

# Principal Well-Being

Social-emotional competencies can help leaders cope, too



**E**VEN BEFORE THE pandemic began, researchers were highlighting educators' increased concern for students' social-emotional learning and mental health. Now we are in our third academic year of schooling impacted by the pandemic, and even while students have mostly transitioned back to in-person learning, their needs have been amplified as they process the mental toll of unexpected school disruptions, so-

cial unrest, and racial tension, as well as more common adverse childhood experiences.

But students aren't the only ones suffering from compound grief and stress; educators are feeling it, too. According to the RAND report "Will This School Year Be Another Casualty of the Pandemic?," the impact has lowered teacher morale and contributed to increased burnout, which might cause a nationwide shortage of teachers and school staff—a condition that many schools and districts are already facing.

Principals need guidance in supporting teachers and students during this time, but they need to prioritize tending to their own wellness, too. In this issue of *Principal* magazine, authors James A. Bailey and Randy Weiner explain how principals can take care of their own well-being by embracing "positive spirals" to deepen SEL competencies of self-awareness and self-management. (See "Stress Reduction for the Selfless" on page 18.)

## New Focus for New Principals

I'm proud to introduce "New Principal Navigator," a new column dedicated to supporting early-career principals. Whether you are in your first few years of leadership or are more of a veteran, you are sure to find nuggets to enhance your practice. This work is generously supported by The Wallace Foundation, and it represents yet another way that NAESP supports principals at every career stage. The first installment, "But First, Relationships" (page 46), provides guidance on which of the essential leadership skills principals should prioritize in their beginning years.

As always, I hope that this issue gives you the resources and inspiration you need to lead dynamic learning communities.

—**Kaylen Tucker, Ph.D.**  
Editor-in-Chief

## LEADING LESSONS

Download the latest issue of *Leading Lessons*, "A Positive Approach to School Discipline," to correct discipline mistakes and align your practice to SEL competencies. Download it at [naesp.org/leading-lessons](https://naesp.org/leading-lessons).



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**Kaylen Tucker, Ph.D.**  
[ktucker@naesp.org](mailto:ktucker@naesp.org)

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[adinfo.nep@foxrep.com](mailto:adinfo.nep@foxrep.com)

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