

# EDspaces

Designing the Future of Education  
Charlotte, NC | November 7-9, 2023

## Cultivating Educator Resilience:

*Insight from the National “Design  
Lessons from Teachers” Report*

November 7th, 2023  
1:00 PM





CORGAN 

**EDspaces**  
Designing the Future of Education  
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# Cultivating Educator Resilience:

Insight from the National “*Design  
Lessons from Teachers*” Report

AIA #: 2023LS49

NOVEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2023



# Introductions



**Kelly Arredondo**  
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Corgan



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Corgan



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Interior Design Project Manager  
Corgan



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Interior Designer  
Corgan



# Learning Objectives



## 1 — Challenges in the Education Landscape

Gain insights and empathy for the challenges present in the education landscape, and the unique needs and perspective of educators, to facilitate dialogue and solutions for teacher wellbeing with their clients and staff.



## 2 — Practicing Evidence-Based Design

Attendees will discover direct connections between the findings from Corgan’s national Teacher Survey to five key actionable focus areas to support teacher satisfaction and resilience.



## 3 — Educator Insight: Environment and Education

Gain insight from direct educator experiences and apply these insights to identify and address the specific challenges teachers face in their district or community.



## 4 — Supporting Teachers Through Design

Clear design solutions that can be implemented in existing and new school facilities to support teachers’ needs, attract and retain talent, and ultimately support learning outcomes for students.





At the **heart of our society** lies the **invaluable teaching profession** – entrusted with nurturing the educational journey of our youngest generation. **Yet, a concerning trend has emerged: the growing shortage of educators in the United States...**addressing this pressing issue has become more imperative than ever.

*“The U.S Teacher Shortage 2023: A State-by-State Breakdown”*  
**Scholaroo**



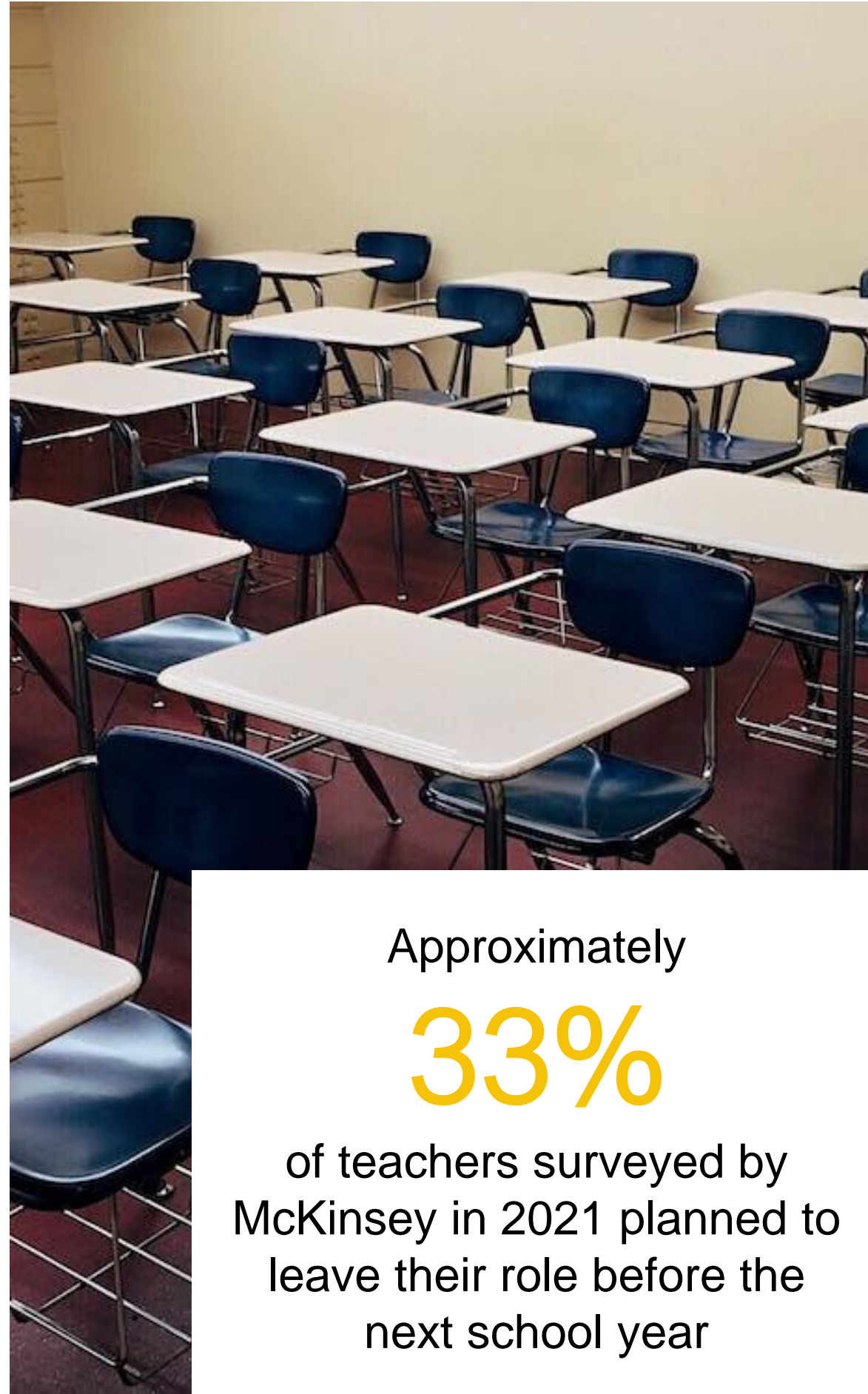


44%

of public schools reported having one or more vacant teaching positions during the 2022-2023 school year



[Institute of Education Sciences, 2022; Bryant et al., 2023; Garcia et al., 2022]



Approximately

33%

of teachers surveyed by McKinsey in 2021 planned to leave their role before the next school year

In 2022,  
**All 50 States**  
reported teacher shortages in at least one subject area





# Why is There a Teacher Shortage?

1

## **ECONOMIC FACTORS**

Increases in cost of living and cost of education outpace rate of teacher pay

2

## **DECREASED ENROLLMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Enrollment in traditional teacher preparation programs declined by nearly a third between 2010 and 2018

3

## **BURNOUT AND LOW MORALE**

Teachers are decreasingly finding the stress and disappointments they experience in their job worthwhile, causing many to consider leaving

4

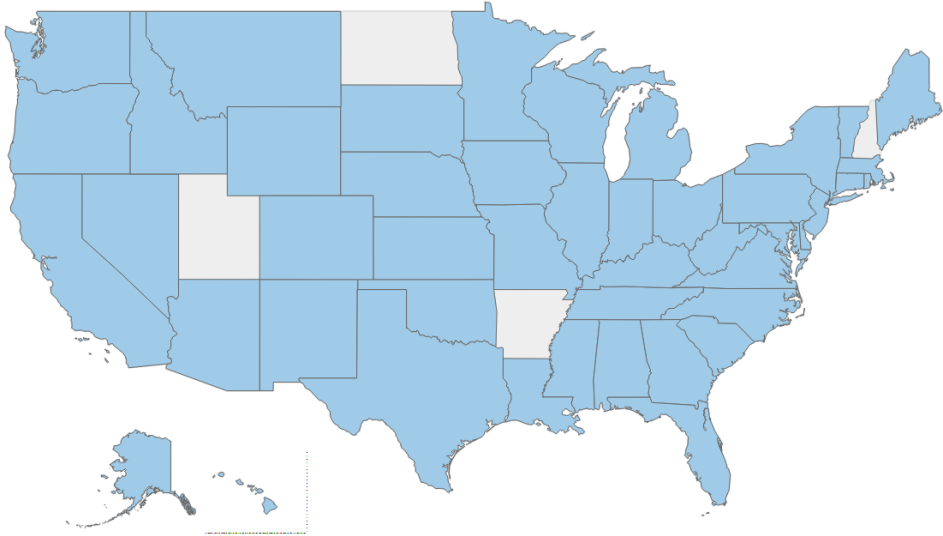
## **INCREASED DEMANDS**

Supporting learning needs, recovering from COVID learning loss, parent expectations, additional roles and responsibilities

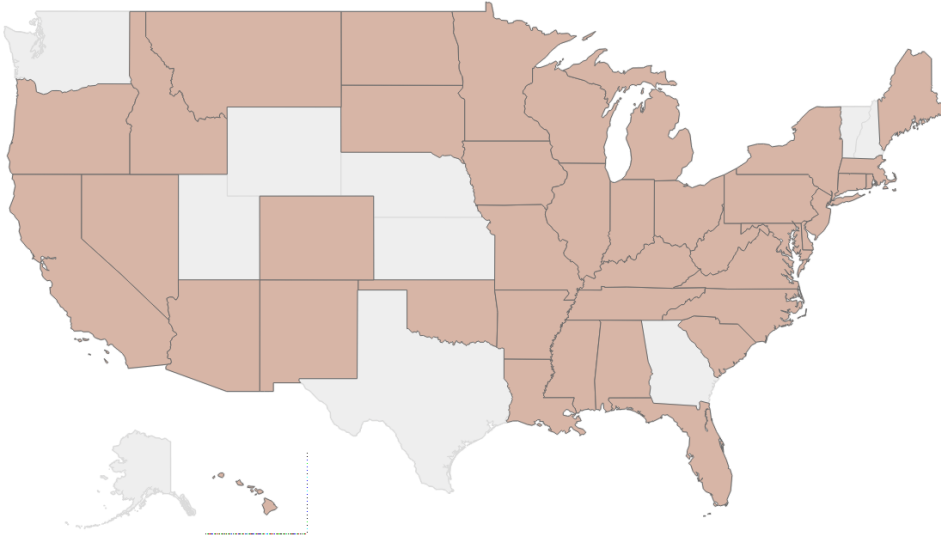


# Where is There a Teacher Shortage?

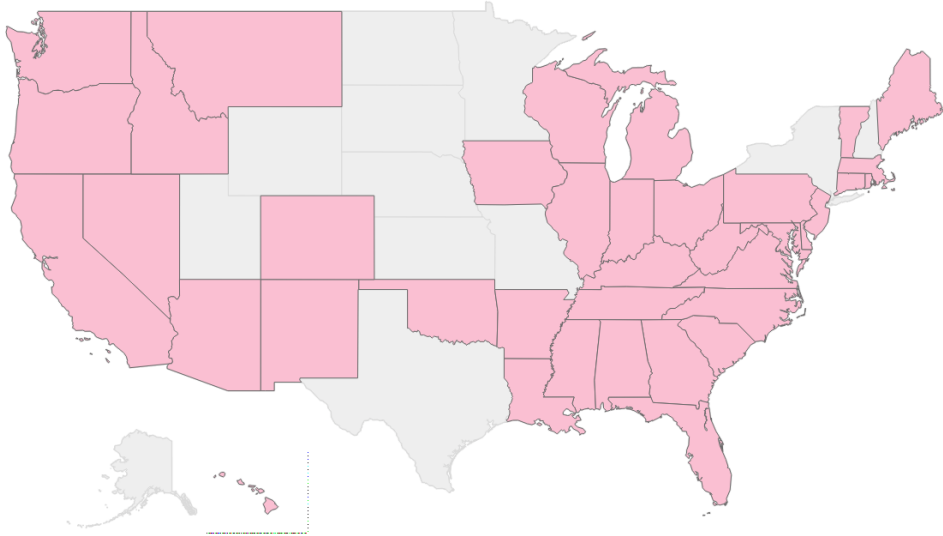
*Subject Area Shortages by State - 2023*



