



Early Childhood Educators Conference: Teacher Wellness

(Submitted by **Eric Brown**, 2019, while serving as Director for Learning at International Schools Group)

Tool(s) used:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems Web
Purpose of using tool:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesizing Thinking <p>Overview: The purpose of using this tool was for early childhood educators to determine the various push and pull factors relating to teacher wellness.</p>
Context of lesson/case study:	Early Childhood Educators Conference
Participants (# and description):	260+ early childhood teachers
Topic, Theme, or Key Understanding of unit/project:	Teacher Wellness
Length of unit/project:	1 Day - Activity was 1 hour
Resources/materials & setting required:	Created presentation, balls of yarn, blank labels, pens/markers
Lesson Plan/Description of the Project:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Systems Web was used to create a tangible feeling of push and pull factors of teacher wellness. After teams of 5 brainstormed the various factors that contribute to teacher wellness, 2 teams then combined to narrow down the factors to 9 (or generate more). Teams then wrote the 9 factors down on the labels along with "Teacher" and represented one of those factors. By standing in a circle, the teacher wrapped the yarn around their finger then threw the ball of yarn to someone else in the circle that was a relationship and explained it. After wrapping the yarn around their finger, the ball was then thrown around to other participants for each relationship the group could determine. The result was a web of yarn that generated discussion of these push and pull factors as well as created a visual for the participants. The teacher felt the most tension which was an additional purpose and effect of the activity. 	
Reflection	
Plusses:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, it went very well with over 260 participants in the room. I was amazed at the variations they created and the different factors that ended up being the ones that created the most tension and those that created the least. The yarn worked very well, participants were up out of their seats engaged throughout. We debriefed with the various factors as a whole group; however, I should have created a way to capture those thoughts other than just discussion. 	
Challenges:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The directions for this especially for a large group need to be very clear. While I felt that I did a good job 	





explaining, it could have very gone the other way.

- I should have created a padlet, answer garden, or Google Doc for participants to record the factor that caused the most tension and the factor that caused the least.
- I was running out of time a little bit, so I could've created this on quickly. Next time, I will certainly build it in to the activity.
- Because of the pull, the teacher ended up really feeling it almost to the point where their finger was hurting, so in the future, I'll have to suggest an alternative (one wrap only, only throw to teacher a few times, etc.)

Suggestions for other practitioners and educators:

Create activity to see how multiple parts of a system are all interrelated. I would certainly do this again for another reason especially now that I have experience facilitating it.

Evidence and Resources:

