

Educational Goods for Well-being in K-12 Schools:
Foundational Questions, Student Autonomy, and Stratifications

by
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Abstract

Student well-being has become a categorical focus for school education policy and practice across Canada and in many parts of the world. In the Manitoba context, student well-being is identified as a priority area by policymakers and educators in the public K-12 school system. Yet, there is a need for more clarity on the theoretical foundations that underpin notions of student well-being as well as how these conceptions translate into school programming across socio-political and geographic contexts. Both the conceptualization and implementation processes that address student well-being involve human (adult) values and choices about what to prioritize for students in schools. This dissertation consists of a series of three independent papers that explore the themes of distributive justice and educational goods for well-being in K-12 schools. The first paper, entitled, *Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners Concerned with Student Well-being*, explores three key questions that must be considered for any policymakers and practitioners concerned with student well-being in schools. The second paper, *Reimagining Paternalism for a Well-being Mandate in K-12 School Education* enquires into the importance of student autonomy when considering student well-being and makes the case for broadening student autonomy through a soft paternalism approach in schools. The final paper, entitled, *Social Class and Access to Well-being Goods and Capabilities in K-12 Schools* explores teachers' perspectives, practices, and experiences in schools with student well-being. This qualitative research identifies how teachers characterize educational goods and capabilities for well-being in four different high school program settings across Winnipeg (Manitoba). Findings from this study demonstrate that healthy personal relationships are thought to be an important educational good for well-being, in addition to other goods such as personal fulfilment, personal autonomy, and democratic competence (in that order). Findings also reveal that educational goods for well-being appear to be differently stratified based on school program, which in turn, are stratified based on socioeconomic status as well as other factors.

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I came to this topic out of a concern for student well-being and along the way, as I think is common on a journey like this, I uncovered layers I was previously unaware to explain *why* this topic is of concern to me. These layers are constructed by my experiences as a K-12 student, my experience teaching in high schools, and how I've made meaning of the experiences of others -- in particular those in my family. I am motivated to pursue this work mainly because of the schooling experiences I witnessed my two brothers go through. Because of their journeys -- and how their journeys reflect countless other student experiences in K-12 schools -- I am concerned with making schools places that meaningfully contribute to the well-being of everyone who attends.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my husband, Derek. Your support, generosity, faith, and love made it possible to pursue and enjoy this work. Thank you for seeing me the way I didn't know I should see myself.

For similar reasons, I also dedicate this work to my mentor, Dr. Falkenberg. It has been a life-changing experience working with you and I feel ineffably grateful to you for it.

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Introduction

Dissertation Overview and Scope

This dissertation consists of a series of three independent papers that take up the theme of educational goods for well-being in schools. Throughout this work, I focus on the period of time that a child is in school and is therefore influenced by their experiences and opportunities in school. Children are influenced by their time in school both while they are a child (qua child) and into their future (qua future adult). I am interested in the ways that K-12 school policymakers and practitioners can support children's well-being qua child and qua future adult. In this introduction, I identify and situate the research focus, namely well-being in schools, and define key terms and concepts. Included in this introduction as well is a brief discussion of my background and positionality in relation to the topic of children's well-being. The final section of this introduction argues for the significance, relevance, and value of research in the area of children's well-being. Finally, I offer ideas about how these three distinct papers are related.

Following this introduction is the core of the work, namely the three papers, which are entitled:

- I. Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners Concerned with Student Well-Being
- II. Reimagining Paternalism for a Well-Being Mandate in K-12 School Education
- III. Social Class and Access to Educational Goods in K-12 Schools

The intention behind my choice to produce a series of papers is to cover a broader range of connected topics than a traditional chapter-based dissertation allows for. In some ways, this combined manuscript trades off depth for breadth. I am forsaking the more commonly chosen goal of developing an expertise from one large study to instead build my knowledge and understanding across different but related areas. The first area I cover is historical and philosophical in nature, addressing foundational questions that can support education

policymakers and practitioners in schools to systematically expand well-being as an explicit priority in schools. The second conceptual paper centres on the relationship between autonomy in schools and well-being, arguing for greater autonomy entitlements in schools. While the third paper, an empirical study, provides findings and a discussion on how teachers think about and prioritize educational goods for well-being across different school settings. I have chosen to investigate three different but related topics which each consider philosophical and sociological perspectives on children's well-being in K-12 schools. The intended audience for these papers is researchers, policymakers (at all levels) and school-based practitioners in K-12 schools. Each paper offers suggestions that can inform political/policy decision making as well as the individual decisions made by practitioners in schools. Together, this work contributes to the growing literature on schooling for children's well-being where well-being is considered to be an end-in-itself.

Setting the Context

Well-being in Schools

Based on many social indicators, the Canadian population is doing better now than in any other previous generation. For instance, life expectancy here is now at 81.7 years up from 73.2 in 1972 and 58.1 in 1925 (Gapminder, n.d.). The average income per person at 43.3K/year is at an all-time high (Gapminder, n.d.) and we are more educated than ever before. In 2016, 54.0% of Canadians aged 25 to 64 had either college or university qualifications, up from 48.3% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2017). Yet, on scales such as the Canadian Index of Well-being, between 1994-2014 well-being has increased just 9.9% compared to 38% increase in GDP (Canadian Index

for Wellbeing, n.d.). Despite substantial economic improvements countries in the Global North during the mid-twentieth century, some data suggests that well-being has not correspondingly increased (Easterlin & Crimmons, 1991). While the general public and education policymakers in particular may not expect well-being to track economic growth, there is likely a reasonable expectation that our overall well-being will improve as our material conditions advance. According to Seligman (2011) however, life satisfaction in the United States for instance, has “been flat for fifty years even though GDP has tripled” (p. 452).

While these figures require further contextualization and perhaps even a discussion on the shifting norms for wealth, they at least show reasons to question the ways in which economic prosperity (of at least a certain type) can promote or even detract from our overall well-being. Economist Max-Neef offers pointed remarks about how the productivity race that many people find themselves in is indeed misguided:

When the form of production and consumption of goods makes goods an end in themselves, then the alleged satisfaction of a need impairs its capacity to create potential. This, in turn, leads to an alienated society engaged in a senseless productivity race. Life, then, is placed at the service of artifacts, rather than artifacts at the service of life. The question of the quality of life is overshadowed by our obsession to increase productivity (Max-Neef, 1991, p. 25).

Economic good then, as Max-Neef argues, is not an end in itself, nor is it equal to quality of life or human well-being. Having our basic needs met is not a one-time thing, but rather it is a constantly evolving and moving target. What Max-Neef, Seligman and others seem to agree on is that the goal of wealth is not just to produce more wealth but rather it should be to engender well-being. A goal which is demonstrably unrealized and which has implications for school education. It seems clear that flourishing requires its own field of study (for communities who both have and have yet to accumulate wealth).

Yet, the focus in K-12 school education has traditionally remained fixed on goals that centre on narrow academic preparatory goods (e.g., literacy and numeracy), performance indicators (e.g., standardized test scores), economic goods, and labour market outcomes. For a long time, Euro-American popular culture has emphasized that both labour market success and financial wealth are of key importance for well-being. While this may be true to a degree, there are good reasons to develop a broader agenda for school education that centres on student well-being and a focus on what makes life go well beyond labour market success or financial wealth. