

A Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher (ECT) Resilience

POLICIES & PRACTICES

Policies and practices refer to the officially mandated statements, guidelines, values and prescriptions that both enable and constrain ECT wellbeing. ECT resilience and wellbeing are enhanced when policies and practices show a strong commitment to social justice, teacher agency and voice, community engagement, and respect for local knowledge and practice.

To enhance ECT resilience, it is important to:

Provide relevant, rigorous and responsive pre-service preparation for the profession

- ▶ Foster stakeholders' collective ownership of preparation, induction and ongoing learning
- ▶ Provide diverse, rigorous and carefully planned pre-service professional experiences
- ▶ Ensure coherence between on-campus courses and the dynamic demands of the profession

Create innovative partnerships and initiatives that assist smooth transitions to the workforce

- ▶ Support professional development suitable to the school context
- ▶ Acknowledge the value of previous professional experiences and expertise
- ▶ Provide additional professional and financial resources for complex school settings

Implement transparent, fair and responsive employment processes

- ▶ Notify school appointments in a timely manner
- ▶ Provide opportunities for continuity of employment
- ▶ Ensure equitable access to support, resources and learning opportunities
- ▶ Provide professional development that equips school leaders to support ECTs

TEACHERS' WORK

Teachers' work refers to the complex array of practices, knowledge, relationships and ethical considerations that comprise the role of the teacher. ECT resilience is promoted when the focus is on understanding the complex, intense and unpredictable nature of teachers' work rather than on individual deficits and blame.

To enhance ECT resilience, it is important to:

Acknowledge the complex, intense and unpredictable nature of teachers' work

- ▶ Attend to the physical, intellectual, relational and emotional dimensions of teachers' work
- ▶ Acknowledge that teachers' work is demanding and tiring

Develop teachers' curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and strategies

- ▶ Provide opportunities for collaborative planning, teaching, assessment and reporting
- ▶ Allocate space and structures for teachers' critical and reflective work
- ▶ Focus on student diversity, passions and interests
- ▶ Promote innovative and engaging curriculum practices

Provide support to create engaging learning environments

- ▶ Take collective ownership of students' wellbeing and behaviour
- ▶ Develop beliefs and practices that engage students and encourage constructive behaviours
- ▶ Create collaborative and democratic learning environments
- ▶ Make authentic connections between students' learning and their life-worlds

Ensure access to appropriate ongoing support, resources and learning opportunities

- ▶ Provide equitable and timely access to needs-based professional learning
- ▶ Support the development of pedagogical beliefs, values and practices
- ▶ Provide adequate release time from face-to-face teaching

SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture refers to the values, beliefs, norms, assumptions, behaviours and relationships that characterise the daily rituals of school life. ECT resilience flourishes in schools that promote collaborative relationships, professional learning communities, educative forms of leadership and democratic decision-making.

To enhance ECT resilience, it is important to:

Promote a sense of belonging and social connectedness

- ▶ Practise affirmation
- ▶ Recognise and value diverse perspectives, practices and backgrounds
- ▶ Foster trust and goodwill
- ▶ Minimise isolation
- ▶ Take collective responsibility for teacher wellbeing and safety

Develop educative, democratic and empowering processes

- ▶ Promote distributive leadership
- ▶ Work through problems respectfully
- ▶ Include all school personnel regardless of employment status
- ▶ Establish a commitment to social justice

Provide formal and informal transition/induction processes

- ▶ Appoint mentors/coaches/buddies
- ▶ Provide ongoing induction
- ▶ Apply equitable processes regardless of length and nature of appointment
- ▶ Promote understanding and appreciation of the different roles in the school

Develop a professional learning community

- ▶ Promote opportunities for risk taking and innovation
- ▶ Provide environments and resources that optimise teaching and learning
- ▶ Provide opportunities for collaborative learning
- ▶ Take collective responsibility for student behaviour, learning and wellbeing

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships refers to the social and professional networks, human connections and belongingness experienced by ECTs. Schools that value relationships focus on the complex emotional needs of ECTs and encourage social exchanges that foster respect, trust, care and integrity. ECT resilience benefits significantly when these values are evident in policies and practice.

To enhance ECT resilience, it is important to:

Promote a sense of belonging, acceptance and wellbeing

- ▶ Foster relationships based on mutual trust, respect, care and integrity
- ▶ Help manage personal and professional challenges and conflicts
- ▶ Encourage involvement in professional and community networks
- ▶ Value support from family, friends and peers

Place student-teacher relationships at the heart of the teaching-learning process

- ▶ Develop positive and democratic relationships with students
- ▶ Involve parents/caregivers in their children's learning
- ▶ Enjoy interacting with students and celebrate their successes
- ▶ Develop learning communities where everyone encourages each other's learning
- ▶ Celebrate student innovation and success in and beyond the classroom

Foster professional growth

- ▶ Value the personal strengths and resources of teachers
- ▶ Give specific, constructive and timely feedback
- ▶ Give explicit affirmation and acknowledgement
- ▶ Support communication with parents/caregivers/community

Promote collective ownership and responsibility for professional relationships

- ▶ Cultivate a generosity of spirit
- ▶ Share responsibility for maintaining positive relationships
- ▶ Create time and spaces for dialogue and collaboration

TEACHER IDENTITY

Teacher identity refers to the development of one's awareness and understanding of self as a teacher. Teacher resilience is enhanced when ECTs engage in processes of self-reflection and self-understanding that sustain their personal identity, while at the same time developing a robust teacher identity.

To enhance ECT resilience, it is important to:

Understand the interplay between personal and professional identities

- ▶ Recognise that personal and professional identities are interconnected
- ▶ Recognise that teachers' identities are produced in particular social and cultural contexts
- ▶ Understand the evolving nature of personal-professional identities
- ▶ Recognise that emotions are an integral part of identity development

Engage in self-reflection

- ▶ Accommodate new and different ways of thinking
- ▶ Challenge and develop beliefs, assumptions, values and practices
- ▶ Negotiate the contradictions and tensions of teaching
- ▶ Employ proactive coping strategies

Foster a sense of agency, efficacy and self-worth

- ▶ Commit to the ethical and moral purposes of teaching
- ▶ Develop a high level of social and emotional responsiveness
- ▶ Maintain hope and optimism
- ▶ Promote work-life balance and wellbeing
- ▶ Seek help and support

