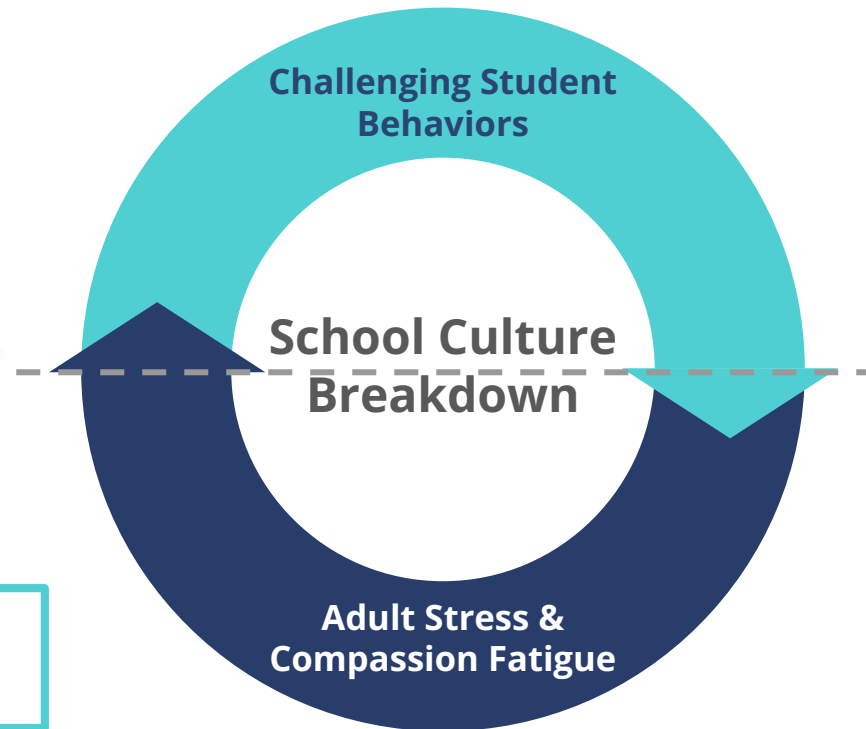
Teachers' Top-Ranked Sources of Job-Related Stress

