

The Impact of COVID-19 on Teachers' Self-Efficacy and School Culture

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Abstract

Teacher efficacy is a cognitive process in which educators construct beliefs about their capacity to perform and positively impact students' outcomes. These beliefs influence the educators' level of effort, their resilience, their capacity to accept failures, and the levels of stress they experience when working in challenging situations such as COVID-19. Teachers' self-efficacy affects the school's collective efficacy and thus the school's culture. This teaching case study is relevant to practicing and prospective principals and administrators because it raises issues related to teachers' self-efficacy during COVID-19, at a time when schools went back to face-to-face instruction after 18 months of online and hybrid instruction. This scenario addresses the critical role principals play in boosting teachers' self-efficacy.

Keywords: *Teachers' self-efficacy, collective efficacy, school culture, PK-12, leadership, COVID-19, crisis.*

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Introduction

I am struggling. To be quite frank, I have been struggling since COVID-19 hit our country and forced us to teach differently, using different modalities, learning as we went, and barely feeling a sense that our hard work made a difference in our students' lives. I can honestly say that I tried my best and it was not enough. For months, I taught my own kids at home, took care of my family and my own health issues, and did all I could to teach and reach my students. I am exhausted and emotionally spent. I am used to being stressed as a teacher, but this level of sustained stress is too much. Now that we are back in school, I have nothing left to give because I gave it all last year and what makes me sad as a passionate educator is that I do not think all my efforts positively impacted my students' performance, motivation, or well-being. I love my job, but I need a break or something else. Maria (Pseudonym used).

What Maria, an urban middle school teacher, expressed in the quote is representative of what many teachers now experience after 18 months of online or hybrid learning and finally being back in schools. Teaching is one of the most stressful professions (Gallup, 2014; Goodwin, 2019). The stress experienced by teachers and administrators often leads to high levels of burnout and lower levels of self-efficacy (Cuddy & Riley, 2021; Faggell, 2021). Prior to COVID-19, 20% of educators reported feeling extremely burnt-out, but after COVID-19, this percentage doubled to 40% (Fagell, 2021). As many educators have come back to teaching face to face, they experience emotional and physical burnout, and in many cases, their self-efficacy is at an all-time low. Teacher efficacy has been defined as "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman et al., 1977, p. 137), or as "teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Guskey & Passaro, 1994, p. 4). Bandura (1977) viewed teacher efficacy as a cognitive process in which educators construct beliefs about their capacity

to perform at a given level of attainment. These beliefs influence the educators' level of effort, their resilience, their capacity to accept failures, and the levels of stress they experience when working in crisis situations such as COVID-19. Teachers' self-efficacy is crucial for schools because it augments job satisfaction and fosters greater motivation to stay in the profession (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). Teaching generally implies that teachers work collaboratively with their colleagues within grade level teams or professional learning communities. As a result, teachers' self-efficacy affects the group's or collective efficacy and therefore has an impact on the school's culture.

This teaching case study takes place during the COVID-19 pandemic at a time when schools are back to teaching face-to-face and teachers' self-efficacy is minimal, thus affecting the collective efficacy and the school culture. The first section of this teaching case study presents relevant background information. Subsequent sections focus on the scenario itself and the teaching notes, which will help current and future school leaders complete the reflective activities.

Background information

This section presents some fictitious contextual information about the community, school district, school, and principal.

Maydon

Maydon is an urban city in the Midwest of the United States. The city is home to 140,000 inhabitants, has a vibrant refugee and immigrant population, and is well known for its visual arts offerings. There is one large university in the center of town and several on the outskirts. Despite Maydon's thriving technological industry, the city is still considered hyper-segregated. The river

has historically served as a natural separation between races, economic status levels and access to educational opportunities. Because schools are funded by property taxes, the schools located on the West side of the river have fewer resources.