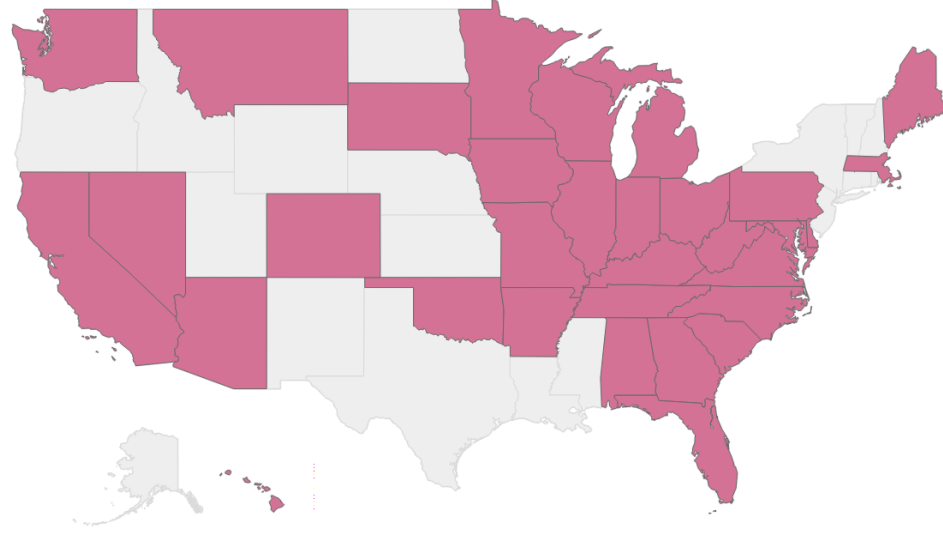
**SPECIAL EDUCATION**



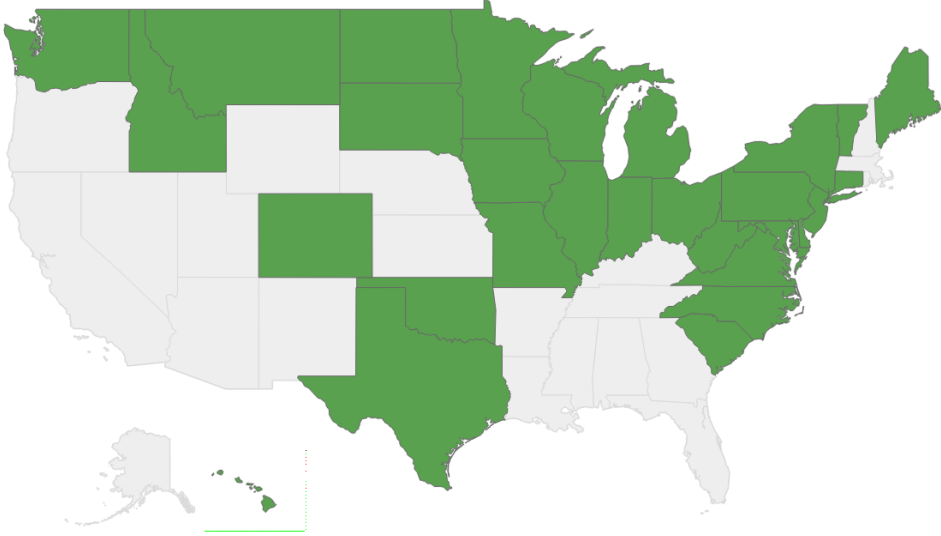
**SCIENCE**



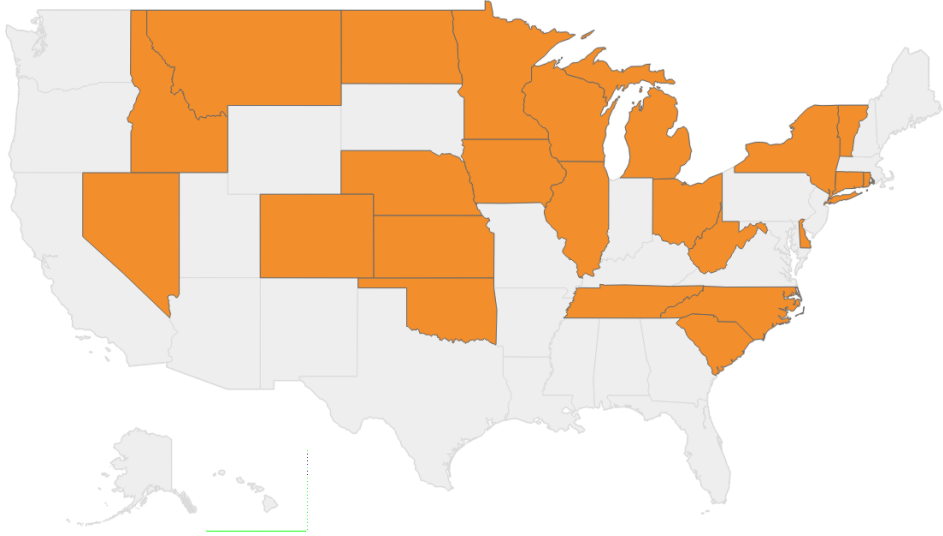
**MATH**



**LANGUAGE ARTS**



**CAREER AND TECHNICAL (CTE)**



**SUPPORT STAFF**



# Teacher Shortages and Issues of Equity



...shortages of well-prepared teachers have historically been most severe in schools that serve larger numbers of students from **low-income families** and **students of color**, and in **subjects with greater opportunity costs**, like special education, mathematics, and science.

Emma Garcia  
*Senior Researcher at the Learning Policy Institute*



# Impact of Turnover and Educator Burnout on Student Outcomes

## POOR MORALE

- Morale for teachers and principals significantly declined during the pandemic
- Poor morale today might dissuade tomorrow's teachers from entering the field

Educator **BURNOUT** is associated with:

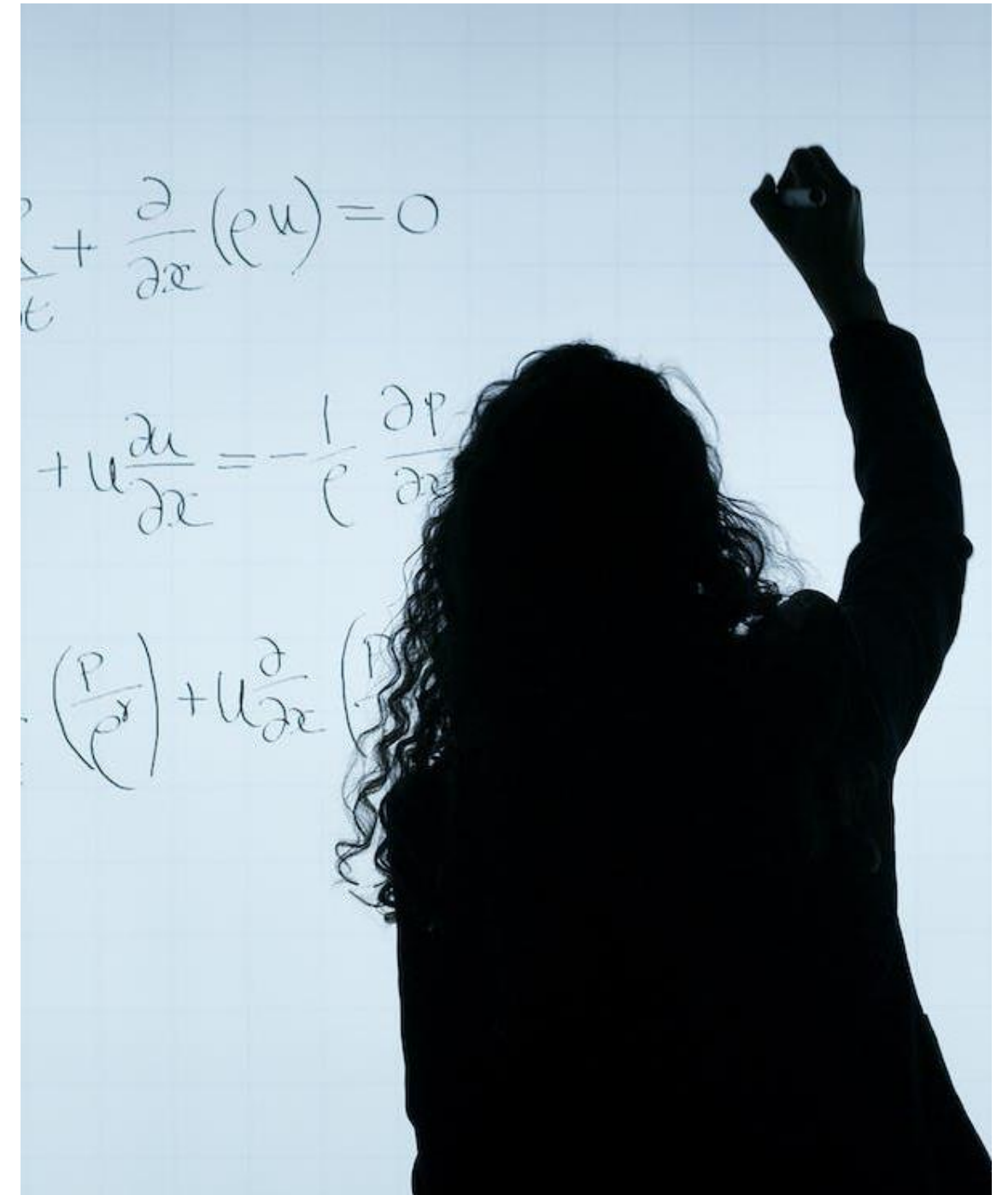
- Declines in academic achievement
- Lower quality student motivation

Teacher **TURNOVER**:

- Harms student achievement and perpetuates unequal opportunities to learn
- Impacts teacher effectiveness
- Erodes the profession's appeal
- Drains district resources

“High rates of underprepared teachers in a district decrease student achievement and, since they are more than twice as likely to leave the profession as fully prepared novices, exacerbate teacher turnover”

- Emma García, Matthew A. Kraft, and Heather L. Schwartz, 2023



[Madigan & Kim, 2021; Garcia et al., 2023]





We should be **deeply concerned** about the profession when teachers repeatedly tell us **they are burnt out and considering quitting...ignoring teachers' voices is partly how we got here.** All kids deserve teachers that are fully invested, not ones so overwhelmed that they understandably have one foot out the door.