Managing student behavior

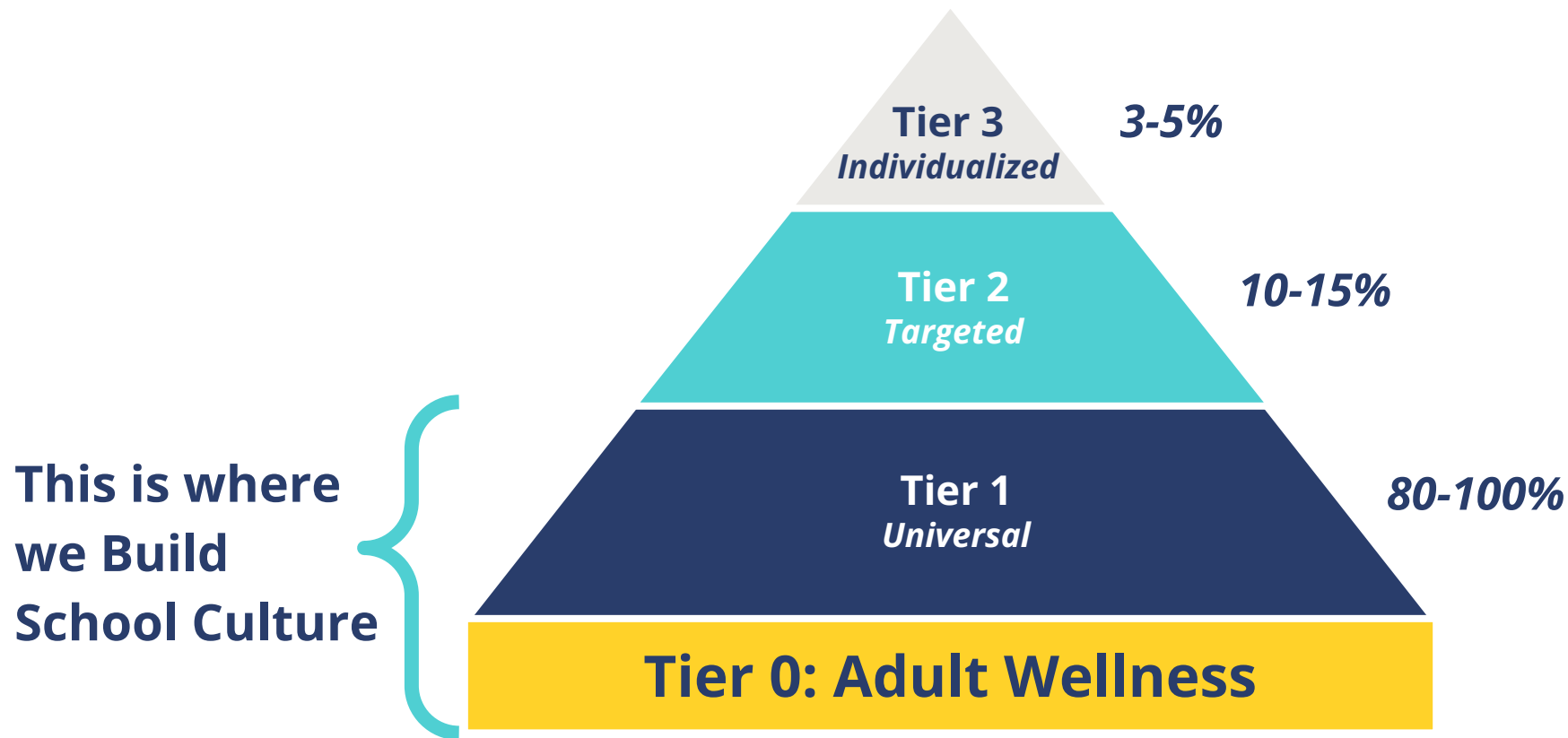
52%

SMHPs have high exhaustion & it can desensitize care

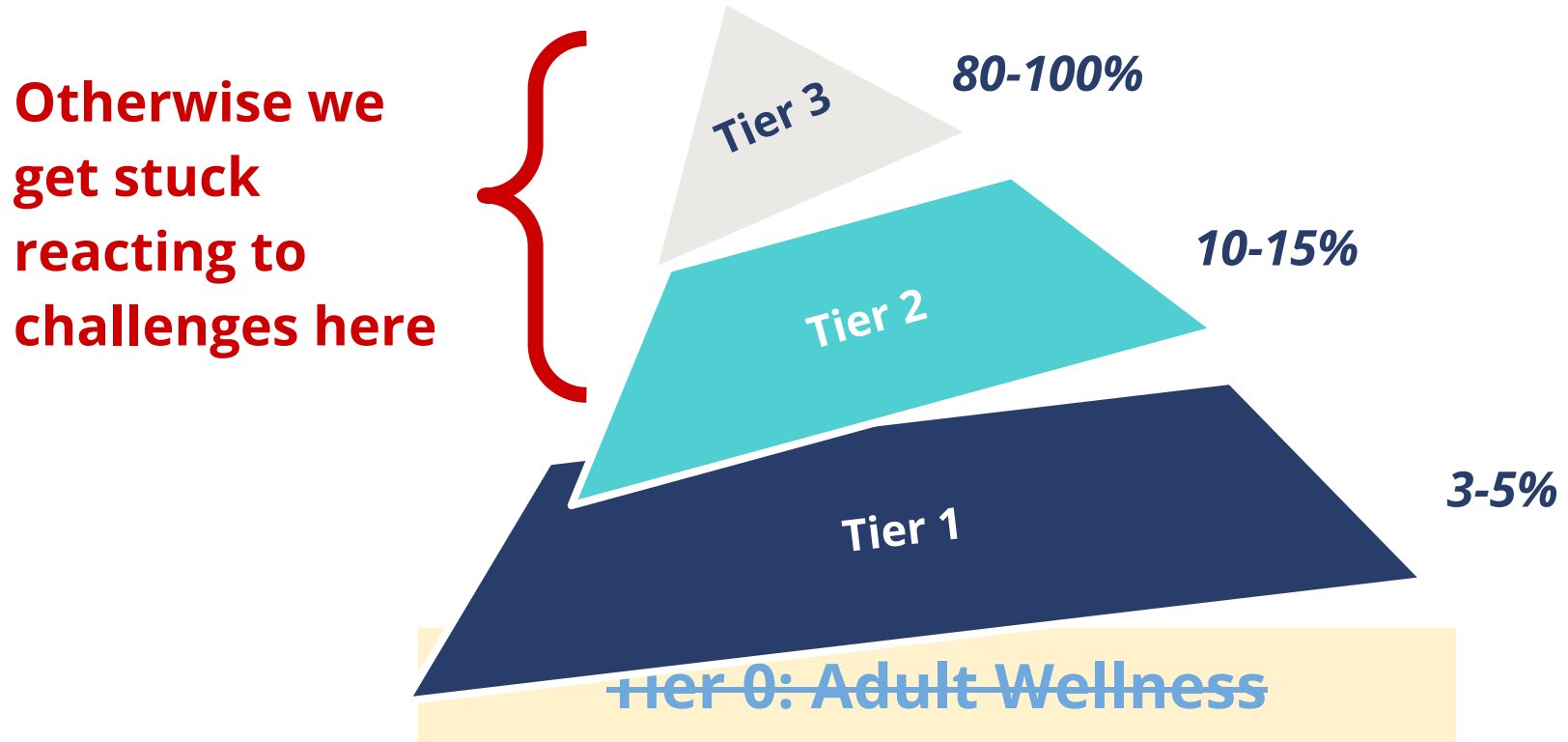
Burnout Type	Low	Moderate	High	
Emotional Exhaustion	10.0%	25.8%	64.2%	90%
Depersonalization	33.3%	39.2%	22.5%	61.7%