Maydon School District and MAYCA Charter Schools

The Maydon School District (MSS) serves 11,000 students from Kindergarten to High School. The district operates 18 school buildings: three preschools, eight elementary schools, three middle schools, and four high schools. There are also two charter schools in the district. In addition to the two charter schools affiliated with the district, MAYCA is a charter school district that operates independently from the school district. MAYCA is comprised of three schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. MAYCA first opened its high school in 2003, the elementary school in 2012 and the middle school in 2016. These schools are governed by their own superintendency. These three schools serve 1,500 students or close to 8% of the district's student population. MAYCA combines a rigorous academic curriculum, personalized support services, and connections to the Maydon community. MAYCA's mission is to provide a quality education regardless of the student's zip code and to ensure that each student is given opportunities, knowledge, and skills to attend college. When visiting MAYCA schools, one often hears that their success is due to being mission-driven and having over 70% of MAYCA graduates admitted and graduating from college within six years. MAYCA schools focus on building strong relationships with both their students and parents and providing high levels of support to students and teachers. For example, teachers receive ongoing coaching designed to enhance the quality of their instruction and their ability to engage their students effectively. Teachers have various opportunities to practice new skills, make mistakes, learn from their

errors, and share learning with colleagues. As a result of the high levels of support given to new teachers, MAYCA's teachers have always experienced high levels of self and collective efficacy, which was apparent prior to COVID-19. This teaching case study takes place in MAYCA Middle School when students and teachers came back into the building after 18 months of mandated online and hybrid learning. I chose to situate this teaching case study at MAYCA middle for several reasons. First, students are performing at higher levels than at other middle schools in the district. Second, MAYCA is known for having effective and innovative teachers who enjoy working at that school and who receive various professional development opportunities. Third, there is an intentional effort from the leadership to match the teachers' demographics with the students.

In Fall 2021, findings from my observations and interviews indicated that MAYCA Middle School teachers were for the first time feeling inadequate, unappreciated, and held the belief that their work did not matter and did not impact students' outcomes and well-being. In other words, teachers' self-efficacy was at an all-time low for the first time since the opening of the school, despite the principal's efforts to offer more professional learning (PL) and being an optimistic and positive leader.

MAYCA Middle School

MAYCA Middle School (MMS) is located on the West side of Maydon, in the city center. MMS serves 450 students, 96% of them identifying as BIPOC. Unlike many schools in the United States, the teachers and staff are 56% BIPOC, allowing students to "see themselves in their teachers." The school employs 32 teachers, one assistant principal, one janitor, two

secretaries, and one counselor. Teachers are almost equally represented in terms of gender and both the principal and vice principal are White men.

Mr. Firman is the current school principal. He was a Social Studies teacher at MMS prior to being the founding principal of MAYCA Middle. Mr. Firman is a dynamic and reflective school leader who is passionate about teaching, equity, diversity, and inclusion. He always says that he “loved being a teacher.” In his free time, he likes to organize activities with students and enjoys focusing on building robust relationships with them. It is during his time with students that they confided in him that having more BIPOC teachers would help them because “these teachers understand students better, they come from the same culture, and thus students can relate to them better.” To increase the number of BIPOC teachers and staff in his school, Principal Firman often hires MAYCA alumni because they “know and understand the MAYCA DNA and they are naturally motivated to teach at MAYCA because the school has had a positive impact on their lives.” In other words, these teachers experienced MAYCA, they liked it, and they now want to be one of the teachers who positively influence students’ trajectories and opportunities. Mr. Firman used to pride himself on having teachers and staff with high levels of self-efficacy. These educators knew and saw that they were making a difference in their students’ lives.

The Case

The scenario presented below is hypothetical. At the end of the day on November 1, Principal Firman notes in his reflective journal his concerns about teachers’ lack of self-efficacy and its impact on the school culture:

The culture at MMS has changed 360 degrees since COVID-19. I can feel some bad vibes when I walk around the hallways. I can see teachers are tired, even more than that they are exhausted. They are upset, and short-tempered, they lack patience for themselves and each other. I often get report that the grade level team meetings are no longer about students, but they are rather venting sessions about the COVID-19 situation and the teachers' perceived lack of influence they have on their students' learning. I see depressed faces, as if they are mourning the MAYCA they knew before COVID-19. Teachers are absent far more than they ever have before COVID-19, they are less enthusiastic about teaching and being at school, they complain a lot more, and seem to have adopted a deficit mindset about themselves, not seeing value in what they do for their students, in other words, they have very low levels of self-efficacy. I am not sure what to do myself as I am also feeling what the teachers feel and am running on very low battery myself. I try my best to stay positive and bring a positive energy in the school, but I do not see any changes even when I am intentionally regularly reward teachers and provide them with professional development.

It is barely 7:30am and principal Firman has already received three calls from teachers feeling sick. When the principal drove to school, saw the blue sky and the sun shining on the beautiful multicolored leaves, he had been hopeful that this Monday would not be a copy and paste of every other day since the start of the school year. However, as Mr. Firman has become accustomed to doing, he reached out to his preferred substitute teachers first who were also all unavailable to work for him that day. He then went to his long substitute list and while his secretary tried to find teachers for the day, he knew that he probably would end up being a substitute for the day and would have to ask his vice principal and other staff members to help in classes as well. Since the pandemic started, the lack of substitute teachers has been an issue throughout the region just like the dearth of bus drivers has impacted the students' ability to arrive on time or arrive at all.

