



At PESA, our learning focus for Term 1 2026 is simple yet impactful: putting people at the centre of everything we do. Reconnecting staff, students, and families is the foundation of a vibrant, inclusive community, and it begins with the understanding that staff wellbeing is the bedrock of a healthy learning environment.

We were joined by **Justin Robinson**, Director and Co-Founder of **The Wellbeing Distillery**, for an online masterclass on ‘Building a Shared Responsibility for Teacher Wellbeing’, where he shared the Wellbeing Quadrant, a practical framework designed to promote wellbeing and proactively prevent ill-being. Below, we have synthesised the key takeaways and curated resources to support your school’s action planning for staff wellbeing.

Why Teacher Wellbeing Matters

Teacher wellbeing is often treated as a peripheral issue, a matter of policy or staff retention. Yet, research increasingly positions it as a foundational pillar of school effectiveness. To understand why, we must look past the obvious pressures of burnout and high turnover to see the systemic link between how teachers feel and how students learn.

- **Student Impact:** When teachers are stressed or burnt out, students experience increased stress levels (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016), reduced motivation (Shen et al., 2015), and lower academic and behavioural outcomes (McCallum, 2021; McCallum & Price, 2010; Wentzel, 2010). Furthermore, teachers with strong workplace wellbeing are more committed to promoting learner autonomy and adopting student-cantered practices (Üstündağ-Algin, et al., 1005).
- **Workforce Sustainability:** Poor wellbeing is a primary driver of the current teacher shortage. As noted by Lemon and Turner (2024), teachers now lodge more mental health claims than any other profession, including healthcare workers.
- **Financial & Cultural Costs:** High attrition leads to massive costs in recruitment and training, while simultaneously disrupting the “ripple effect” of school culture on families and the broader community.

PESA

Every school is **different**, and every school is the **same**.

Every teacher is **distinct**, and every teacher shares the **same joy and struggles**.

Justin Robinson
Director and Co-Founder of The Wellbeing Distillery

Ultimately, these points underscore a simple truth: teachers matter. Fostering wellbeing is not a luxury, it is essential to creating workplaces worth showing up to, places where educators feel valued and empowered to do the meaningful, life-changing work that defines the profession of teaching.

Wellbeing as a Shared Responsibility: TWD Wellbeing Quadrant

Wellbeing is not just the school’s job. Individuals, and even students share responsibility. Individuals manage personal habits like sleep, relationships, and mindfulness, while schools provide a safe, supportive environment.

Justin shared The Wellbeing Distillery’s Wellbeing Quadrant as a simple tool for supporting staff wellbeing in schools by considering both who is responsible and what type of wellbeing objective is required. The framework emphasises that effective wellbeing strategies require the following complementary approaches:

- **Promoting wellbeing:** Proactive actions that build positive experiences and engagement.
- **Preventing ill-being:** Measures that reduce stress, burnout, and psychosocial risks.



The Wellbeing Quadrant is a visual tool that can be used to show where wellbeing actions sit, also helping schools identify:

- which areas are strong
- which need improvement
- where responsibilities are shared or unclear

Responsibility	Promote Wellbeing	Prevent ill-being
Individual	Gratitude, relationships, mindfulness	Sleep, boundaries, asking for help
School	Connection, playfulness, meaning, good working conditions	Manage workload, support autonomy, reduce phyosocial risks

Practical Resources

TEACHER WELLBEING ACTION PLAN – ITEM BANK

The following list of 200 action items, grouped by Risk Factor, has been compiled following TWD facilitated focus groups with 25 different schools.

#	ACTION ITEM to be implemented	KEY RISK FACTOR to be addressed	RESOURCE COSTS		EXPECTED IMPACT Low, Medium, High
			HUMAN COSTS Low, Med, High	FINANCE COSTS 0, \$, \$\$, \$\$\$	
1	Develop and seek input on a Staff Working from Home policy including purpose, guidelines, and boundaries	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
2	Education Support Staff who work part-time during school holidays be supported to have flexibility in working days where practicable	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
3	Ensure staff are always asked to submit preferences whenever creating rosters (eg. Yard duty, Devotions, ...)	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
4	Give staff greater flexibility to book outside appointments and to be able to leave school during recess/lunch and non-contact periods	Autonomy	Low	0	Medium
5	Leadership team to share a 'draft' version of Home Groups for teachers to provide input, prior to it being finalised each year	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
6	Line Managers to use performance conversations and/or team meetings to seek input from staff on how they would like to organise their work	Autonomy	Low	0	Medium
7	Provide early notice (August) and discussion opportunities regarding proposed work schedules for the following school year	Autonomy	Medium	0	Medium
8	Provide the option to work at home in afternoons during work break periods	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
9	Review Performance Review and Development system with the goal of providing staff with greater autonomy in the process and within their role	Autonomy	Medium	0	Medium
10	Promote task enabling, where team members are considering how best to help colleagues perform their roles/tasks to the best of their ability	Autonomy	Low	0	Low
11	Actively seek input and suggestions from staff during the development/drafting phase of major new school initiatives/projects	Change Management	Medium	0	Low
12	Develop, with input from staff, a change management policy and procedure	Change Management	Medium	0	Low
13	Each term, provide a comfortable, open forum for staff discussions	Change Management	Medium	0	Medium