First Tier 0, Then Tier 1



First Tier 0, Then Tier 1



Belonging: A Powerful Tier 1 Tool

Students who report having an adult at school who they feel cares about them, have...



Higher Attendance

19% pts more likely
to be regular
attenders



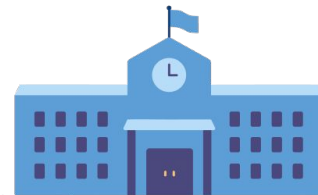
Increased Engagement

Correlation with **active participation** vs passive compliance



Improved Pass Rates

Up to **35% reduction** in
course failure



College Going Success

Up to a **48% increase** in
college attendance &
4-year completion

Think. Pair. Share.

*What are some ways that you do
or could make belonging a part of
Tier 1 routines at your school(s)?*



Our Tier 1



COMMUNITY MEETING

SCHOLARSHIP PREP TK-8 PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

As a trauma-informed school, we recognized that our students experiencing homelessness required a warm and welcoming environment, trustworthy adults and peers, explicit opportunities to learn and practice coping skills, and to have their basic needs met.

Our Community Meeting toolkit has had a lasting impact on all students, especially those in underserved populations. Through this CDE-recognized Model Innovative Practice, we can now better identify, support, and serve our students experiencing homelessness.



Threshold Greetings



Daily Check-in with SEL Activities



Weekly Universal Screener



Classroom Resource Center

Benefits of Routine and Structure



Skills and Structure

The benefits of a consistent routine are not just that a designated meeting time builds student efficacy; it also provides classroom management structure, communication and coping skills, and a time for students to get into the right mindset for learning.



Trauma-Informed Practice

This structured time to connect provides stability, which is an essential trauma-informed practice. Our students are able to know what they are walking into each day without being put on the spot academically first thing in the morning.



Prep for Success

Scholarship Prep teachers use Community Meeting time to map out the day for students. This limits the surprises and disruptions to students' routines and expectations, allowing for greater academic success.

Skip the Stress



No Wrong Answers

Beginning the day with this meeting time allows our students to participate, experience success, and be in a setting with no wrong answers.



All Students Can Succeed

This practice is especially important and successful for youth experiencing homelessness or other traumas as participation and success are not dependent on completing homework, regular school attendance, or having mastery of grade-level standards.



SAFE SPACE



SAFE ADULTS

SAFE SPACE



SAFE SPACE



What Are Safe Adults?



