



UNIVERSITY OF  
EASTERN FINLAND

# **Teacher well-being – why does it matter?**

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# Research based teacher education at the University of Eastern Finland

- Students have the most diverse opportunities in Finland to pursue a career as **class teachers** or **subject teachers**, or to specialise in **early education**, **special education** or **career counselling**.
- Our teacher training schools are modern learning environments that also serve as active platforms for research and experimenting in the context of teaching and learning.





# Finnish school context (1/2)

- Promoting students' learning and well-being is a central aim of the Finnish basic education (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014).
- There are no standardized tests in the Finnish comprehensive school.
- Teachers are highly educated (i.e., Master degree).





# Finnish school context (2/2)

- A wide range of support is available for students.
- Finnish students generally report low levels of study burnout and high levels of teacher support.
- Most of Finnish teachers experience well-being at work.





# Why does teacher well-being matter at school?

- The well-being of teachers is crucial to ensuring equal learning opportunities for all students.
- Stressed teachers have a limited capacity to develop their teaching practices and support students.
- Exhausted teachers typically have more turnover intentions, and hence, a higher risk for leaving the teaching profession.





# The research evidence (1/2)

- **Proactive means that promote teacher well-being can be developed within the professional community.**
  - Providing and receiving support from colleagues reduced the sense of inadequacy in teacher-pupil interaction among individual teachers, but also at the school level.
- **Teacher well-being is contagious in the school community.**
  - Teacher strain in the classroom can cross over to their students.
  - Students taught by an exhausted teacher are more at risk of losing interest in schoolwork and perceiving it as being meaningless.

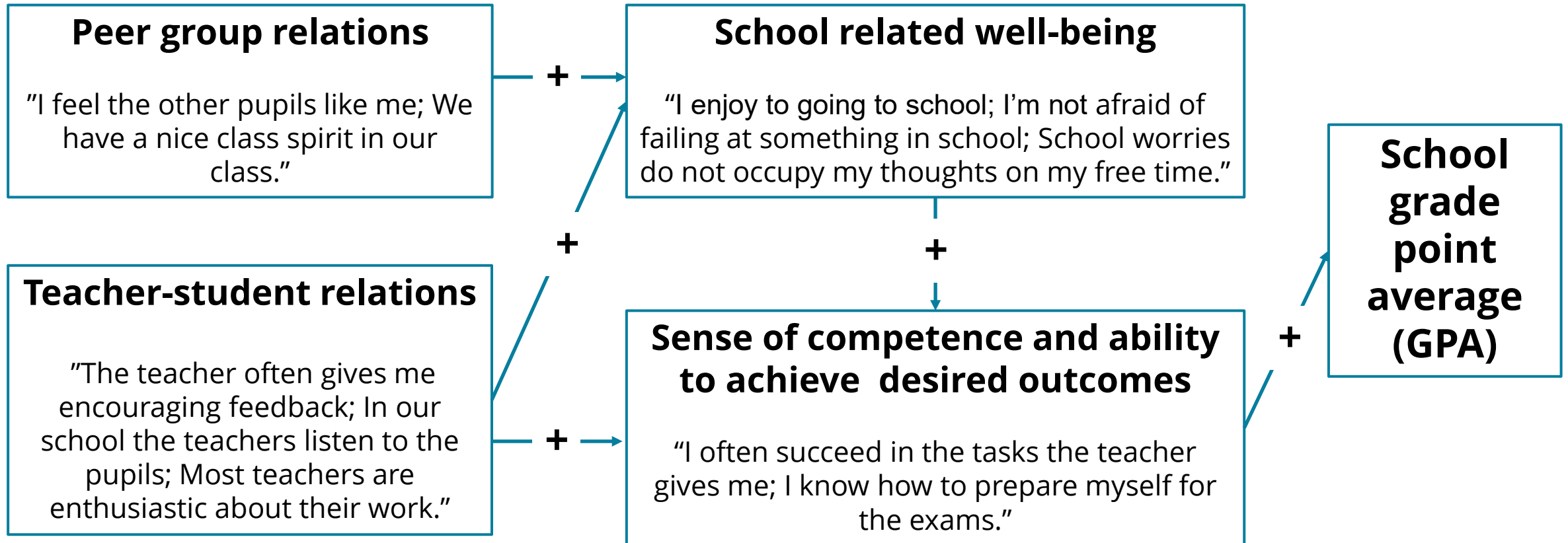


# The research evidence (2/2)

- **Teacher learning and well-being are intertwined** – *“you cannot have one without another in the school community”*.
  - Active and intentional teacher learning is suggested to be a key for supporting meaningful school development, experimentation with innovative teaching methods, the facilitation of pupils’ active learning in the classroom, and in teacher burnout prevention.