Despite these challenges, Mr. Firman puts on a happy front for teachers all day, leaving his principal duties for the early morning and night times after he puts his two young children to

bed. Because he typically has an unlimited amount of energy when it comes to educating students, he continues to approach the health crisis and his school's many challenges with utter positivity. However, because teachers are tired and mentally fragile, they do not respond as well to the principal's positivity. Clara expressed the sentiment of her colleagues when she said: "I wish that instead of being over positive, the principal would help us regain our self-efficacy." In one of their grade level teams, the 7th grade squad discussed this issue. Marvin an experienced teacher said:

I know Mr. Firman is trying to cheer us up but quite frankly, I can only take so many jokes a day when I am tired and burnt out. I also cannot eat more donuts. I know he buys us goods and gifts to reward us because he is grateful for our work. I know Mr. Firman has good intentions, but he does not understand that right now we need feedback rather than donuts. We also need a good dose of conflicts around what is happening to our school's culture. He is avoiding the conflicts and as a result we have become toxic; there are more clicks than ever before, more segregation between BIPOC and White teachers and more resentment towards the principal. We need the leadership to tell us how we are doing as teachers. I am depressed because I am not getting that feedback. I am gradually losing my agency, confidence, and interest in school and that affects our team's agency and efficacy.

Margie, a new teacher, and an alumna of MAYCA agreed and added:

I have missed more work than I ever have, it is not always because I am sick, and I cannot come. It is more that I do not want to come because I do not feel that I am making a difference in these kids' lives and that is why I chose to work at MAYCA in the first place. Maybe I do make a difference but how would I know? The students are also going through a lot. There are more fights than ever, and more discipline issues than ever before. If students serve in school-suspension, they are not in class and if they are not in class, I cannot help them learn. I cannot do my job well, which makes me lose the little efficacy I had. As a new teacher, I know I am lucky to have a coach, but I still need feedback and authentic praise from my principal. This year he only came once in my classroom. It is hard enough to be a new teacher during the pandemic, but it is almost inconceivable when one loses their self-efficacy and agency which is where I am. I am even afraid now to stand in front of my students, that is how much I lack confidence.

Martha, another teacher, chimed in and added that teachers were physically and mentally exhausted. She stated not having recovered from the 18 months of online and hybrid instruction. She shared that she still did not find the time to exercise and take care of herself because she took bad habits during the pandemic. She stated that having genuine conversations or even conflicts about teaching and learning, and the negative school culture would help teachers regain momentum and their collective efficacy. Debbie had listened to her colleagues and finally took the floor and said:

I agree with Martha. I was recently isolated for two weeks because I contracted the virus and I had to sleep in my RV outside my home. I did not even receive a call from the principal. I know he is also struggling, and he is doing his best to mask his struggles but instead of making us believe that he is ok, he should show and model vulnerability because I know for a fact he has had his worries both personally and professionally. He is our leader, his actions or non-actions affects our own efficacy, our collective agency and efficacy and our school culture.

Other teachers in the team spoke about the lack of conflicts being toxic, particularly when it came to conflicts between BIPOC and White teachers. Martin said: “There were tensions between racial groups among teachers because of cultural differences before COVID-19 but now you could cut the tension with a knife, it is so apparent and uncomfortable.” Margie agreed and shared:

These conversations about race are supposed to be uncomfortable and they are healthy when they occur. Right now, I feel that we need to have conflicts and speak about our differences and frustrations with COVID-19, our teaching, our policies, our leadership, or anything else. Conflicts are healthy and I believe we know how to handle them, but now at MAYCA we avoid them at all costs and stick to the fake positivity when we all know there are many issues dividing us.

While the grade level teams met, Mr. Firman was in his office with a teacher, a newcomer who was giving the principal his resignation after one month at MAYCA. Mr. Firman had never experienced this kind of separation in his five years of principalship. Despite offering the teacher more support, more financial incentives, and more professional development, the teacher declined and simply said: “I cannot do it. I am not seeing that I make a difference, I feel inadequate and unappreciated by my colleagues and the administration, I just do not have the bandwidth anymore.” The principal shook the teacher’s hand and thanked him. He then closed his door and pondered what to do next to retain teachers, attract new ones, and alter the school’s culture. He called his vice principal in to discuss a plan of action. After hours of meetings, they came up with new policies that they believed would improve the school’s culture. Because cell phones had always been an issue prior to COVID-19 and students had been on their phones so much during the remote learning period, the administrators decided that there would be a new no phone policy at school. They figured that this policy would decrease the number of detentions and suspensions, which would help the school culture and hence help teachers feel better about their work.

The administrators also decided to reduce the student-teacher ratio to one teacher for every 10 students. Teachers welcomed this new policy; however, the new policy eliminated the grade level meetings, a time when teachers talked and stayed social. Martha expressed being “shocked that the leadership would create such policies without consulting the ones who are most affected by them.” Marvin agreed with Martha and added: “I know that the leadership has good intentions and is trying to spare us from extra meetings while also acting quickly. However,

by excluding us from such decisions, the leaders are creating a different culture, a culture of us against them.”

To boost the morale of MMS teachers and to positively impact the school culture, the leadership team decided to increase the number of PL offered. Teachers had always enjoyed PL prior to COVID-19 and requested sessions during the online instruction period. PL became a weekly occurrence at MMS. Topics ranged from content matters to classroom management or the introduction of new pedagogical tools. To Mr. Firman’s surprise, teachers did not welcome the additional PL. Instead, they collaboratively wrote a letter to the principal. The letter stated:

Mr. Firman,

While recognize the benefits of PL, we believe that PL is only advantageous when it is carefully planned, when teachers have an input on the topics that are presented, when teachers can choose which PL to attend based on their needs and when the PL delivery is engaging and motivating rather than lecture based. We have experts at MAYCA who could deliver certain training rather than always looking for consultants who do not know our school. As PL stands right now, it is detrimental to us rather than helpful because it does not motivate us, it does not provide us what we need, and it takes our time and energy. As a result, we continue to be exhausted, frustrated, and quite unhappy in our jobs. With this in mind, we respectfully ask that you consult us prior to organizing anymore PL. We thank you, MAYCA teachers.

Despite the leadership’s efforts to create new policies and provide additional PL opportunities, the leadership team has not seen a difference in teachers’ self-efficacy. Rather Mr. Firman and his vice-principal noted that collective efficacy was disappearing and that the school culture continued to deteriorate. The vice-principal stated: “It seems that everyone is operating on a survival mode at best.” In an honest conversation, with his vice principal, Mr. Firman shared:

I do not recognize our school culture; the teachers are so devalued despite our attempts. They used to be so confident, energetic, and happy. They knew they made a huge difference in the kids’ lives. Now they seem to doubt everything they do, everything we

do, and I do not see the collective efficacy or the school culture we used to have. I even heard that some of our best teachers were planning to leave the profession at the end of the school year.

Mr. Firman has an opportunity to make some changes and learn how to foster the teachers' self-efficacy to improve the collective efficacy and the school's culture. The next section provides information about the role of the school leader in promoting teachers' self-efficacy, enhancing the collective efficacy and positively affecting the school's culture.

Teaching Notes

These Teaching Notes aim to assist prospective and current school leaders understand the importance of teachers' self-efficacy in promoting the schools' collective efficacy and creating healthy and inviting school cultures. These concepts are always important in 'normal times' because teaching is a stressful profession, but they are even more crucial in times of crisis because teachers endure long-term and sustained stress and traumas.

Leaders and School Culture

The culture of a school is what distinguishes one school from another. The school culture determines how people are treated, how policies and programs are implemented, and how a person feels when he/she walks into the school for the first time. The school culture dictates whether a school is inviting and safe for students, and whether the leader cares about his/her students and teachers. Because culture is a predominant force, the culture of a school influences teacher and student retention, performance, and well-being (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2019; Lindsey et al., 2018; Purkey & Novack, 1988; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015).

Donohoo et al. (2018) affirmed that school principals can positively impact the culture of a school by altering existing narratives and mindsets. Such narratives may include that new teachers only interact with principals during their scheduled summative observation or that to be professional means working countless hours and forgetting to take care of self along the way. During the pandemic, teachers and leaders alike have often lost sight of their own well-being, forgetting to take care of themselves because they were focused on taking care of everyone else first (Author, 2021; Author & Bachowski, 2021). The pandemic reminded educators of the utmost importance in balancing professionalism with self-care and that school leaders should model and support the self-care of their faculty and staff (Author, 2021; Author & Bachowski, 2021). In their qualitative study with 24 educators across seven schools and three districts, Author and Bachowski (2021) found that leaders were about to create intentionally inviting school cultures in times of crisis when they modeled taking time for activities they enjoyed, found time to listen to others and connect with people and colleagues, were intentional about shutting off work, and doing small acts of kindness for others. Guskey (2021) posited that self-care should also include providing PL that is engaging. Offering such PL can energize, inspire, and reignite the teachers' passion for education.