Deflect

Avoid taking conflict personally. Always use your knowledge and abilities. Deflect, don't engage.



Deescalate

Ensure that you are helping students regulate and not escalate. Give students tools and examples of stress relief.



Demeanor

You may be students' only safe space. Be positive, be welcoming, be affirming, and be understanding.

Lead with Love



✓ Recognition and Belonging

By meeting them at the threshold, we're acknowledging the humanity, worth, and potential of all students, especially those experiencing homelessness. These greetings may be the first positive adult interaction for the students since they were last on campus.

✓ Redirection and Regulation

More than a fist bump or a high five, Threshold Greetings provide a chance for staff to assess where a student is at, recognizing opportunities to help with regulating emotions or redirecting negative emotions before entering the classroom and interacting with peers.

✓ Breaking Down Barriers

Staff members are also supported through this positive interaction, especially those who may have trouble connecting with their students. Threshold Greetings break down communication barriers and provide an opportunity to connect outside of calling on a student when instruction begins.

Start Your Day in a Positive Way with Threshold Greetings

Be Consistent

Be consistent and greet each student by name each day as they enter your classroom.

Keep it Relevant

Customize your greeting system according to your grade level and classroom preferences.

Voice & Choice

Give students options, ensuring they have a voice and choice for their greeting.

Follow Up

Check-in with students who may need additional help regulating or redirecting emotions.



High Fives



Air Hugs



Call and Response



Compliments



Personalized Handshakes



Rock-Paper-Scissors Battle



Creating Community Through Common Language



Naming Feelings

With SEL Curriculum, students learn vocabulary that puts feelings and emotions into words.



Creating Community

As this common language is developed and our classrooms evolve into a community, students and faculty are better equipped to navigate everyday school experiences.



Establishing Trust

In this safe and welcoming environment, students experiencing trauma can build trust with adults and peers.

BUILDING COPING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS



Lifelong Tools

With Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum, students develop coping mechanisms, behavior management tools, and conflict resolution skills.



Understanding Emotions

Students experiencing homelessness and other traumas can better understand and regulate their emotions and learn how to relate to and interact with their peers.



Focused Learning

Effective conflict resolution enables students to refocus their efforts on learning.



Emotional Building Blocks



Anxious



Brave



Confident



Disappointed



Enthusiastic



Friendly



Guilty



Humiliated



Inspired



Jealous



Kind



Lonely



Marvelous



Nauseated



Outraged



Peaceful



Quirky



Relieved



Surprised



Torn



Uncertain



Valued



Wise



Xpress Yourself



Yearning



Zany



Breathe



Name It



Write it Down



Be Creative



Go for a walk



Get Perspective



Celebrate Yourself



Sleep on it



Talk it out



Tighten and release



Take Action



Breathe 5 Times



Count to 10



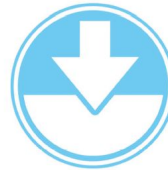
Smile, Hug, or
Fist Bump



Walk Away Quietly



Drink a Glass of Water



Meet in the Middle



Put Yourself in
Someone Else's Shoes



Active Listening



Look for Help



Tighten and release

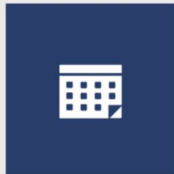
**Trust unlocks
identification**

Tier 1 Morning Meeting

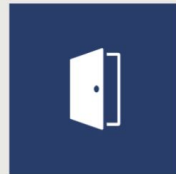
TIER 3

TIER 2

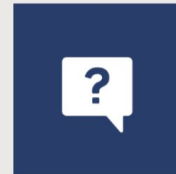
TIER 1



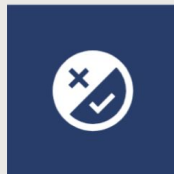
Designated Daily
Meeting Time



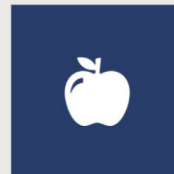
Threshold Greetings



Daily SEL Check-In



Weekly Universal
Screener



Classroom Resource
Center

**Preventative
Belonging**

**Proactive
Support**

The Power of Engagement

A consistent morning meeting reinforces:

- Predictable routines → creates emotional safety
- Intentional Interaction → increases participation
- Movement & mindfulness → helps students regulate
- Student voice → builds ownership and connection

SEL skills develop through repetition, just like academics



SOWN
TO GROW

move
THIS WORLD

We Only Have so Much Water. How we use it matters.