— *Matthew Kraft*

*Associate Professor of Education at Brown University*



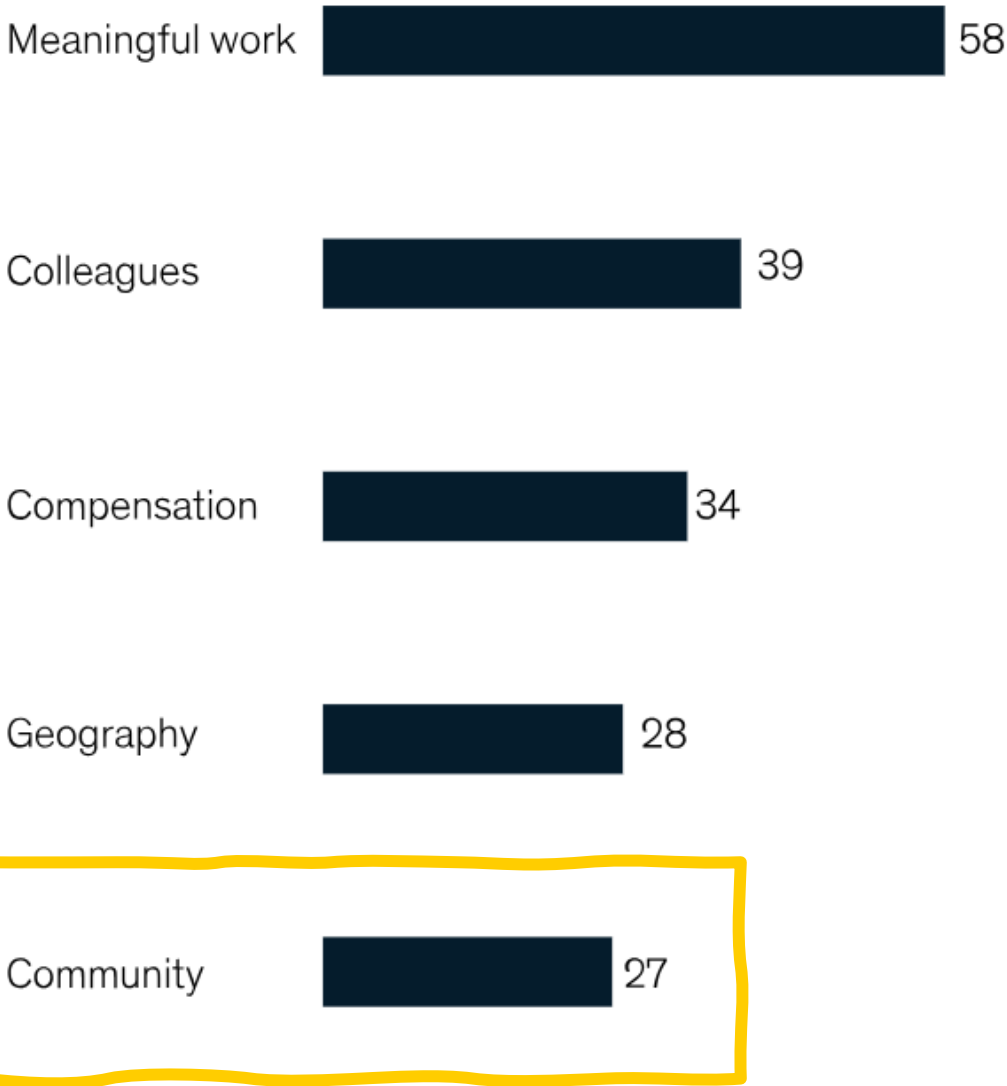
Interpersonal factors drive educators to stay in their roles, while unmanageable work environments can drive them to leave.

Reasons that education sector employees plan to leave vs stay, % of respondents (n = 1,899)

Top factors driving educators to leave



Top factors driving educators to stay



Note: Sample sizes are as follows: plan to stay, 59% (n = 1,126); plan to leave, 27% (n = 518); left, 13% (n = 255).  
Source: Aaron De Smet, Bonnie Dowling, Bryan Hancock, and Bill Schaninger, "The Great Attrition is making hiring harder. Are you searching the right talent pools?," *McKinsey Quarterly*, July 13, 2022

# Should I *stay* or should I *go*?

Minimizing push factors and enhancing factors that encourage educators to stay.





Supporting educators is a complex undertaking. How can the design community come together to respond to this pervasive challenge?





***Design  
Lessons  
From  
Teachers 2.0***

Corgan’s 2022 Survey



Cultivating Educator Resilience

QUALITATIVE



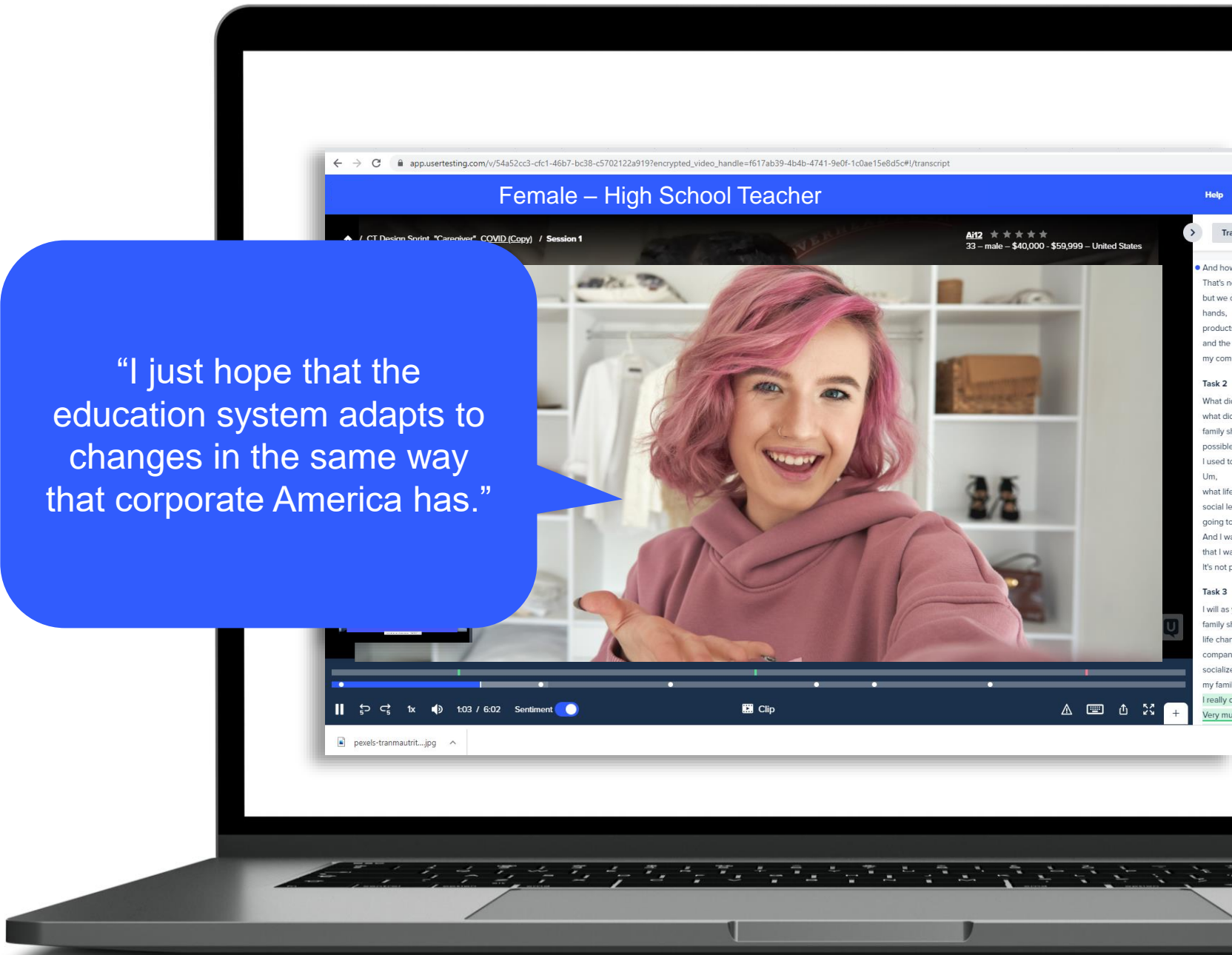
36

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

with full time, K-12 teachers in the United States. 12 interviews (each) were completed for Elementary, Middle, and High School.

20

HOURS OF RECORDED DATA





QUANTITATIVE

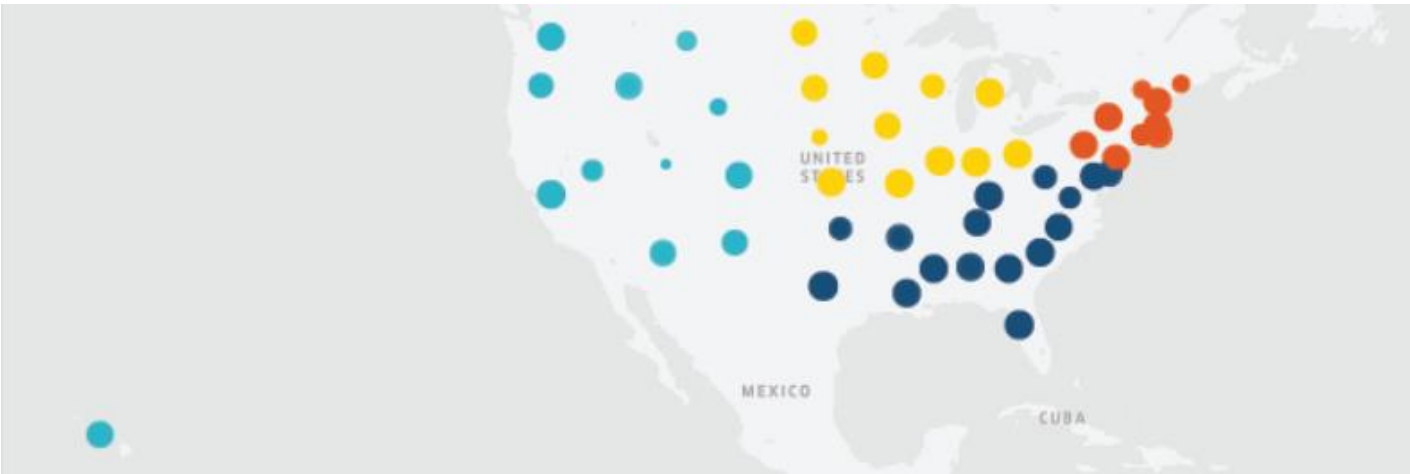


1,000

SURVEY RESPONSES

From individuals who currently work as full-time, teaching staff for K-12 in the United States.

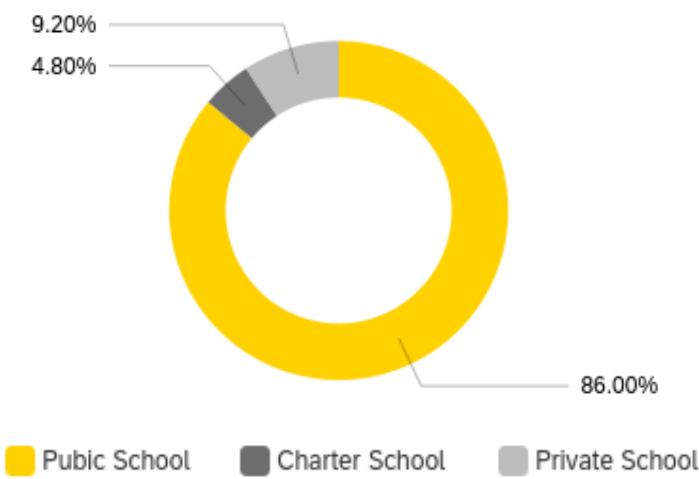
School levels were roughly balanced between Elementary School (357), Middle School (297), and High School (346).