Other narratives that can negatively affect a school's culture relate to balancing risk and autonomy and whether the principal supports teachers' growth by allowing them to learn from errors and take risks. Lastly, the culture of a school is impacted when principals do not give authentic and meaningful feedback to improve teaching and teachers' self-efficacy (Donohoo et al., 2021).

Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is related to teachers' persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, and instructional behavior. Teacher efficacy also affects student outcomes, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs (Anderson & Schuh, 2021; Mielke, 2021; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Bandura (1977) proposed four major influences on self-efficacy beliefs: Vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, psychological and emotional arousal, and mastery experiences. *Vicarious experiences* occur when teachers learn by observing other educators. As a result, school leaders should allocate resources and support systems so that teachers' PL include observing other skillful teachers within or outside their school. The use of videos is also advised as teachers can view themselves and debrief their teaching with their coach or mentor or can video another teacher and follow a similar process. Because fostering a sense of efficacy in teachers impacts the collective efficacy, using vicarious experiences can also build an entire school's sense of efficacy.

Verbal persuasion relates to feedback and other verbal interactions that a teacher receives about his or her performance. The coach, formal or informal mentor, as well as the principal and other colleagues all play a key role in providing verbal persuasion. These communications may be formal or informal, verbal and/or non-verbal, written and/or oral. Verbal persuasion is key to fostering teachers' self-efficacy if the feedback is genuine and specific. For example, instead of saying "good job today", helpful feedback that is timely and specific may sound like: "When you modeled the skit today at the beginning of the lesson and modeled what to do and what not to do, students could really relate to your expectation. You not only modeled and explained to

them what a successful skit is, but you also wrote it down on the board so that made it harder for them to forget.” To boost teachers’ self-efficacy, verbal persuasion should focus on highlighting successes. *Psychological and emotional arousal* also adds to a feeling of capability or incompetence, depending upon whether it is experienced as a sense of anxiety or of excitement about a performance. This is true for individual as well as collective efforts. As a result, school leaders should be mindful to frame their feedback in a way that even if a lesson did not achieve its goal, the teacher understands what he or she did well and that learning by making errors is one of the most powerful ways to learn. The principal should also be vulnerable enough to share some of his/her errors to encourage teachers to take risks and make mistakes to grow.

Finally, *mastery experiences* are actual teaching accomplishments with students. Self-efficacy beliefs are raised when teachers see improvement in student performances because of their teaching. A healthy dose of self-efficacy yields greater efforts and higher levels of persistence over time, whereas when teachers experience low self-efficacy, they lose their motivation and their resilience (Anderson & Schuh, 2021; Bandura, 1977; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). However, it is also important for school leaders to challenge teachers beyond their comfort zones by making sure they receive various opportunities to practice new instructional approaches that become progressively more challenging. The bottom line is the higher teachers’ self-efficacy is, the more teachers are satisfied with their jobs and the greater motivation they have to stay in the profession (Worth & Van den Brande, 2020). To capture the importance of boosting teachers’ self-efficacy in times of crisis, Pflieger and Cunningham (2021) coined the term crisis efficacy as the belief that one’s perceived ability to succeed is not just for everyday

life but also in times of crisis, when individuals experience high levels of sustained stress and burnout. Because learning and teaching are social endeavors, teachers' self-efficacy impacts the collective efficacy, and hence negatively affects the school's culture (Mielke, 2021).