Putting Out Fires



VS.

Watering Seeds



Reactive Support

When we wait for Tier 2 & 3 needs to turn into behavior challenges, absenteeism, mental health crises, etc., it can feel like we are constantly in firefighting mode.

Preventative & Responsive Support

Using Tier 1 as a space to nurture trusting relationships with students allows us to understand the root cause of their needs and provide early Tier 2 & 3 support.



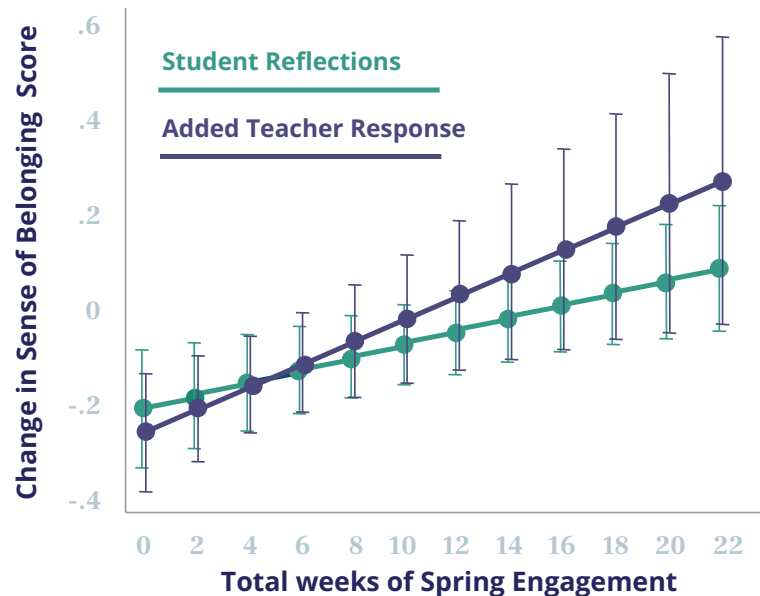
Consistent Connection Boosts Belonging

Weekly Student Check-In

How are you feeling?

What's going well, and what's been hard?



Independent Study, Huebert Impact Research (2025)

Consistent Connection Boosts Belonging

 Week 5 ▾



 **How are you feeling?**


Angry


Tired


Calm


Excited


Sad


Okay


Happy

 Week 5 ▾





I feel **Sad because of**  **Friends**

Dictated text here






Talk

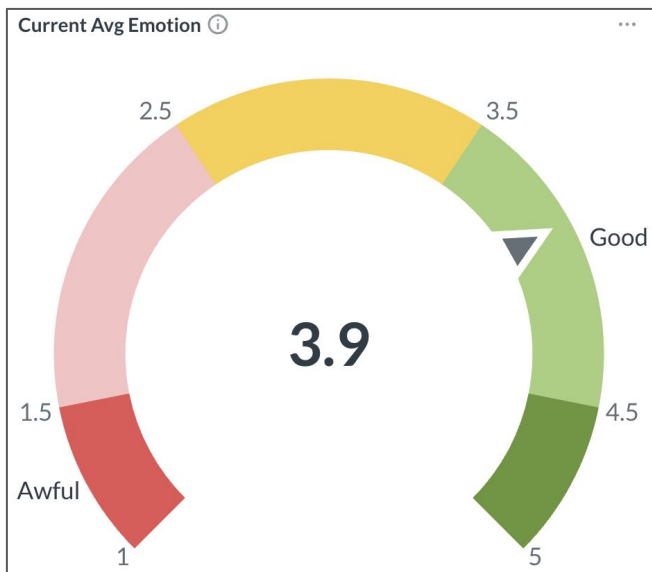
Building Community Early Helps Us Identify Needs

Students benefit from consistent connection to a teacher to build belonging & reinforce we care



As trust is established, they share honestly about how they are doing before challenges are visible

● Awful ● Not So Good ● Okay ● Good ● Awesome



Surfacing Student Needs with Weekly Check-Ins

This weekend I feel Not so good because I am worrying about my grandpa lately his foot blood is not circling well and his heart is not working well that he had to go to the hospital.



