



Teacher Wellbeing

2022 Report



Kami

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About this Report

At Kami, we're constantly championing the voices of our community. We wouldn't be where we are today without the teachers and educators from around the world who've helped shape and transform our company. So checking in on their mental health and wellbeing was a no-brainer; when teachers win, everyone wins.

Teachers need our help more than ever. But first, they need someone to listen. Having already developed close relationships with educators, we've been able to collect valuable insight from the teaching community about <what's going on, how they're feeling, and what needs to change.

In late 2021, we developed a teacher wellbeing survey that we shared with our database. We received 2,387 responses from teachers across the world, 90% of whom are based in the US. With these results, we pulled together our key findings for analysis, including reflective responses from Christina Naegeli Costa.

If you or anyone you know is struggling with mental health and needs help, we've included a list of resources at the end of the report.

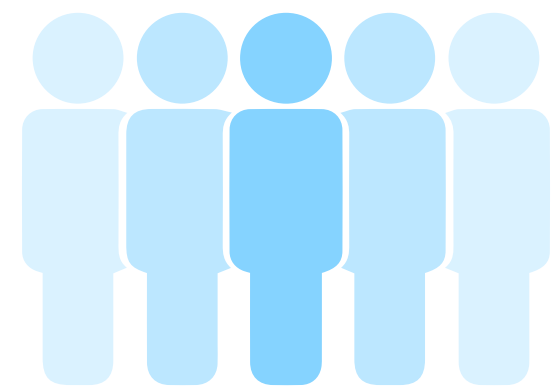


Christina is an academic who teaches psychology to undergraduate and high school students, and studies well-being. She is passionate about inclusive education and also works as a teaching consultant.

Who We Are

Kami is a digital learning platform that empowers everyone to love learning. In or out of the classroom, we support both teachers and students to reach their potential by providing tools and resources for accessibility, engagement, collaboration, workflow and more.

Let's Start With Some **Stats**



2387

Teachers surveyed
📍 90% from the U.S.

50%

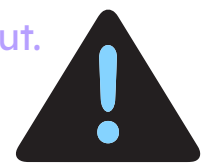
Plan on being a teacher
for the foreseeable future.

Over

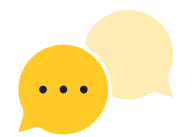
80%

feel there is not
sufficient support

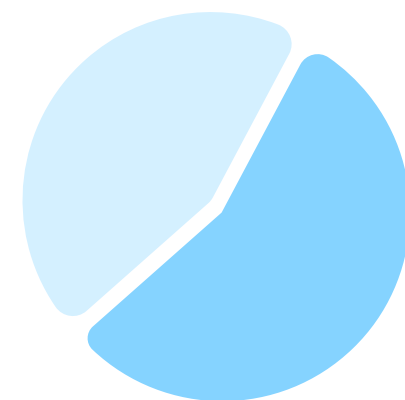
to help them avoid stress or burnout.



62%



Teach over
20 students
per class.



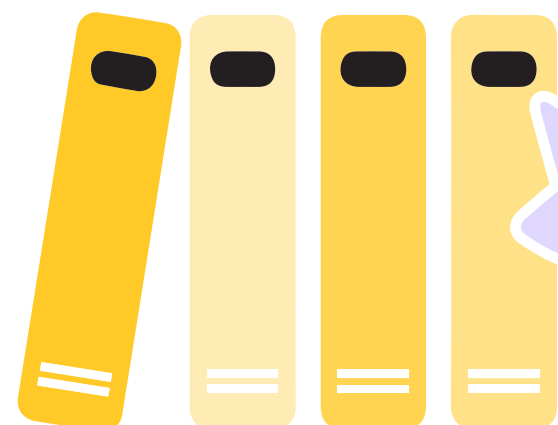
3 out of **5**

teachers are **unhappy** and
feel anxious or depressed.



75%

have thought about
leaving the teaching
profession (sometimes, often or always).