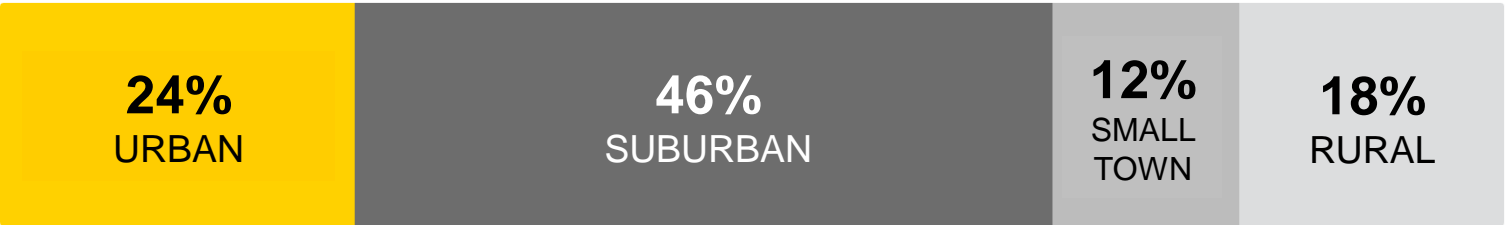
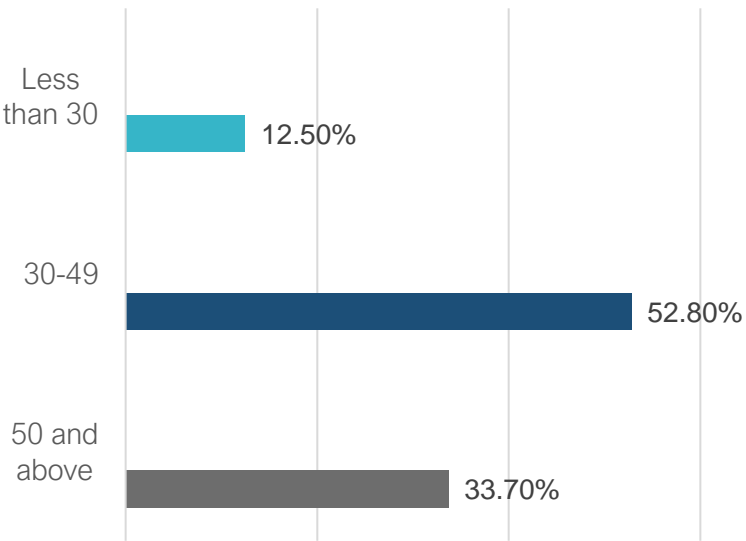
RESPONDENTS BY REGION

148	256	362	234
West	Midwest	South	Northeast

School Typology



Age of Survey Participants





## 5 Key Insights

- # Summary of Findings

## Teacher Wellbeing

Increasing importance on wellness, companies are driven to re-evaluate their workplaces to ensure employees the support they need. But what does that mean for teachers? With growing demands and limited support, teachers are being asked to take an active role in their own wellness — to take a difficult job and make it work. This is a challenge many are facing.

### 03 — Flexibility

#### THE PROBLEM WITH FLEXIBILITY

The value of flexibility, the number of teachers who want more flexibility from their teaching environment, and the number of teachers who want more flexibility from their teaching environment are the same from 2019 to 2022.

### 04 — Personalization and Choice

#### RE-TUNING THE CLASSROOM

For students, virtual learning was not without its challenges, however, the opportunity to select the right setting for the task at hand — taking advantage of the comforts and choices available when learning from home accelerated the pedagogical emphasis on personalized learning. Student-led learning opportunities designed to position teachers as facilitators to connect students to the resources and curriculum were increasingly designed to position teachers as facilitators to connect students to the resources and curriculum they need. A little extra help on a math problem or a quiet space for more introverted students. But what happens when teachers don't have the controls they need to adapt the space for students — or themselves?

According to the study, surveyed teachers indicated they found the poor quality of their physical environment, including light, air quality, distractions, and inability to personalize the space limiting — while also generally agreeing that they had the ability to make better choices about their environment for themselves.

### 05 — Schools as a Workplace

#### THE BROKEN BREAKROOM AND HOW TO FIX IT

The office is so much more than a desk, but for many teachers, there are often few spaces outside of their classroom work surface. In a comparison between 2019 and 2022, teachers have remained dissatisfied with the dedicated work surface. In a comparison between 2019 and 2022, teachers have remained dissatisfied with the design of teacher-focused spaces. It's why so few of them reported using the teacher workstation (15%) for work, including grading papers and researching lesson plans. While trends from corporate workplaces to attract and retain talent while boosting productivity and engagement may not be replicable on school campuses, they provide inspiration for small interventions from the right ergonomics and professional settings to a variety of spaces and thoughtful amenities that can improve the work and learning environment for teachers.

### Teacher Satisfaction with Workspace

Workspace Type	Satisfaction Score (Out of 5)
Private Designated Office	3.5
Private Desk in Classroom	3.5
Private Desk in Workspace	3
Shared Designated Office	2.2
Shared Desk in Shared Workspace	2.2
No Private Desk	2.2

Out of 5

### Amenities

Most traditional offices have started to understand the office is an amenity. While the breakroom on campus may have once signaled a notion of hospitality for teachers, they are now typically notoriously neglected and ill-fitted for what teachers need to succeed. Instead, providing the strategic flexibility and amenities that support evolving curriculum, wellness considerations, technology, and opportunities to personalize their décor or physical comfort offer meaningful assets to our schools' most important asset: teachers.

### When asked what facility enhancements they would most like to have, the majority of teachers (58%) indicated that they would like to have a nearby fridge, microwave, water station can save teachers the time of driving to the cafeteria for a drink or break. Or, a dedicated courtyard or outdoor space for teachers to take a break. Or, a dedicated courtyard or outdoor space for teachers to take a break. Or, a dedicated courtyard or outdoor space for teachers to take a break.

## 17





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# Building Empathy Through Journey Mapping

ACTIVITY #1

## ACTIVITY #1

# Building Empathy Through Journey Mapping

Put yourselves in the shoes of an educator working in a typical elementary school. What do you need in your environment and what missed opportunities for support can you identify in the design of the school?

Each table will receive an Educator Persona. Read about your educator and then map their journey on the provided floor plan.

Identify important nodes, pain points, and potential design interventions to improve their daily journey.

### BUILDING EMPATHY THROUGH JOURNEY MAPPING:

Put yourselves in the shoes of your educator persona and map out how they would move through this school. Identify **pain points**, **key considerations for their needs**, and **opportunities for improvement in the design of the school**.

**EDUCATOR PERSONA:**

**LEGEND:**

- ① Sequence of Events
- Journey Path
- ★ Important Feature
- △ Pain Point
- ? Design Idea

Classroom opportunity to personalize, add a teacher collab space in the pod

Park - dedicated staff parking

### EDUCATOR PERSONA

Building Empathy Through Journey Mapping

**MEET YOUR EDUCATOR!**

**NAME:** Julia

**EXPERIENCE:** 1 year of teaching experience

**ROLE:** Teaches 4<sup>th</sup> grade, assistant director for the school musical

**SOURCES OF STRESS:** Managing parent expectations, not knowing what to expect each day, maintaining balance in life

**APPROACH TO TEACHING:** Emphasizes social and emotional learning. Focuses on fostering a positive classroom culture and forming individual connections with her students

**INDIVIDUAL NEEDS:** Has ADHD, desires a connection with coworkers, feeling competent and confident

**NOTES:**

Julia needs spaces for mentorship to help her professional development- team or small group meeting space, teacher collab or workshop

She expends a lot of emotional energy with her students, so she needs a place to decompress

Dedicated place to focus



## *Resilience in the Teaching Profession*

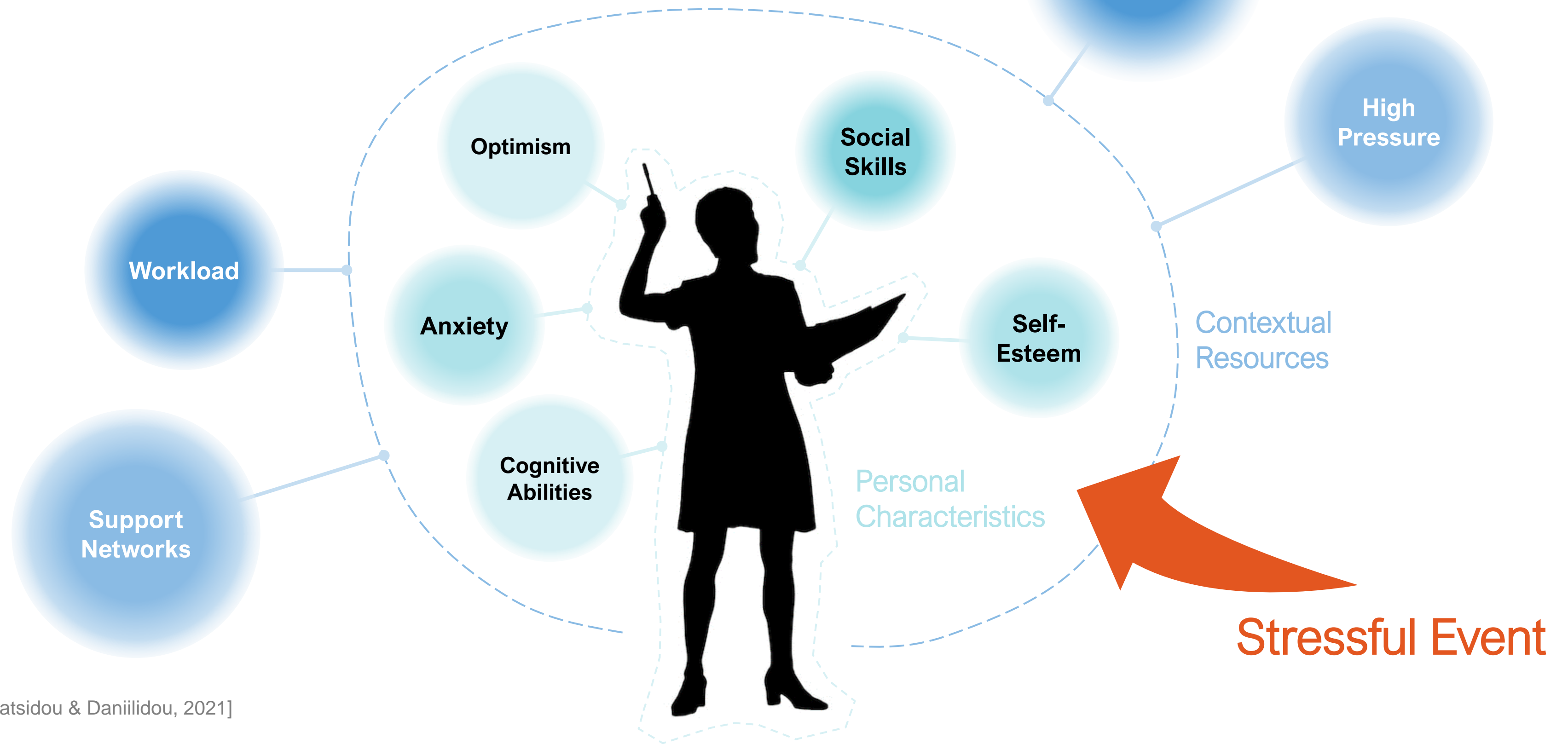


Quality that enables teachers to **overcome personal and environmental vulnerabilities and maintain their commitment to teaching** in the face of work-related challenges, pressures, and demands

[Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2021; Bruneti, 2006; Daniilidou & Platsidou, 2018]



# Resilience is a Dynamic Process





# Responding to Stressful Events

- **Resilience is a box of tools and resources**, an individual brings to a situation to solve a problem
- Includes both personal and external resources
- It is not a quality you have or do not have
- Resilient teachers utilize **coping strategies** efficiently and effectively

[Wosnitza & Piexoto, 2018; Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2021]