Absolutly nothing helped me this week. I got sat next to a group of bullies who constly talk and its torture

This week i had a panic attack because my mom is never satisfied with all i do and i talked it out with my dad while crying all the way over to school and now every time i walk out of the car to school my dad tells me to smile (i just say no)



Growth & Success: Sown To Grow Progress Data

How are you
feeling?



What's going well, and
what's been hard?



2,096

Engaged
Students

36,025

Student
Reflections
Written

318

Alerts
Received

98%

Teacher
Reflection Read
Rate

92%

Teacher
Response Rate

100%

Alerts
Addressed Rate

Totals and Averages include all Scholarship Prep campuses

Classroom Resource Centers



**Available to all students
in every classroom**

**Non perishable snacks
Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Floss
Mouthwash
Mints
Product for all hair
types
Combs
Brushes
School supplies
Underwear
Socks
Deodorant
Menstrual products**

RELOAD AND MONITOR



We train our staff to monitor the frequency with which students access the classroom resource center for items.



If a student is identified as potentially needing extra support, the staff member engages the School Counselor, as with the [Weekly Universal Screener](#).



Monitoring the Resource Center also lets our staff know when it's time to restock supplies.

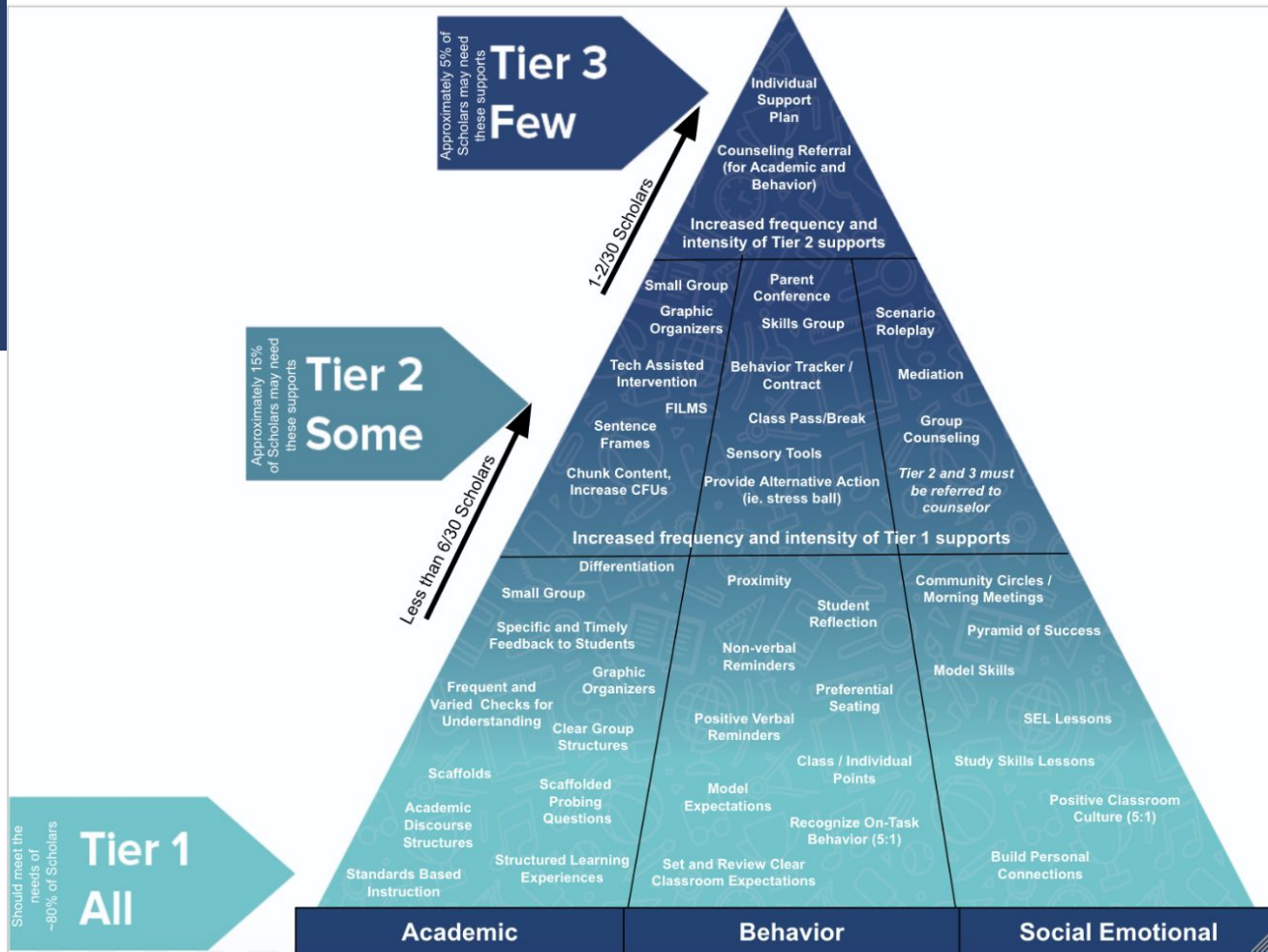
MTSS Approach



SCHOLARSHIP
PREP

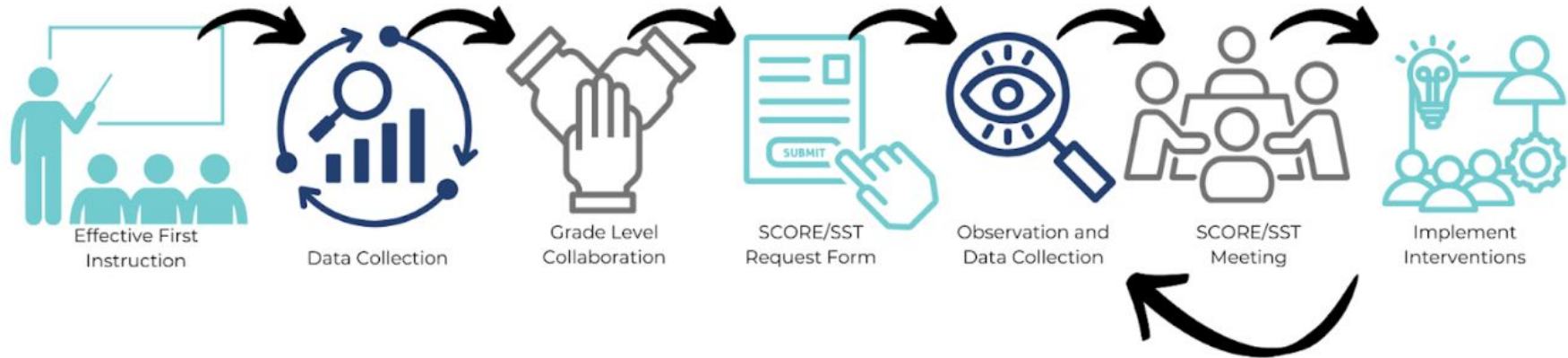


SOWN
TO GROW



Tier 2 & 3 Support Process

Process



Questions?



Alisha Rodriguez

TK-3 Counselor
Scholarship Prep
Orange County Site



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Executive of Scaled Impact
Sown To Grow
Lecturer, Adult SEL
UC Berkeley

Let's Practice!



Something I did this week that I am proud of is that I got nominated for the writing contest. I'd never think that I would be nominated for a writing contest.

What are you learning about this student?

How might you respond?

What other supports from my school, district, or community can we tap into?

Let's Practice!



Something that would help that you should know is my parents are divorced and I smile so nobody will know I am very sad inside. I just need someone to let it ALL OUT! I wish that I could have a good life. It really affects me.

What are you learning about this student?

How might you respond?

What other supports from my school, district, or community can we tap into?

Let's Practice!



Okay, I'll tell you what you want:
My. Week. Was. DEPRESSING. I
hated it because we had to have a
POSITIVE and not draw pictures in
class. 😞😞😞 bro i was bored
because i could NOT draw. sad.

**What are you learning about
this student?**

How might you respond?

