

# Guidelines for Return to School

## Maintaining Staff Wellbeing

As we prepare to return to school, feelings of uncertainty, ambiguity, and stress may ensue. Balancing our physical, social, and emotional wellbeing becomes necessary. Our mindset is our strongest asset to help us cope during these challenging times.



### 1 Accept the feeling of uncertainty and recognize that it is normal to feel a lack of control.

- Remind yourself of previous ways of coping during times of uncertainty
- Avoid ruminating on worst-case scenarios
- Focus on what is going well at this time

### 3 Optimism is a contagious and powerful tool.

- Creating a positive atmosphere helps students feel safe and secure
- Finding joy in unexpected places
- Noticing the laughter or the excitement of your students
- Reflecting on things that make you feel hopeful

### 5 Connect, share and debrief with your colleagues.

- We are all in this together; no one has all the answers
- Listen to each other, offer and accept support, encourage one another
- What strength do I have that I can share with others?

### 7 Practice self-care and self-compassion daily.

- Take care of your physical wellbeing, particularly getting adequate sleep and rest
- Engage in activities that promote pleasure and relaxation
- Recognize when you need to take a break or talk to someone
- Practice gratitude enhance positive feelings
- Be kind to yourself and give yourself credit for the work you do

### 2 Try to let go of what you cannot control while, focusing on what you can. For example:

- Your reactions and responses to your students' needs
- The activities and learning opportunities that you want to foster
- Maintaining boundaries and principles on what you can manage
- Reconnecting to your purpose or goal as an educator

### 4 Some things have changed but some have stayed the same. You are still an educator!

- How can I adapt to new ways of teaching and shifting academic goals?
- What social-emotional skills can I focus on? (Independence? Conversation skills?)
- What teaching strategies do my students respond well to?

### 6 Change your narrative in order to foster a more helpful perspective.

- For example, instead of saying "I am so afraid of this situation, all these new rules are too difficult" try saying "This is a challenge but also an opportunity to learn new skills, be creative, and appreciate what we normally take for granted."
- Good things often emerge from difficult events and situations, can you think of some?

*Remember that you must look after yourself to be able to look after others*