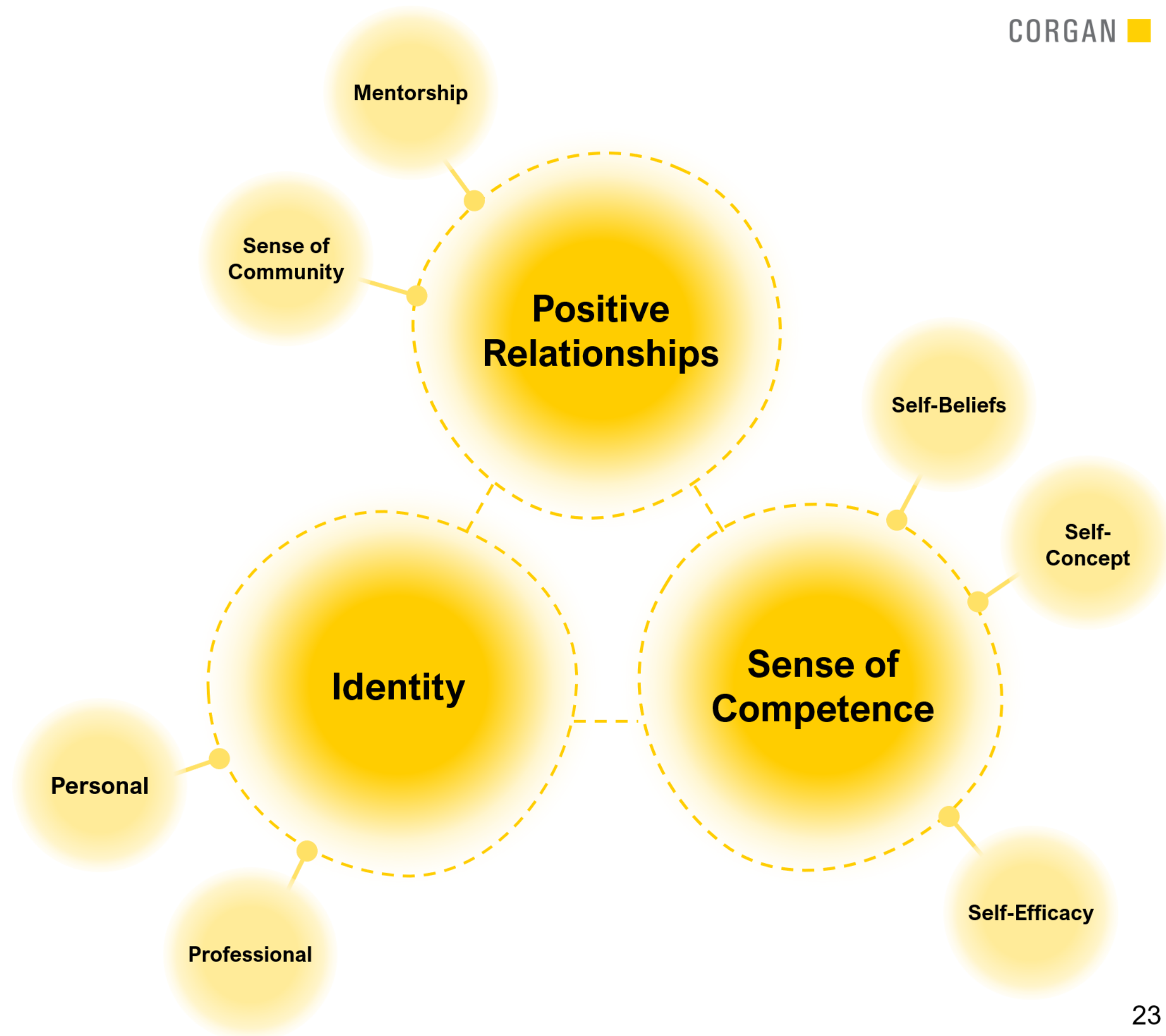




# Developing Resilience

“The **environment** can (and should) therefore provide the **resources that nurture and enable the development of resilience** by means of facilitating the construction of...”

*Marold Wosnitza and Francisco Piexoto, 2018*





# Resilience

## *Model of Protective Factors*



### Professional

- Teaching strategies
- Continued professional development
- Positive relationships
- Coping strategies



### Emotional

- Emotional and stress management
- Not taking things personally
- Feeling of fulfillment



### Motivational

- Continuous improvement and learning
- Persistence
- Setting goals
- Career decision making



### Social

- Social support networks
- Mentorship
- Collaborating with colleagues

[Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2021; Wosnitza et al., 2018]



# Meaning in Life and Resilience

- “Meaningful Work” was the top factor driving educators to stay in their job (McKinsey Survey)
- **Meaning in life is a resource for resilience**
  - Human tendency to construct meaning even when confronted with stressful or traumatic events
- Search for Meaning vs. Presence of Meaning
- **Discovery Process**
  - High presence and high search for meaning
  - Higher levels of creativity, receptiveness, exploration, and flow
  - Professional growth and development, positive interactions

“Meaning in life is a significant resource in the resilience process, supporting the use of adaptive behaviors and enhancing the feeling of wellbeing.”

- Platsidou and Daniilidou, 2021



[Platsidou & Daniilidou, 2021; Bryant et al, 2023]





What ***challenges to educator resilience*** do you see in your community?



# Schools as a Workplace

**“I wish there was a nicer way to separate ‘church and state’ - when it's your prep time and your work time where you don't have to **put your teacher glasses back on** and be an authority figure.”**

- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER





# Schools as a Workplace:

## Privacy and Quiet

” I don’t really need many things. I need a desk that’s mine and I’m fine... I just need to feel planted, and my work contained.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER

” There’s no space that is fully dedicated to teachers except the desk/chair. That’s it.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER



### Top 3 Spatial Qualities Teachers Desire for Focused Work



### Spaces that Best Support Role Responsibilities Outside of Teaching

77%

My desk in my classroom

15%

Teacher workroom

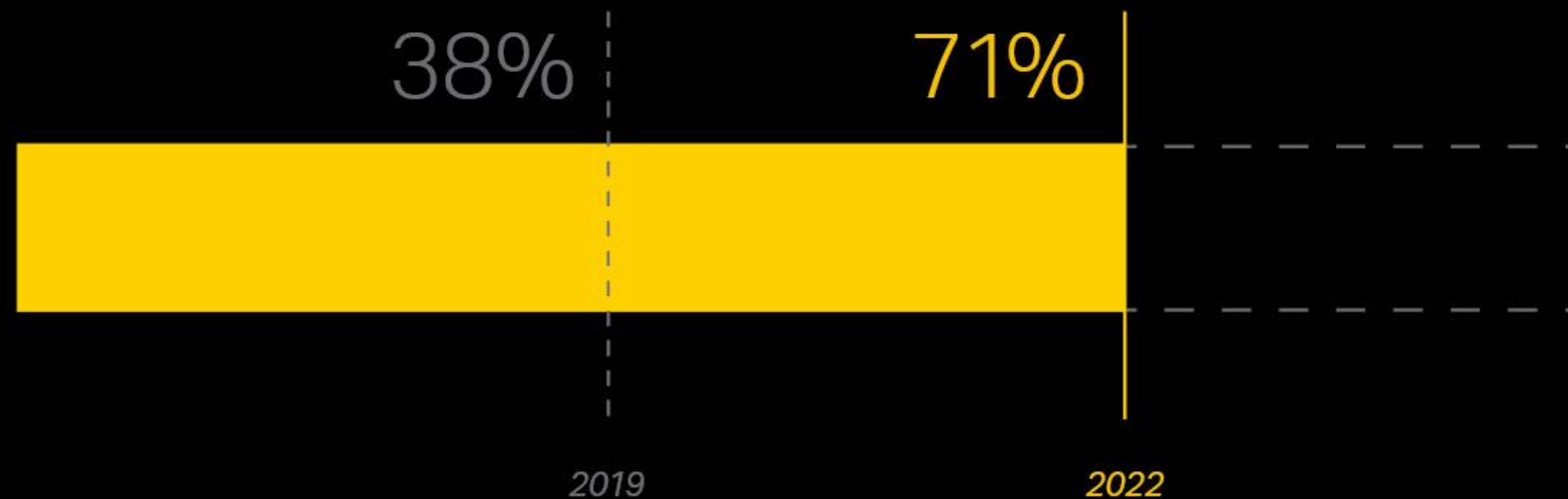
14%

Spaces at home



## Post-Pandemic Teacher Insight

The design of the classroom has an increased importance in their ability to be a good teacher  
**—up by 33% since 2019.**





# Wellbeing

“One of the best things  
for students is for  
**teachers to be happy  
and stable**”

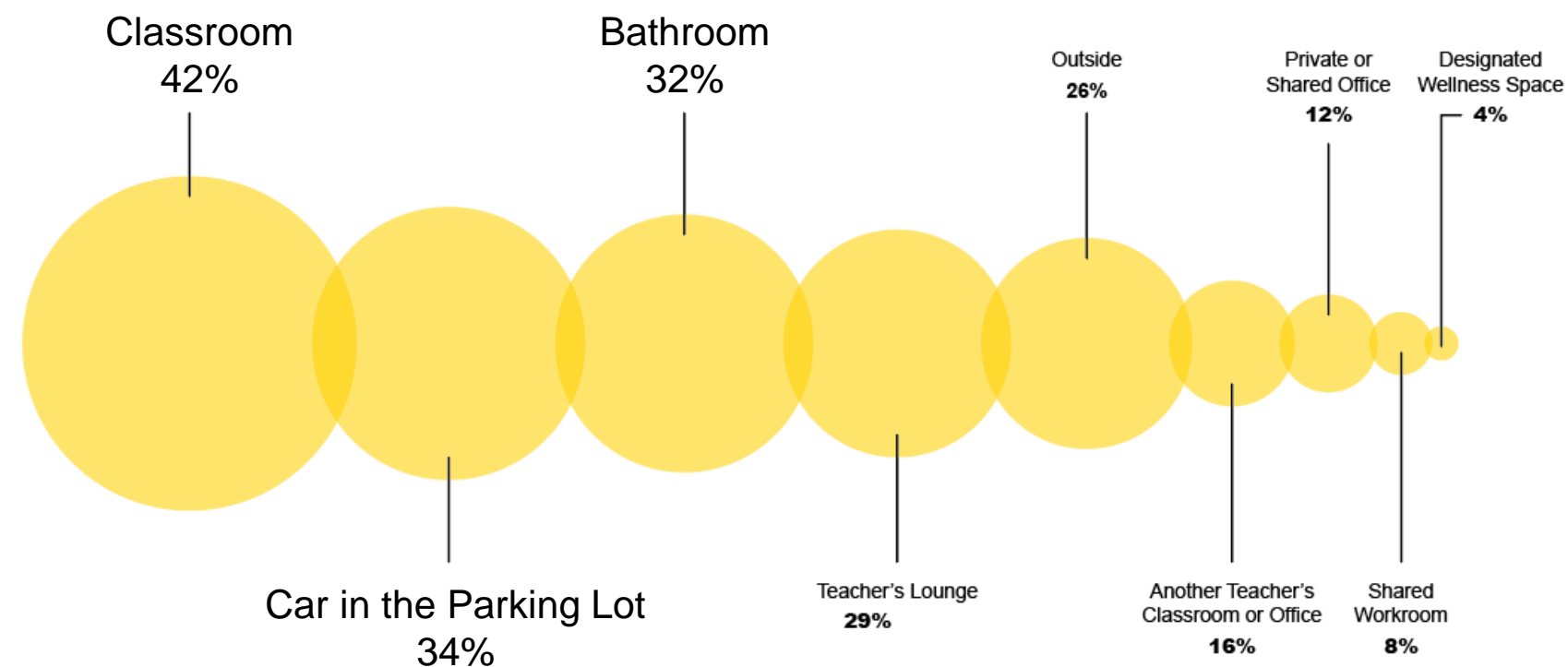
- MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER





# Wellbeing: Teachers first need their “oxygen mask”

Teachers are working professionals with unique needs of their own. However, they are often overloaded with responsibilities that go beyond the classroom itself. While these added responsibilities are commonly accepted as part of “the job,” they can also take a toll on their wellbeing. By better understanding and supporting their needs, teachers will be better equipped to support their students.