**What other supports from my
school, district, or community
can we tap into?**

Let's Practice!



A recent time it was hard to focus was when I was talking to a friend in math. I can stay focused by maybe moving to the carpet.

What are you learning about this student?

How might you respond?

What other supports from my school, district, or community can we tap into?

Remember

- 1. Start with adults.** *If the adults at school aren't supported and engaged, the whole system toples.*
- 2. Belonging is built through routine.** *Simple gestures of care, done consistently, have powerful preventative benefits.*
- 3. Trust unlocks identification.** *Through strong relationships, we build the trust necessary to understand and support needs before crisis arises.*

Thank you!



Alisha Rodriguez

TK-3 Counselor

Scholarship Prep

Orange County Site

alisha.rodriguez@scholarshipschools.org



Dr. Zaia Vera

Executive of Scaled Impact

Sown To Grow

Lecturer, Adult SEL, UC Berkeley

zaia@sowntogrow.com



Learn More!

Appendix

Research References

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<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/75-of-educators-expect-student-behavior-to-be-a-challenge-this-year-what-else/2026/08>
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Potential outcomes	Exploratory evidence	Correlational evidence	Causal evidence
Health and sleep quality	Kern et al. (2014) and Burić et al. (2021)		Crain et al. (2017)
Job and life satisfaction		Silvia et al. (2012); Kern et al. (2014); Butler and Kern (2016); Capone and Petrillo (2020); Collie et al. (2021); Dreer (2021); Erickson (2021)	
Motivation to quit		Ostroff (1992); Walter (2020); Lee et al. (2021); Kwon et al. (2022); Collie (2023)	Wang and Hall (2021)
Job engagement		Ostroff (1992); Silvia et al. (2012); Kern et al. (2014); Shoshani (2021); Hofmann et al. (2022); Collie (2023)	
Self-efficacy		Huang et al. (2019); Capone and Petrillo (2020); Erickson (2021); Billett et al. (2022); Pfleging (2022); Zheng et al. (2022)	Burić et al. (2021)
Teacher–student relationships	Roffey (2012); Pugliese (2019); Walter (2020)	Christian (2017); Aldrup et al. (2018); Pugliese (2019)	
Teamwork		Jacobsson et al. (2016)	
Choice of teaching methods		Huang et al. (2019)	
Teaching behavior	Turner and Thielking (2019); Turner et al. (2021)	Huang et al. (2019)	Ryan and Deci (2016)
Quality of instruction	Klusmann et al. (2008); Crider (2022)	Klusmann et al. (2008); Silvia et al. (2012); Brachfeld (2018); Virtanen et al. (2019); Jones Kingsley (2021); Sánchez Solarte (2022); Harrison et al. (2023); Pap et al. (2023)	
Student experience	Van Petegem et al. (2007); Turner and Thielking (2019); Glazzard and Rose (2020); Turner et al. (2021)	Ostroff (1992); Harding et al. (2019); Bilz et al. (2022); Pap et al. (2023)	Braun et al. (2020); Braun (2021)
Student outcomes	Turner et al. (2021)	Huang et al. (2019); Shoshani (2021)	Duckworth et al. (2009); Braun et al. (2020)
Student engagement		Sánchez Solarte (2022)	Wang and Hall (2021)
School outcomes		Ostroff (1992); Granziera et al. (2023)	
System outcomes			

Objectives

- 1. Start with adults.** Sustainable proactive mental health support requires Tier 0 investment — building staff wellness, shared belief, and community trust before expecting staff to hold space for students' most vulnerable needs. Participants will leave with an understanding of the importance of adult well-being and tangible examples to implement in their school sites.
- 2. Belonging is built through routine.** Scholarship Prep's Community Meeting structure shows how consistent, low-lift practices embedded in the school day create the psychological safety that makes proactive identification possible. Participants will model these practices and begin building their own toolkit for belonging-based routines.
- 3. Trust unlocks identification.** Screeners only work when students feel comfortable opening up. Data from Scholarship Prep's community meeting structure shows increased identification and support for student needs. Participants will explore how to create the trusting conditions for effective screeners and connect them to an action plan for support, leveraging their community meeting toolkit.