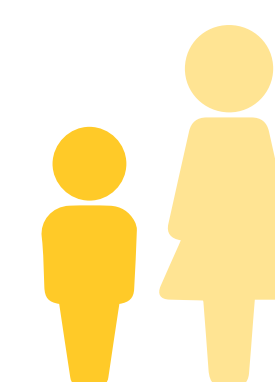
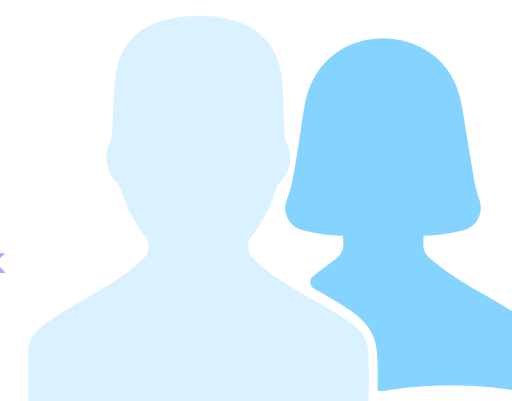


60% became
teachers

To help shape young
minds and prepare
them for the future.

1 out of
every **2**

teachers has had to seek
external support for
work-related stress
or **anxiety**.



1 in 2

teachers have no time
🕒 to engage with family or
friends outside of work.





What is **Wellbeing**?

noun: the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy.

Wellbeing is a catchall phrase to describe the balance in key areas of life: Physical, emotional, psychological, social, spiritual, intellectual, and economic. It is how we are doing and feeling in each of those unique areas of our lives—and much like physical health—wellbeing is something we have to monitor and look after.

“ Wellbeing is not just our emotional state like it is often portrayed, but there are several dimensions. ”

Christina Costa

To have a thriving wellbeing is to have the tools, support, environments, and resources to build and sustain a life worth living. Since the beginning of the 2020 pandemic, these factors were put to the test for all of us – the unfamiliar set in, lives were irreversibly changed, and wellbeing took a hit.

However, life continued, everyone was forced to push on, and employees were expected to go about their normal routine but in a completely new way. The pressure to maintain perfection doubled with the stress of the ongoing global pandemic, lead to what we’re now recognizing as The Great Resignation.

Preserving mental health is paramount as society steers through this “new normal”. Without wellbeing, we’re without workers; especially those in emotionally, mentally, and physically demanding sectors, such as education.

“ Our wellbeing can be linked to so many other important aspects of our lives—our mental health, self-esteem, and relationships. If we don’t prioritize our wellbeing then all of these adjacent areas can suffer. ”

Christina Costa

Why we should all care about teacher wellbeing

Teachers are tasked with one of the most demanding and challenging responsibilities of any profession – shaping and inspiring the minds of the next generation. However, this challenge becomes near impossible if they don't have the time or energy to shape their own.

As Costa explains, “teacher wellbeing affects not only student wellbeing but also student achievement”. When teachers have time for their mental health, they have time for their student's mental health; when we look after teachers, we look after students and their ability to succeed, too. For years, teachers have been putting the needs of their students before their own to ensure this success – but without acknowledging their own wellbeing, this selflessness has only increased expectations to deliver much more while being supported much less.

Normally, teaching is exciting, dynamic, and rewarding. Seeing students grow, connect, and achieve is the ultimate goal and “why” for many in the education profession. But with modern-day demands and a lack of support or understanding, teachers are being stretched physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Working under these conditions truly tests every facet of their professional abilities; even for those considered to have some of the strongest hearts and minds. As far as employment goes, working in education requires teachers to give much more of themselves to the profession than most other jobs.

Unmanageable workloads

Results from our survey show that **75% of respondents disagree** that their “workloads are manageable”. While a further **69% disagree** that there is sufficient support and assistance available to teachers for work-related stress or anxiety.