Where Teachers Currently Go When They Need a Moment to Themselves



## Under Pressure: Primary Sources of Stress

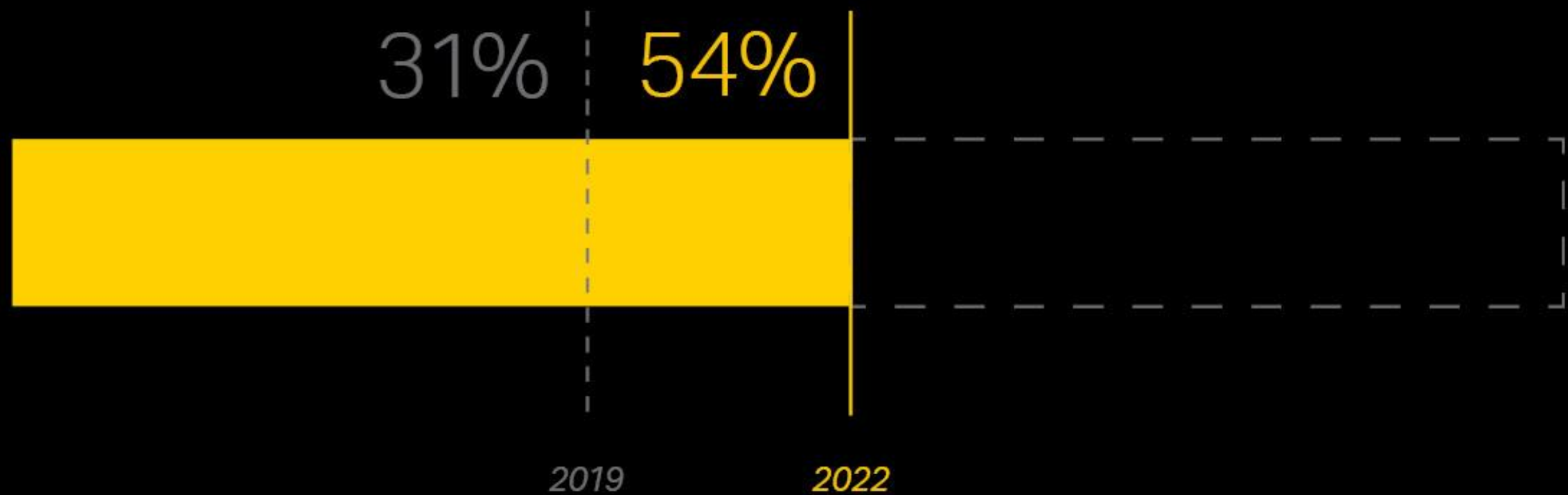
- Pressure to catch up from COVID-related learning gaps and providing educational equity (59%)
- Workload (53%)
- **Safety:** teachers feel that a **safe classroom** is of high importance (4.6/5) but are **only moderately satisfied** with how safe they feel their classrooms currently are (3.6/5)
- 12% of teachers identified as having one or more **mental or physical disabilities** that affect their experience with physical space



## Post-Pandemic Teacher Insight

The pressure teachers put on themselves to help students succeed is increasingly a primary source of stress

**—up by 23% since 2019.**





## *Cultivating Resilience Through Design* **Opportunity for Restoration**

### High-Quality Environment

- WELL Building Standard
- Supports health, wellness, and cognitive performance
- Natural light
- Ventilation and thermal comfort
- Soundscape

### Quiet Spaces for Wellbeing and Focus

- Opportunity to turn off “teacher mode”
- Access to nature
- Space to decompress, focus on individual needs

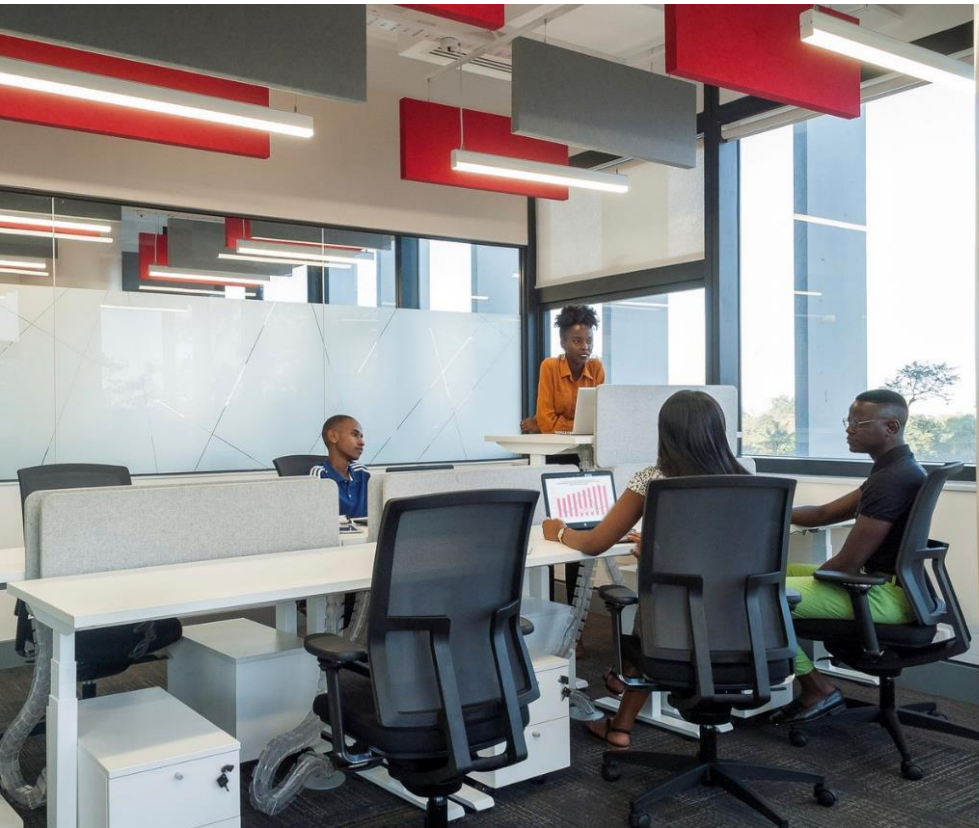
### Comfort

- Inviting and relaxing environment





## Cultivating Educator Resilience



## *Cultivating Resilience Through Design* **Community and Mentorship**

### Professional Settings

- Spaces that support focused, professional work
- Facilitate teacher collaboration with intentional shared workspaces
- Integrate opportunities for professional mentorship and social connections

### Balance Individual and Shared Spaces

- Options: align workspace with the task at hand
- Strategic locations

### Foster a Supportive School Climate

- Welcoming community spaces to encourage positive interactions
- Sense of belonging and mutual support





# Physical and Virtual Environments

“Design for student learning and a teacher workplace don't have to be contradictory things. **Right now, the environment isn't ideal for either group**”

- MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER



# Physical and Virtual Environments

*It's not just a classroom. It's not just a workplace.  
It's something in between – and its technology driven.*

Classrooms need to meet the needs of students and teachers as **separate, unique users**. When it comes to teaching and learning, technology is now a fundamental piece of that puzzle. **Classroom design needs to seamlessly integrate and support the growing use of technology and be change-ready as technology advances in the future.**

## Limitations in Learning Environments

- Limited number of **outlets** (45%)
- **Limited space** for group work or collaboration (37%)
- Lack of **technology** or problematic technology (32%)
- Lack of **writable surfaces** (24%)
- Lack of access to **resources** (20%)



# 56%

of teachers indicated that **improvements in technology would help them to feel more supported** in their working environment



All of those pieces of technology are key in incorporating my planning, my learning, my students learning into one. Even if we are not doing remote learning, those are all still things I use on a daily basis.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER**



# Flexibility

“Flexibility means being able to choose how I set up my classroom and **how I work with students**”

- HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER





# Flexibility: Not a Blank Check

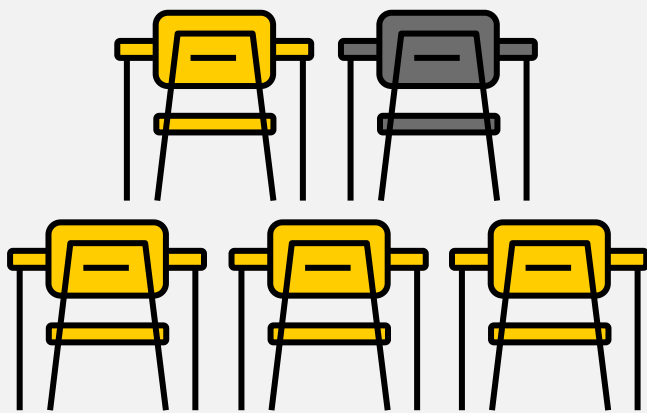
Expectations and standards for learning are evolving, and the classroom needs to reflect the current world, which is flexible, fluid, and dynamic. Teachers are looking for *modifiable* spaces that have the appropriate **affordances** (technology integration, power outlets, etc.) to support layouts, group sizes, and activities to align with their teaching style.

82%

of surveyed teachers report they want more flexibility for their teaching environment



Teachers find teaching spaces limiting to their teaching style



4/5

Teachers want more space for desk-free activities



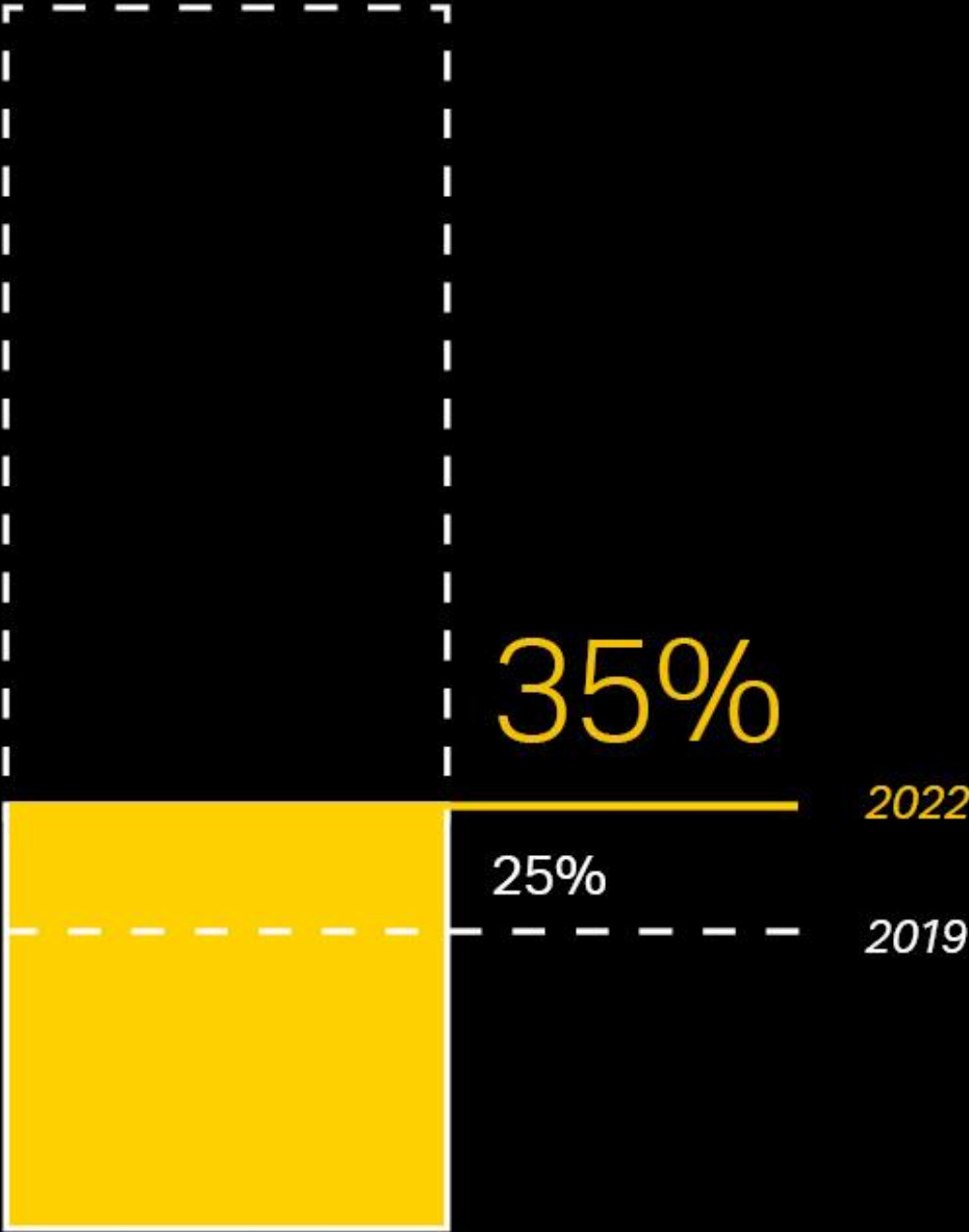
## Limitations in Learning Environments

- Furniture cannot be reconfigured to support different activities or group sizes (29%)
- Furniture that is **not movable** or easily movable (25%)
- Furniture that **does not meet needs or teaching style, activities, or grouping** (24%)



# Post-Pandemic Teacher Insight

Limiting learning environments are increasingly a primary source of stress —up by 10% since 2019.







