

# Organizational Wellness

Secondary Traumatic Stress and HB 1363



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## Overview

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) is the emotional distress that arises when someone vicariously experiences the traumatic experiences of another individual. Sometimes known as compassion fatigue, the toll of tending to someone's painful experiences can create very real symptoms in caregivers, including teachers.

[Substitute House Bill \(SHB\) 1363](#) and [RCW 28A.300.825](#) acknowledges the significant toll STS has on educators, and subsequently students, and focuses on the adoption of policy and procedures so that districts and schools can take meaningful steps in supporting their staff's health and well-being. By implementing policy through the strategic use of professional learning and a continuous improvement process, districts and schools can reduce staff turnover, increase student outcomes, and model healthy behaviors for the entire school community.

## OSPI completed legislative requirements

Assembly of a statewide team comprised of stakeholders to guide the work and further the understanding of the impact of STS on Washington state educators.

[Create a webpage](#) to provide access to resources and a Washington-specific assessment designed in partnership with Healthier Generation.

# The Importance of Sustainable Funding

In June of 2023 districts were surveyed on their knowledge and implementation of HB 1363. Over 100 districts responded with low knowledge and implementation rates. When asked “What, if anything, would support your efforts in meeting compliance with SHB 1363?” Over 90% of answers responded with a need for funding, including responses: “Funding to support the work”, “Paid work time” & “There is no money to make real changes that will benefit staff...Districts are asked to reduce spending, yet this program needs funding to get off the ground.”

- When asked “What, has your district implemented?”

~70% of 117 responses shared something along the lines of “Other than a board policy, I have seen no action implemented.”

## A Need for State Agency Supported Capacity Building

Many respondents replied with a need for further implementation supports from OSPI:

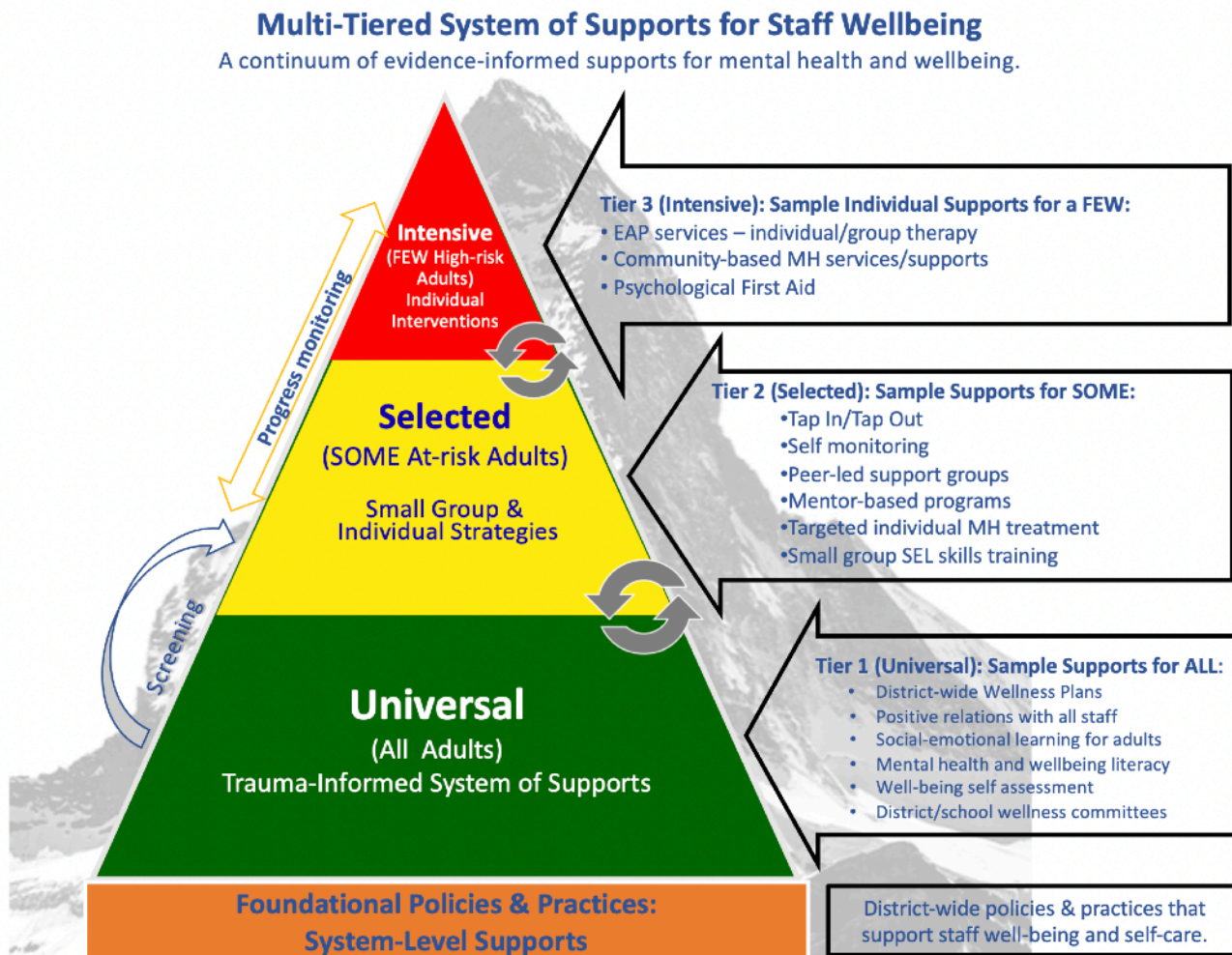
Capacity building from OSPI was mentioned many times including: “Monthly information from the OSPI communications department to share with staff.” & “Updates from OSPI regarding what and how other districts are implementing their efforts to address staff secondary trauma.”

What, if anything, would support your efforts in meeting compliance with SHB 1363?

pay Secondary Traumatic Stress secondary trauma members policy money  
implement Unsure make stress mental health share work reporting  
school start support take funding trauma staff help  
need training districts Appropriate resources ensure  
students sure time health create meet know Provide resources committee  
wellness

# Crucial elements that require sustainable funding

1. **Funded State capacity building, through an MTSS lens.** A lead agency is necessary in the design and growth of sustainable organizational wellness practices with an emphasis on STS. OSPI has been tasked by the legislature to support implementation of HB 1363 and has additionally partnered with Kaiser Permanente and Healthier Generation for the MTSS Workforce Wellness Community of Practice for two years supporting districts build wellness practices into their school based Tiered models. **Data shows districts require additional support in implementation including guidance, resource creation, coaching and webinars.**



Maiké & Associates, LLC with funding by Kaiser Permanente

2. **District funding specifically earmarked for HB 1363 implementation.** Districts responded to survey data that they require funds to fully implement HB 1363 and bring the work to fidelity.