



Strategies to Support a Positive School Climate

Workload

Workload is defined as the amount of work an individual is required to complete (Jex, 1998), and includes the responsibilities educators are expected to perform both within and outside the classroom. Excessive workload occurs when an employee feels that they have too many tasks to complete at a given time (Greenglass & Burke, 2003).



Why is it important?

- Workload is a significant workplace stressor associated with numerous negative outcomes, including burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996).
- Teacher workload detracts from an educator's ability to provide meaningful feedback and sufficiently review homework assignments (Cooper et al., 2006).
- Workload from administrative responsibilities can negatively impact the quality of a teachers' instructional efforts (Kim, 2019)

In Practice

School leaders should actively monitor the workload of their staff and seek to provide solutions if they are feeling overburdened, instilling a positive work culture around open communication and balanced workloads.



What can schools do?

- Regularly connect with staff to discuss current workloads and, where concerns exist, work towards mutually agreeable solutions.
- Seek to reduce non-essential responsibilities by looking for opportunities to either eliminate or postpone this work to a later date.
- Carve out dedicated time during school hours to complete administrative tasks and lesson planning.
- Look into arrangements that redistribute non-compulsory tasks to reduce workload (e.g., shared and rotated assignments).



Leader Reflection

School leaders can provide a supportive environment that addresses workload concerns by adopting the following collaborative solutions:

- Work alongside staff to help them prioritise their work, highlighting both essential and non-essential tasks.
- Look into roles and responsibilities where little control and autonomy exists and allow staff to dictate how they will conduct this work.
- Enable teachers at all levels to be given protected time to carry out planning, marking and to do lesson observations.
- Reduce the number of non-essential meetings, think twice about sending unnecessary e-mails and pare down initiatives that may distract employees from their key responsibilities.

References

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