# Personalization + Choice

**“Students learn differently – whether verbal, auditory, tactile, kinesthetically...we need to meet students where they are...Teachers also have different ways they interact with students.”**

- MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER



# Personalization + Choice: For Teachers and Students

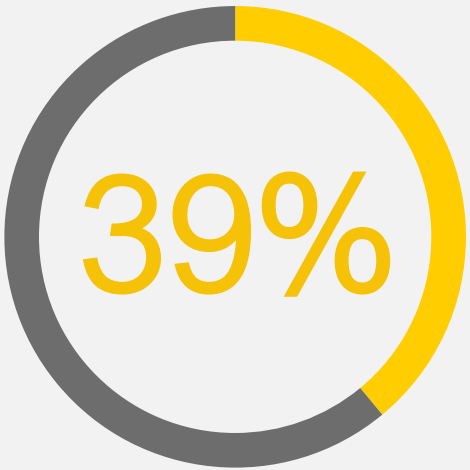
Teachers (and students) are under more pressure than ever to perform amidst fluctuating circumstances, and they need different tools to succeed. One of those tools is the classroom itself and the **teachers' ability to adapt their space and curriculum to meet student and personal needs**. Teachers indicated that their **students benefit when both students and teachers are afforded personalization and choice**.

“ We are all about fostering individualism and personalizing... We try to provide choice over their environment and what is going to make them successful.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

“ If teachers feel supported, then students feel supported.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER



Teachers report that providing an environment that offers personalized learning and support is a primary source of stress



## Limitations in Learning Environments

- **Poor quality of the physical environment (40%)**
- **Distractions in the surrounding environment (18%)**
- **Excessive noise (16%)**
- **Ability to personalize/decorate the classroom (11%)**



# Cultivating Resilience Through Design

## Self-Efficacy

### Intuitive Affordances

- Integrate resources and features that are easy to understand and utilize - clear, readable design
- Seamlessly embedded technologies
- Zoning of spaces

### Adaptability and Flexibility

- Modifiable spaces to support different needs
- Easily movable, modular furniture systems
- Accommodate changing paradigms

### Ownership

- Individual needs, identity, feeling “planted”
- Provide opportunities for ownership at any available scale





# Cultivating Educator Resilience



## Cultivating Resilience Through Design

### Classroom-Level Focus

#### The Classroom Does It All

- Teachers utilize their classroom to support their wellbeing and professional needs
- Identify opportunities for integrated support for educators

#### Comfort and Ergonomics

- Consider the teacher's flow through the space
- Balance student and teacher needs
- Adjustable IEQ factors
- Distractions and level of stimulation

#### Teacher Professionalism

- Classrooms are learning spaces *and* working spaces

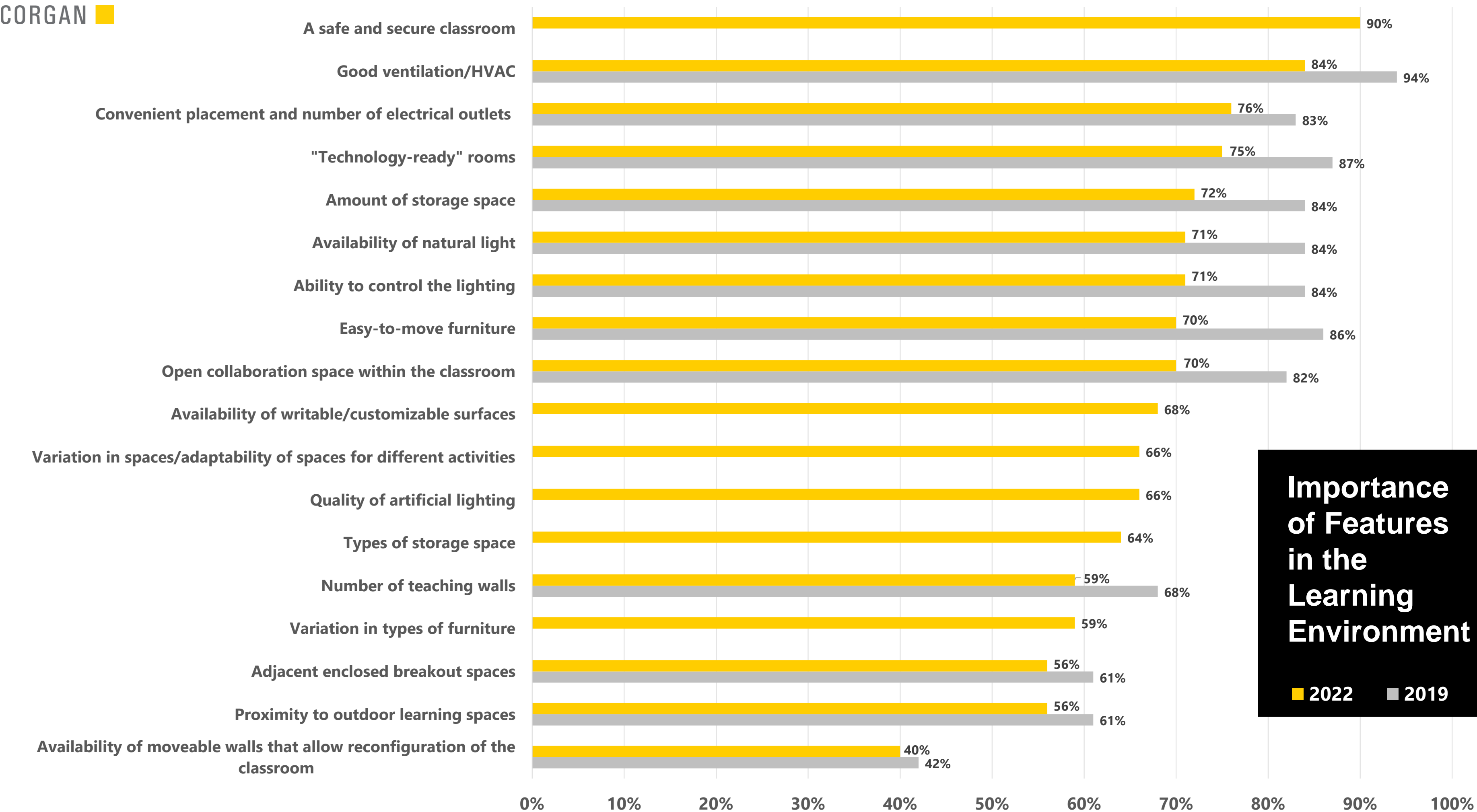


# Post-Pandemic Teacher Insight

"It's 100% a learning environment for students, but it's also 100% a work environment for teachers."







**Importance  
of Features  
in the  
Learning  
Environment**

■ 2022   ■ 2019



# Design Takeaways

1

## MEET TEACHERS’ BASIC NEEDS

Before higher aspirations can be met, many teachers still need the basics, like quality light and air, working technology, essential resources, and support

2

## THE CLASSROOM DOES IT ALL

The classroom is a teachers’ space as much as it is a students’ space- it must support learning, professional work, and wellness

3

## ADAPTABILITY + ALIGNMENT

Teachers need easily modifiable spaces with movable furniture and desire greater alignment between their space and their teaching style

4

## TECHNOLOGY IS FUNDAMENTAL

Technology is now a given in the learning environment and it must be well supported and seamlessly integrated

5

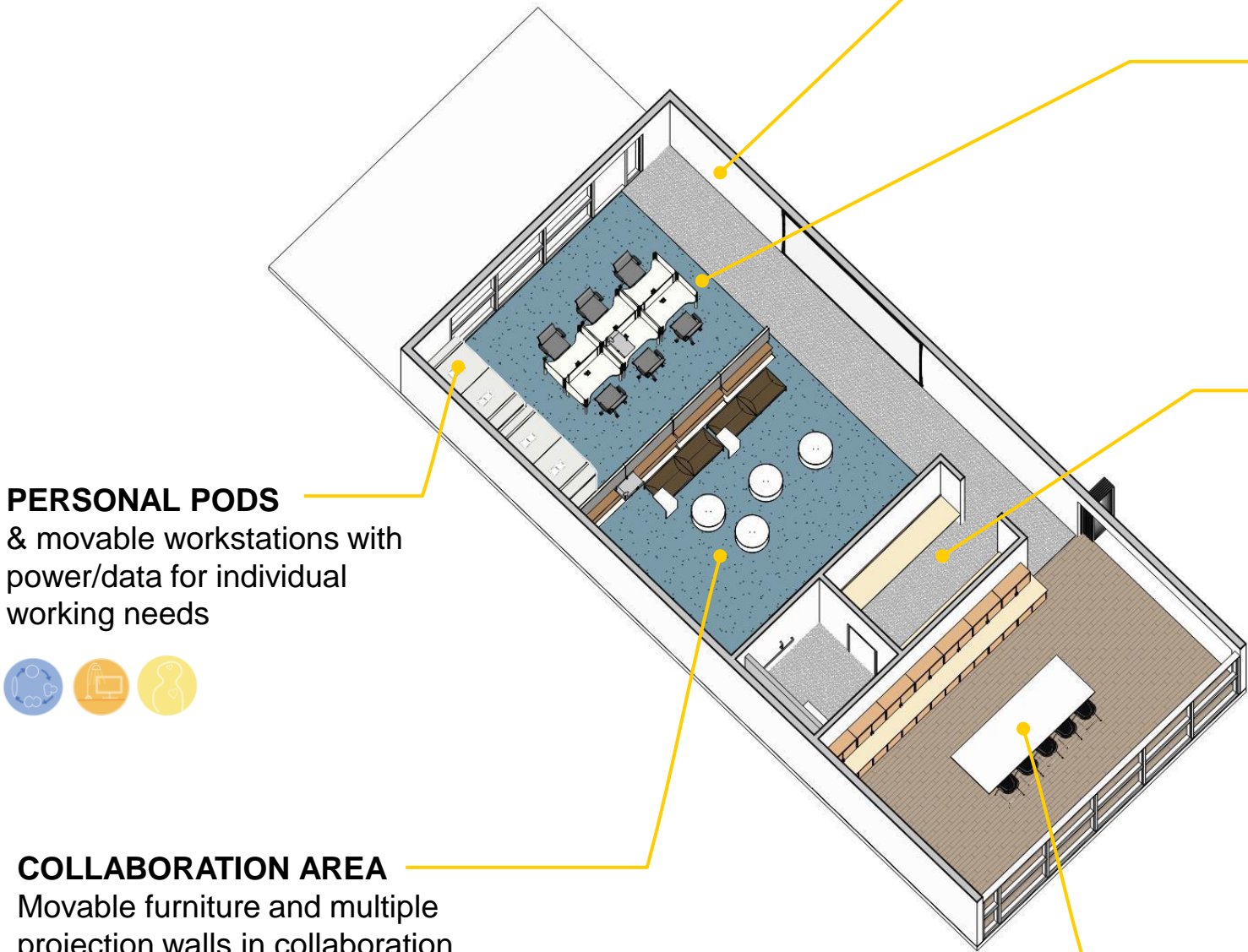
## “TEACHER MODE”: OFF

Teachers desire quiet, privacy, and separation from others when focusing on responsibilities outside of teaching