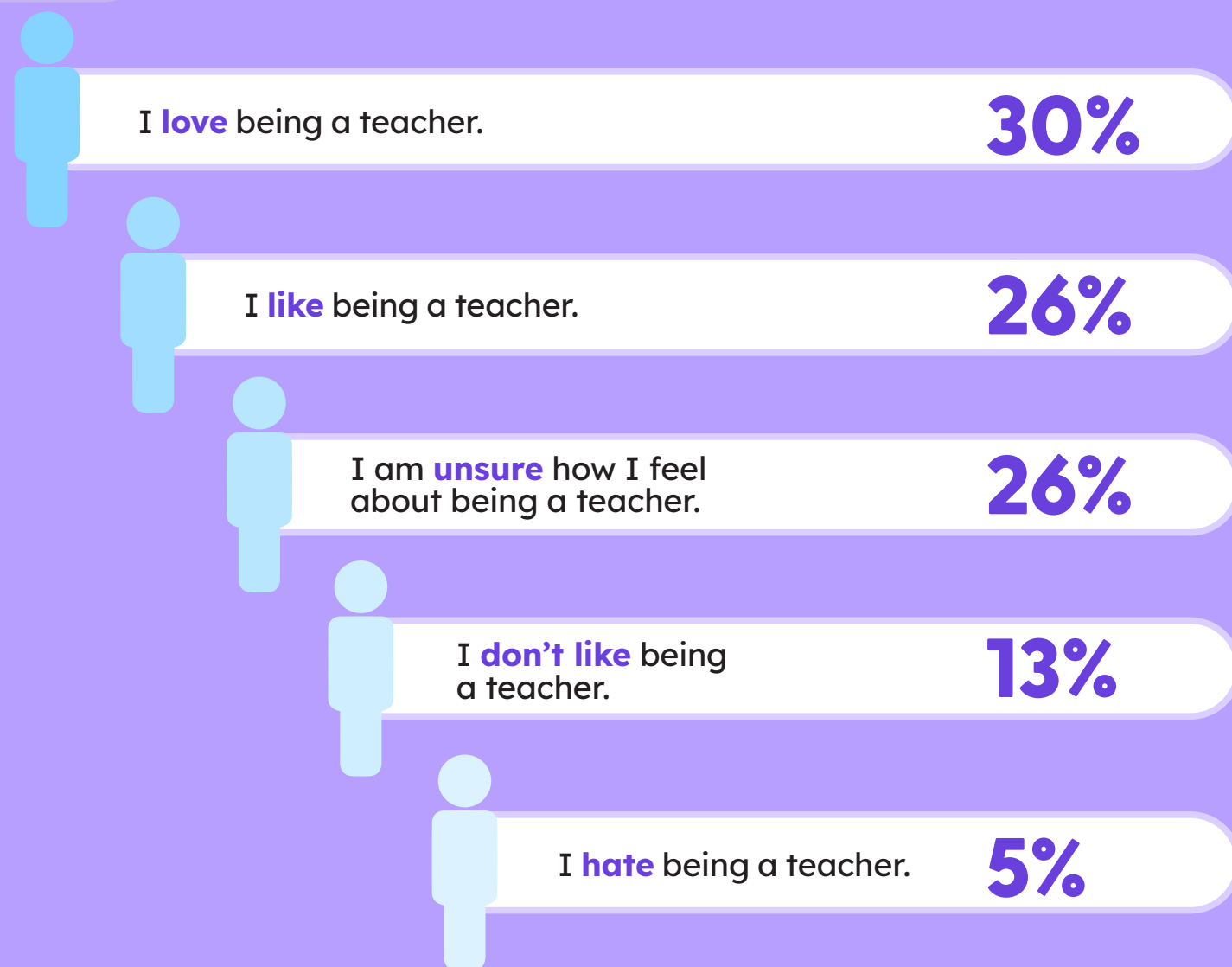
“Plainly put—students who have teachers who are happy and satisfied at work do better and feel better.”

Christina Costa

“But more than that, teacher wellbeing, to me, matters because teachers deserve to have satisfying and fulfilling careers while experiencing minimal burnout.”

Christina Costa

? Which of these statements best describes your view on your career as a teacher right now?



? What were your main reason(s) for becoming a teacher or entering the teaching profession?



Teachers and Their Careers

When looking into a future career, a huge deciding factor is often what the industry can provide for you. But for teachers, it's often what they can do for the industry – or more specifically, students. Our survey showed that for 61% of respondents, one of the main reasons they became a teacher was to help shape young minds and prepare them for the future. While for 33%, it was also to do something good and give back. Some were also drawn to the classroom out of admiration for teachers or the desire for greater representation of gender or culture.

This is where many find their fulfillment; bettering future generations, inspiring their community, and seeing the good that comes directly from their contributions. For years, the promise of having a positive impact motivated teachers to push through the long hours, heavy workloads, and insufficient pay.

Only 40% of teachers see themselves remaining in that role for the foreseeable future, while 29% confirmed they're burnt out and don't know how much longer they can last. Then, there are the 10% who are doubting their decision to stay after watching more and more of their colleagues resign.

Digging a little deeper, we found that the things teachers disliked the most about the role included workloads, including paperwork and grading; expectations, from both the faculty and parents; and additional responsibilities, such as becoming secondary caregivers for students.

Over time, all these factors—along with pandemic pressures—have completely consumed teachers to the point where the aforementioned rewards are being traded for resignations.

“I really enjoy the feeling of teaching a great class, the excitement of students asking questions, and the long-term growth students demonstrate.”

Anon, Teacher Wellbeing Survey

“I love giving back to my community. The students see hope in their future.”

Anon, Teacher Wellbeing Survey

How Teachers Are Currently **Feeling**

The results confirm, teachers are not okay. Over the past year, 84% agreed that they worked long hours and were tired and run down; 76% struggled with workloads, and 69% felt unhappy. This unhappiness was also described as feeling anxious, overwhelmed, frustrated, and/or depressed.

“If I was looking out for teacher friends, the types of things I would look for would be major changes in major patterns—like sleeping (sleeping all day or not sleep at all) or eating. We are all feeling so much stress right now and educators are at the forefront.”
Christina Costa

Over 75% of those surveyed have thought about leaving the teaching profession due to many reasons: The workload is too high, while the pay is too low; student behavior can sometimes create extra stress and reflects a lack of respect; a general lack of support or understanding within the profession. This shouldn't come as a surprise considering 71% felt anxious about the school year ahead.

I am grateful for data like this that shows people numerically how teachers are feeling and doing, but just from interacting with teachers in life and in social media, we know that teachers are not ok. They are being forced into unhealthy and unsafe environments and expected to accommodate too many different directions without being compensated.
Christina Costa

Despite the current struggle, the desire to better communities and future generations remains consistent. When we asked teachers what makes them stay in their profession, the most common responses included references to their love for students, love for teaching, and the ability to make a difference.



Have you ever thought about leaving the teaching profession?



What makes you consider leaving the teaching profession?
Most common words used:



Teacher Support

Our survey found that there is a high need and demand for work-related stress support. Half of the teachers surveyed have had to seek external support, with only 12% having accessed internal support via their school or district. And while 38% are aware of internal support available, 33% don't and therefore don't know how to access it.

It's clear that teachers are experiencing extreme levels of stress, anxiety and depression, but the foundations of support for these issues aren't readily available. Awareness of, and access to, funded support is vital to maintain teacher wellbeing.

“I think right now if we are seeing that only 12% of teachers have access to and utilize support, we need to be asking ourselves how we can get that to 100%. How can schools get more funding? How do we make sure then that teachers have the time and energy to access those materials?”