Collective Efficacy

“Teachers operate collectively within an interactive social system. Therefore, educational development through efficacy enhancement must address the social and organizational structure of educational systems” (Bandura, 1977, p. 243). Collective efficacy is a group's belief that the group can impact its performance (Tschannen-Moran & Chen, 2014; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2014). It is worthy to note that collective efficacy beliefs may refer to the beliefs of an entire faculty or to smaller subcultures within the whole, such as grade-level teams (Tschannen-Moran & Chen, 2014). Teachers' collective efficacy is the belief that the teachers as a whole produce positive student outcomes. Collective efficacy is not easy because it does not mean silencing dissent to foster compliance, or else collective efficacy promotes toxic positivity and toxic school cultures. Regarding toxic positivity, France (2021) stated: “Toxic positivity is the pervasive mindset that, no matter the circumstances, one should always see the positive” (p.33). Authors such as Preston and Donohoo (2021) affirmed that instead of pervasive positivity conflicts are needed. Conflict or what these authors call co(n)frontation is healthy. Preston and Donohoo (2021) refer to co(n)frontation as “the moment of opportunity in which a problem presents itself and the team exercises the professional discipline needed to deal with it appropriately” (p.27). As a result, school leaders should not be overly positive to motivate or encourage their teachers, but rather they should allow conflicts to emerge to foster collective efficacy and promote a healthy school culture.

Implications for Practice

To create or sustain intentionally inviting school cultures that foster teachers' self and collective efficacy, leaders should provide vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, psychological and emotional arousal, and mastery experiences (Bandura, 1977). They should also model self-care (Author, 2021) and vulnerability (France, 2019). Scribner (1999) noted that teachers' levels of efficacy influenced their responses to PL. As a result, leaders must not only provide PL that is based on best practices, but they should also always provide regular and quality feedback (Guskey, 2021) and attend to boosting their teachers' self-efficacy first because these efficacy beliefs drive the teachers' motivation to implement new instructional strategies (Scribner, 1999). If teachers are not confident about their abilities, they are more likely to perceive innovations as threats and will not attempt to apply and implement the new skills they acquired during a PL event. Consequently, because beliefs about capability, both at the individual and collective levels, are related to teachers' motivation to engage in PL and adaptive practices, it is crucial that school leaders understand the mechanisms by which these beliefs are developed and sustained over time. Additionally, leaders should facilitate instructional bonding, coaching, e-coaching, professional learning communities, and the making of videos to highlight successes (Fisher & Frey, 2021).

Efficacy-driven leaders can model the use of a gratitude journal and turn venting sessions into victory sessions while also allowing conflicts to arise when needed (Preston & Donohoo, 2021). They should have a reward system but keep in mind that teachers want "more affirmation that their practice is making a difference" (Mielke, 2021, p.18). Principals should provide timely and specific feedback using hand-written notes or emails and they should

genuinely praise good teaching often (Fisher & Frey, 2021). Principals should also ask questions, such as what are your current strengths with managing learning? What are areas you would love to improve? The same kinds of questions can be used for student engagement, instruction, and feedback. Although these recommendations stem from time spent at MMS during COVID-19, I believe that these recommendations are applicable for any other types of crises when educators experience higher levels of stress and trauma than normal. Such crises may include natural disasters or active shooters.

Conclusion

Focusing and enhancing teachers' self-efficacy is always important but it is particularly key in times of crisis such as COVID-19 when teachers have sustained months of stress and burnout and are physically and mentally exhausted. This teaching case study demonstrated that teachers' self-efficacy affects the collective efficacy and impacts the school culture as well. In this scenario, Mr. Firman focused on being positive and providing rewards in lieu of increasing his teachers' self-efficacy. As a result, and without realizing it, teachers lost interest in their jobs, felt unappreciated, and perceived their hard work as not making a difference in the students' outcomes and lives. This lack of efficacy translated into poor collective efficacy and a toxic school culture. Next, you will have the opportunity to reflect on this teaching case study and apply what you have learned. Using the teaching notes, please answer the questions and complete the activities.

Activities

1. Put yourself in Mr. Firman shoes, what could you do to improve the teachers' self-efficacy in times of crisis? Create a list of ideas using Bandura's (1977) four major influencers of self-efficacy beliefs: Vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, psychological and emotional arousal, and mastery experiences as they all influence efficacy beliefs.

2. Reflect on your teachers and school.

- How would you describe the teachers' level of self-efficacy prior to COVID-19? and now?

- How would you rate the collective efficacy at your school?

- List three examples of what you currently do to create or sustain inviting school cultures that foster teachers' self and collective efficacy?

- List examples that describe how you promote self-care for your teachers?

3. Write an action plan. Create one or two goals related to augmenting teachers' self-efficacy. Use the template below.

ACTION PLAN

As a reminder, SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

Goals	Action Items	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed	By When?
	<p>What do you need to do to reach your goals?</p>	<p>Who is participating in the delivery of your goals?</p>	<p>What do you need to reach your goals?</p>	<p>When can your goals be reached?</p>

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