Cultivating Educator Resilience

# TEACHER'S HUB MODULE - SMALL



**PERSONAL PODS**  
& movable workstations with power/data for individual working needs



**COLLABORATION AREA**  
Movable furniture and multiple projection walls in collaboration space accommodate activities of different scales



**WRITABLE SURFACES**  
The whole wall to be writable surface and support discussion



**FOCUS ZONE**  
With movable walls that separates or opens to collaboration zone



**WORKROOM**  
Print room and storage



**GATHERING AREA**  
Open kitchen with outdoor connection





Cultivating Educator Resilience

# TEACHER'S HUB MODULE - LARGE



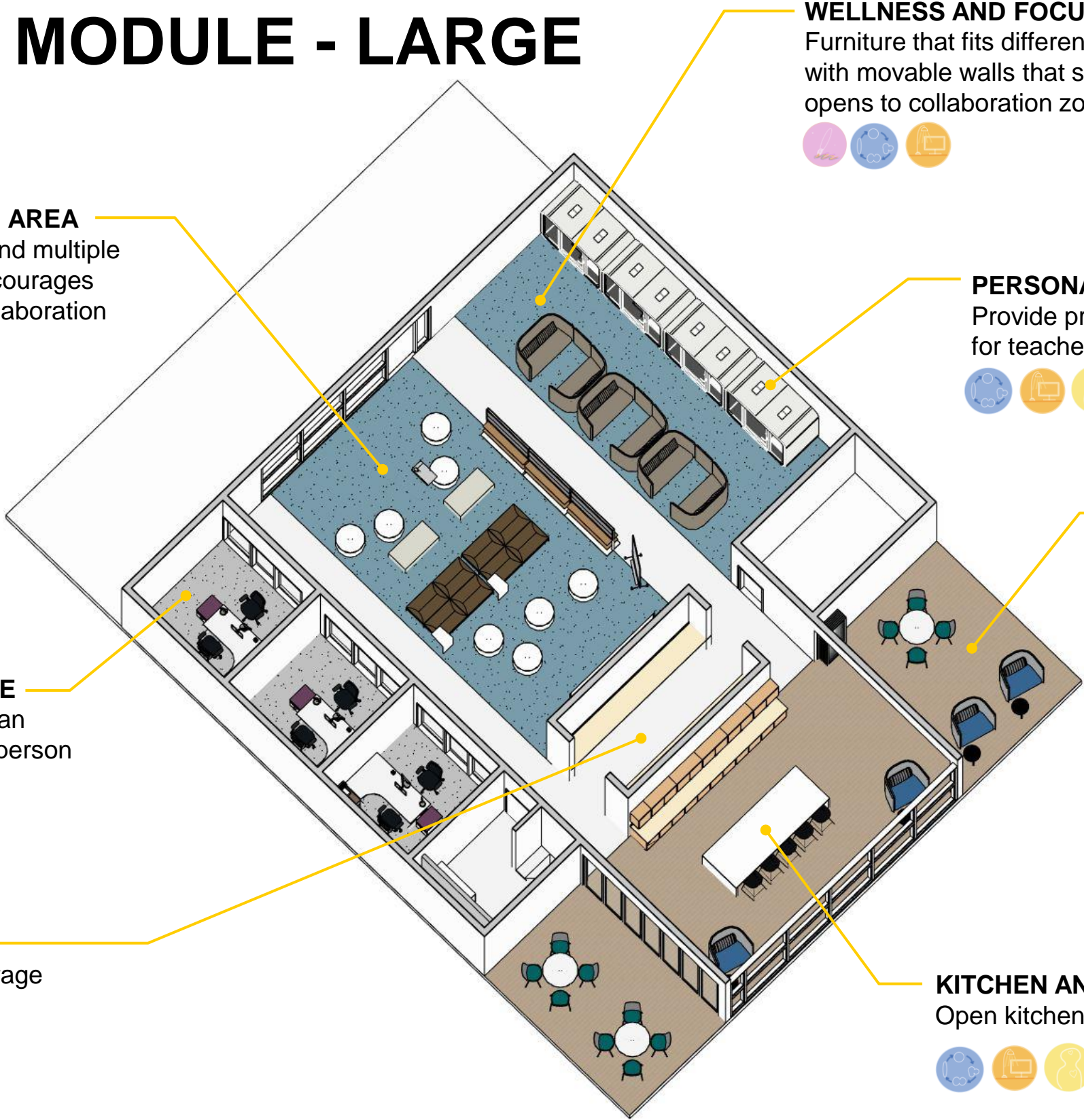
**COLLABORATION AREA**  
Movable furniture and multiple projection walls encourages interdisciplinary collaboration



**HOTELING OFFICE**  
Small offices that can accommodate a 4-person meeting



**WORKROOM**  
Print room and storage



**WELLNESS AND FOCUS AREA**  
Furniture that fits different group sizes with movable walls that separates or opens to collaboration zone



**PERSONAL PODS**  
Provide privacy and a quiet space for teachers



**PATIO**  
Outdoor relaxation and gathering space

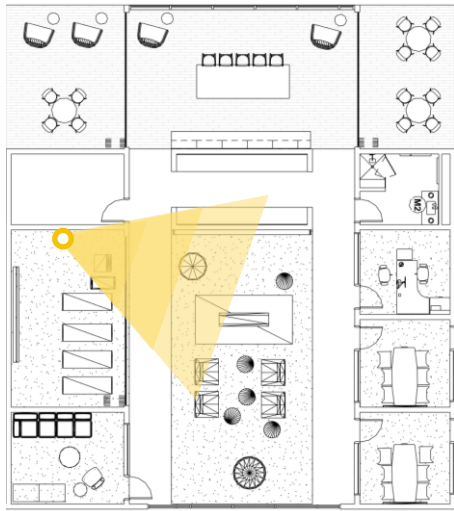


**KITCHEN AND GATHERING SPACE**  
Open kitchen expands to outdoor patio



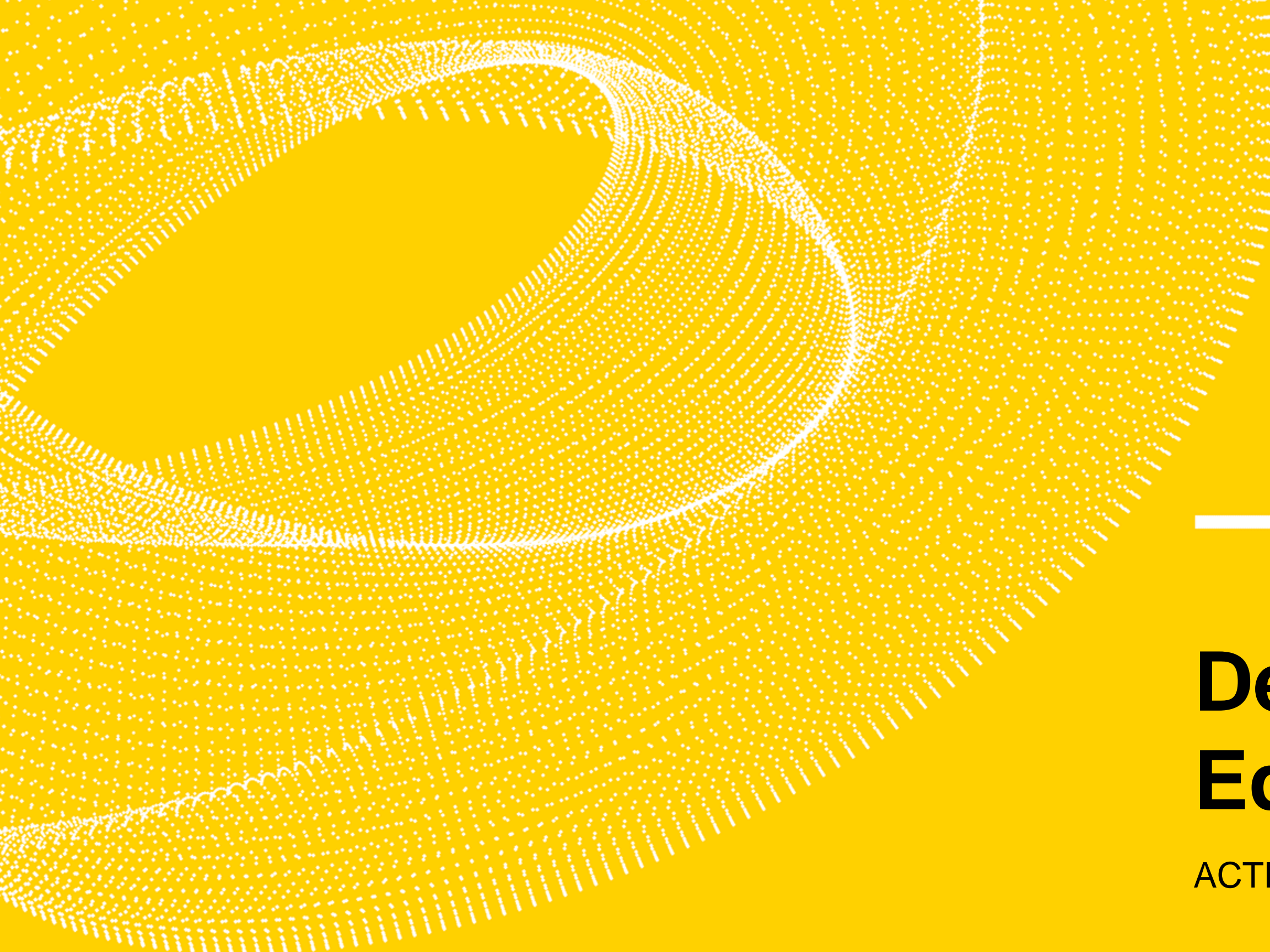


Cultivating Educator Resilience



Teacher's Hub – Wellness and Collaboration Space





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# Designing for Educator Resilience

ACTIVITY #2



ACTIVITY #2

# Designing for Educator Resilience

Build on the sense of empathy created in the first activity to develop design interventions for your persona educator with the data we shared in mind.

You can focus on one or multiple spaces from the provided list or define your own. Feel free to draw a plan, create a sketch, use the provided images to show us what you imagine.

Each group will share out their thoughts on both activities

DESIGNING FOR EDUCATOR RESILIENCE:

*What **opportunities** do you see for design to support educator resilience in school environments? Draw on the **empathy** you developed for your educator in the first activity and **develop design ideas for spaces or features that could support their resilience.***

EDUCATOR PERSONA:

SPACE(S):

Classroom

Teacher Desk

Workroom

Wellness Room

Breakroom

Classroom Pod

Outdoor Space

Collaboration Area

Hoteling Office

Phone Room

Personal Pod

Focus Area

DESIGN IDEAS:

You can create a diagram, a sketch, or a plan!



# Want to learn more?

## Check out our resources

More information on this study is available through:

- A research white paper with full survey findings
- An executive summary of insights and survey findings
- A series of **blog posts** focusing on each major insight with supporting findings and potential design strategies
- An episode of the Square, Corgan's **podcast**





# Contributors

## 2022 Design Lessons From Teachers 2.0

RESEARCH + INVESTIGATION



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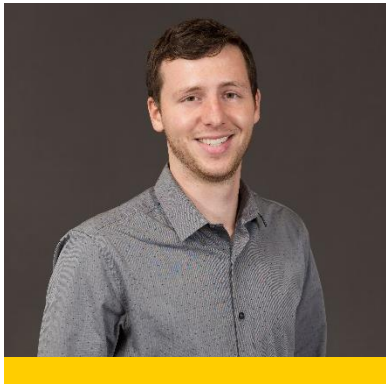
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# EDspaces

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# Thank You!

Please scan the QR code to  
provide session feedback.



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