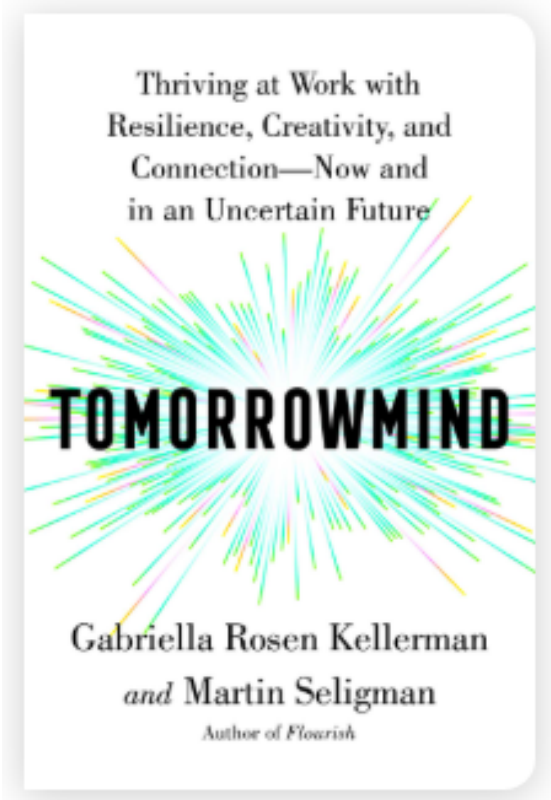
Finding the right ideas for your staff wellbeing action plan can be challenging. To help, Justin has generously shared some practical resources:

- [A comprehensive “idea bank”](#) – Over 200 actionable items organised by risk factor, cost, and impact. This list was developed from focus groups run by The Wellbeing Distillery across 25 schools, offering tested strategies you can adapt to your context.
- [Sentiments from Educators: What’s Worked Well for Teacher Wellbeing](#) – Real sentiments from educators highlighting what’s worked well. Page two presents the thematic grouping for quick reference.

Further Reading

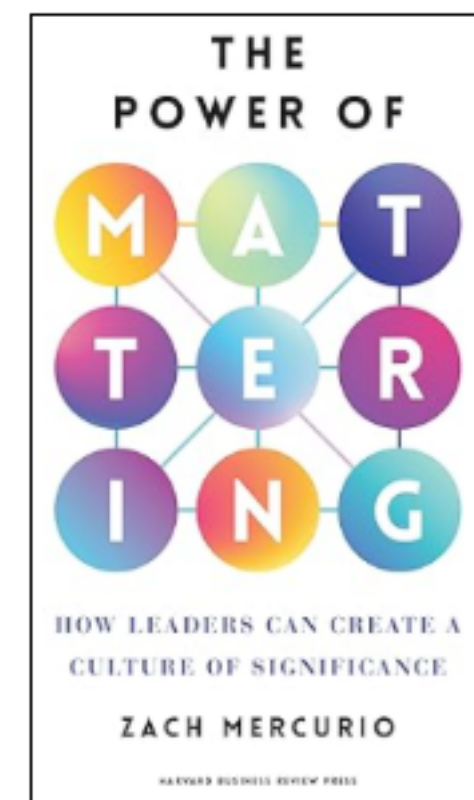
Tomorrowmind: Thriving at Work with Resilience, Creativity, and Connection - Now and in an Uncertain Future
by Gabriella Rosen Kellerman and Martin Seligman

In this book, Kellerman and Seligman offer a future-focused guide to thriving in an era shaped by automation, globalisation, and constant change. Drawing on rigorous research and real-world application, they outline practical, evidence-based strategies to build resilience, emotional intelligence, creativity, social connection, and foresight. More than a survival manual, Tomorrowmind equips individuals and leaders to create workplaces grounded in meaning, connection, and adaptability, so people and organisations can flourish, even in uncertain times.



**The Power of Mattering:
How Leaders Can Create a Culture of Significance
by Zach Mercurio**

In this book, researcher and speaker Zach Mercurio explores why so many people feel overlooked at work and how that impacts wellbeing, engagement and performance. Through research and practical examples, he introduces three simple leadership practices: **Noticing**, **Affirming**, and **Needing** to help people feel valued and indispensable. Packed with research, real-world examples and practical tools, this book helps leaders create cultures where people know they matter - and perform at their best.



Referenced Research and Reports

During the webinar, Justin referenced these three papers as relevant to the discussion of teacher wellbeing.

- Perceptions of Teachers and Teaching (Heffernan et al., 2019): A Monash University study highlighting the gap between public perception and teacher reality, warning of a looming shortage due to unmanageable workloads.
- Scoping Review on Teacher/Student Wellbeing (Baelen et al., 2025): An analysis of 67 studies showing that 93% found a positive correlation between teacher wellbeing and student wellbeing.
- Teacher Wellbeing: The State of the Nation (Adrienne Hornby, 2025): This report argues that resilience is not a "fix-all", it emphasises that systemic workplace stressors must be addressed through strategic, school-wide policy. This report is complete with suggested solutions to improve staff and teacher wellbeing