Christina Costa

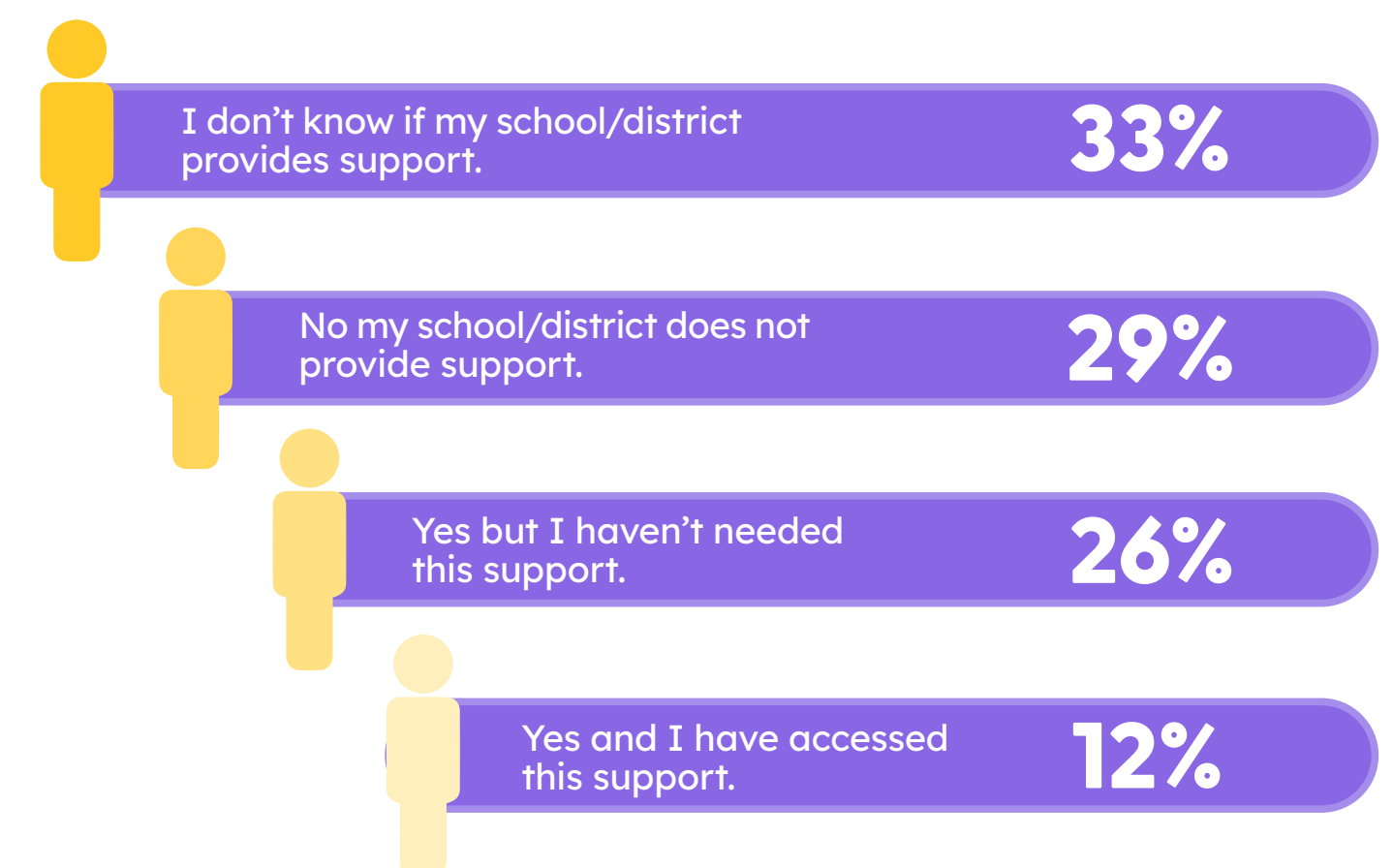


Which of these statements best describes your experience with the support you received?

Somewhat helpful	44%
Very helpful	25%
Not so helpful	16%
Extremely helpful	12%
Not at all helpful	3%



Has/does your school/district provide support or assistance for work-related stress or anxiety?



The Impact of Teacher **Burnout**

When teacher mental health declines, so does the mental health of students. The longer this goes unaddressed, the harder it is for both students and teachers to reach their goals and find success. This can create a hostile environment that further aggravates negative associations with the classroom.

Hope remains low as only 6% of teachers agree or strongly agree that their workloads are getting better, while 84% disagree or strongly disagree. This may be due to a lack of proper training for those new to the industry; only 28% agree or strongly agree that there is sufficient training available for teachers, often resulting in more demanding workloads for those with more experience.

“There are too few experienced teachers who are staying in teaching. This means I am asked to do the job of more than one person and it is exhausting.”

”
Anon, Teacher Wellbeing Survey



“Burnout is unfortunately high in the teaching profession. Sometimes a change in schools is the answer, sometimes a change in grade level or trying something new is the answer, but also sometimes the system is set up not to respect teachers or fund teachers and that will follow them wherever they go.”

