

Self-Care Cookbook 2.0



Recipes and Resources for School Leaders

Paul K. Fox, PMEA Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment, & Retention

Monday, December 8, 2025 - 11:00 AM - 12:05 PM

Empire B - Hershey Lodge & Convention Center

A. Session Description

Do you find the harried pace of our profession overwhelming and at times crushing when buried beneath decades of keeping our noses to the grindstone and putting everyone else's needs above our own? Do some of your staff members say they are stressed out, constantly tired, plagued by one ailment after another, or wondering how they're going to "keep up?" If health is interfering with your colleagues' abilities to do their jobs and find success, balance, and meaning in their lives, then it is **time for change**.

The purpose of this session is to empower school leaders and teachers with skills and attitudes needed to make informed decisions to promote self-improvements in their lifelong health and wellbeing, to LEARN tools for better time management and to help remediate fatigue, stress and burnout, CONNECT and collaborate with your staff to inspire unique strategies for better personal self-care, and ACTIVATE creative new approaches to foster an improved workplace environment.

B. Targets

This "two-for-one session" will provide research and resources approaching this topic from both the perspective of cultivating strategies for improved individual health, stress remediation, mindfulness, and time management, creating customized self-care plans, as well as an "idea bank" of proposals for school/system leaders to promote and model best practices of staff wellness with a focus on school climate, culture, collaborative problem solving, and community engagement. Attendees will explore solutions to physical, mental, emotional, and social issues that may lead to educator stress, fatigue, burnout, demoralization, low productivity, and lack of a work/life balance.

C. Clinician

Paul K. Fox graduated with University Honors from the College of Fine Arts, Carnegie-Mellon University, earning degrees in Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music/Viola (1977) and Master of Fine Arts in Music Education (1979).

Mr. Fox is currently State Retired Member Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA), member and Past State Chair (2016-2024) of the PMEA Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment, and Retention, Artistic Director of the South Hills Junior Orchestra, Steering Committee/ School District Representative of the UPPER ST. CLAIR TODAY magazine, Announcer for the Upper St. Clair High School Marching Band (40+ years), Director of Communications and Chair of the Arts Committee for the Community Foundation of Upper St. Clair, and Volunteer Escort for the St. Clair Hospital.



He retired in June 2013 from 35 years of public-school music teaching and administration. His final job assignment was Performing Arts Curriculum Leader and orchestra/string teacher (grades 5-12) employed by the Upper St. Clair School District (Allegheny County in Western Pennsylvania). As a music educator, he also taught choral music (grades 7-12), vocal/general music (grades K-8), elementary band (grade 4), plays/musicals (grades 4-12), and music theory (grades 10-12).

Since 2012, he has presented 80+ professional development workshops/webinars/conference sessions and has written more than 200 articles about care/health/wellness of educators, creativity in education, interview techniques, marketing professionalism, pre-service training, educator ethics, and retirement resources for a variety of websites and publications, most archived at his website: <https://paulfox.blog/>. Email: paulkfox.usc@gmail.com

D. Sample References for Further Study

- **Copy of updated workshop slides and other care articles (blogsite):** <https://paulfox.blog/care/>
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<https://leadinggreatlearning.com/books-by-mike/rekindle-your-professional-fire/>
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<https://www.franklincovey.com/the-7-habits/habit-3.html>
- Effective School Solutions: “Authentic Teacher Self Care – No Toxic Positivity Here!”
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<https://www.wgu.edu/heyteach/article/9-stress-management-strategies-every-teacher-needs-know1612.html>
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<https://www.newleaders.org/blog/how-school-leaders-can-create-the-conditions-to-support-teacher-self-care>
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<https://katrinaonstad.com/books/>
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