(Maslach and Jackson, 1981; Pietarinen, et al., 2013; Pyhältö, et al., 2020; Pietarinen et al., 2021; Räsänen et al., 2020a; 2020b; Soini et al., 2010; Tikkanen et al., 2019; Tikkanen et al., 2021; Väisänen et al., 2018)

# Students' perceived support from teachers (n= 170; 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders)



Pietarinen, J. Pyhältö, K. & Soini, T. (2014). Student's emotional and cognitive engagement as the determinants of well-being and achievement in school. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 67, 40–51.

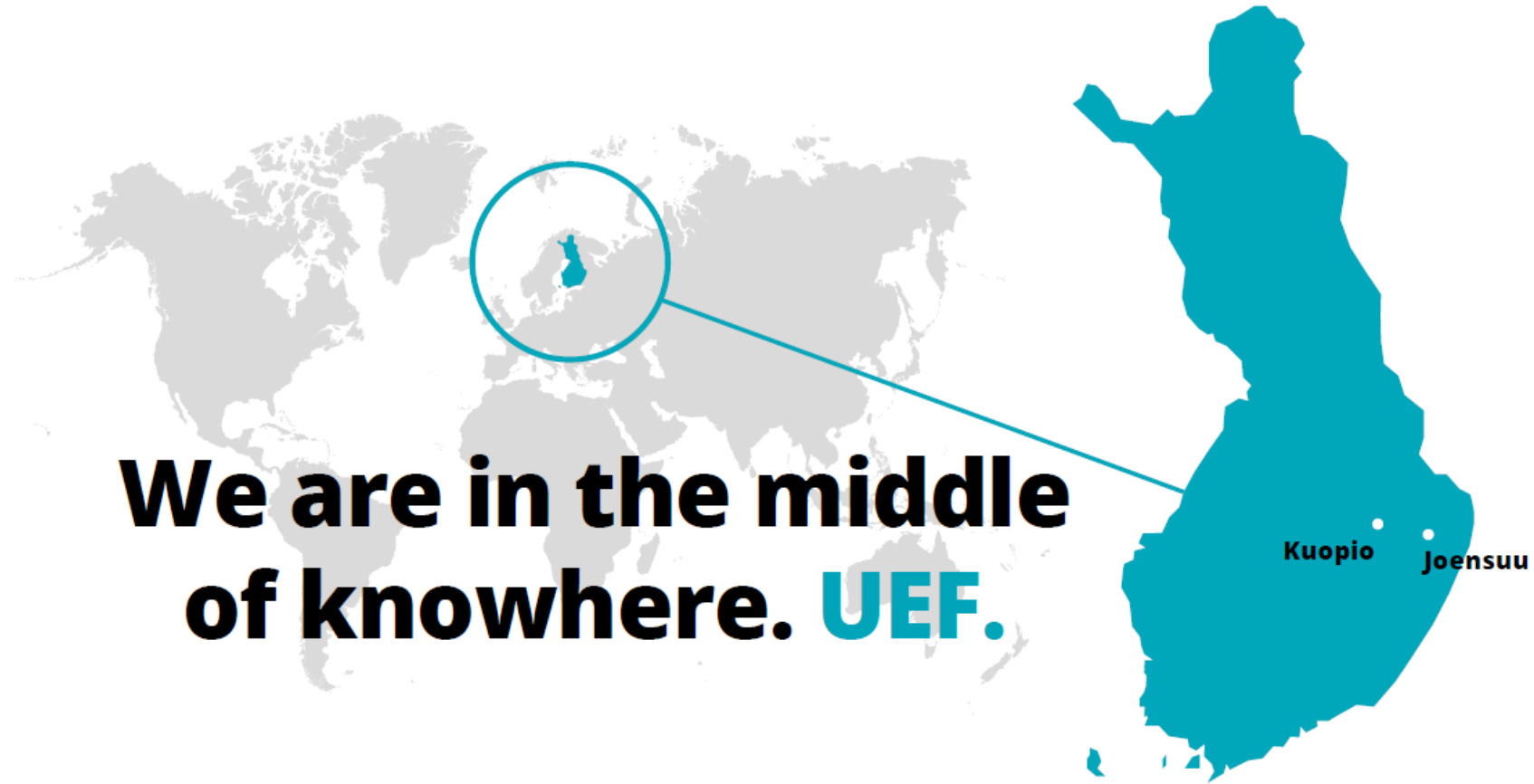




# Conclusions

- This intertwined relation between teacher learning and well-being should be enhanced already in teacher education.
- Research based teacher education at UEF aims to facilitate student teachers' learning by focusing on:
  - Curriculum making knowledge
  - Pedagogical and subject knowledge
  - Future school development, i.e., diversifying learning and interaction in school
  - Teacher-student interaction and inclusive education
  - Collaborative and reflective working practice that supports both teacher learning and well-being.

# Thank you!



**We are in the middle  
of knowhere. UEF.**