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Christina Costa

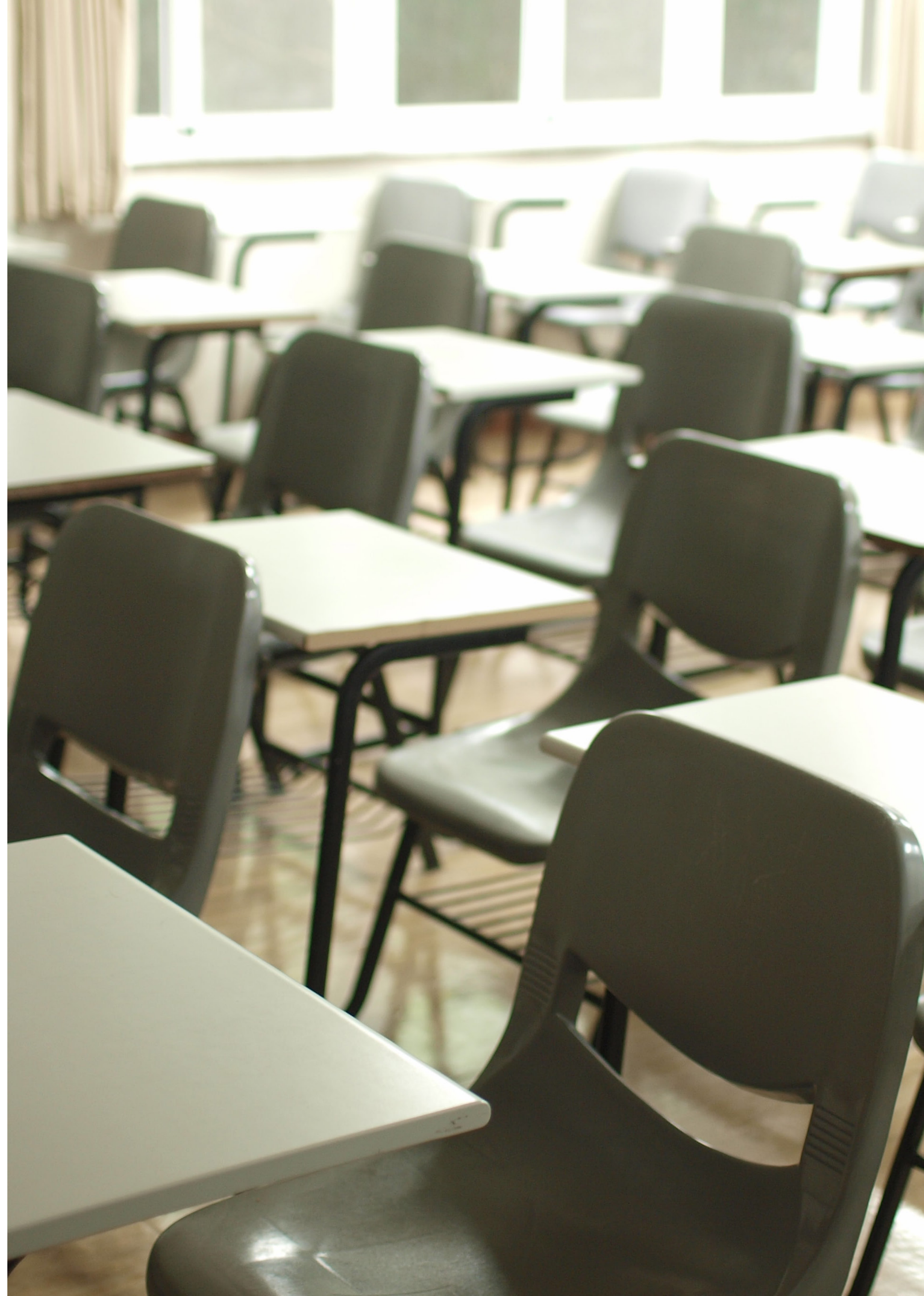
Change Has to Start Somewhere

A recurring theme in the survey results was a lack of resources – whether that be human resource, time, or training. With 77% of respondents struggling with workloads and expectations, two key things need to change. Firstly, pressures need to be relieved from existing teachers, with additional responsibilities and expectations removed. Secondly, the teaching workforce needs to grow. That means conditions need to improve from both a wellbeing and financial point of view to both retain existing teachers and attract new ones.

There's no silver-bullet solution but the overwhelming sentiment from the survey is that teachers don't feel heard. If we're looking for a place to start, it's with teacher consultation and considering their needs from the outset.

“We need people in government and education spheres that have been teachers and care about teachers. I never want to put the onus on teachers advocating for their own change, but it is great to see community members, parents, administration stepping up and advocating for funding and safety of teachers.”


Christina Costa



Wellbeing **Resources** for Those in Need

“

The Teacher's Guide to Self-Care by Sarah Forst is a wonderful book resource that I recommend. I also recommend seeking online communities for help and therapy, therapy, therapy. In the U.S., psychologytoday.com is a great place to seek out therapy resources and you can search based on your needs and area.

”

Christina Costa

It's okay to ask for **help**

If you or someone you know is struggling, there are ways to get help. Use these resources to find mental health support for yourself, a friend, or a family member.

US

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Online Lifeline Chat:

suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat

Crisis Text Line:

Text **HELLO** to **741741** for 24/7, anonymous, free crisis counseling

NZ

Free Call or Text Line:

Text **1737** for support from a trained counselor

Lifeline:

0800 543 354 or free text **4357 (HELP)**

Healthline:

0800 611 116

Suicide Crisis Helpline:

0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)

AUS

Lifeline:

13 11 14

Beyond Blue:

Call **1300 22 4636** for those feeling anxious or depressed

Friendline:

Call **1800 424 287** or chat online for anyone who's feeling lonely, needs to reconnect, or just wants a chat

UK

Samaritans:

Call **116 123** or visit [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

SHOUT Crisis Text Line:

Text “**SHOUT**” to **85258**

National Suicide Prevention Helpline:

Call **0800 689 5652**

JPN

TELL Lifeline:

Call **03-5774-0992** or visit telljp.com

Befrienders:

Visit befrienders-jpn.org

Japan Health Care Info:

Visit japanhealthinfo.com/mental-health/

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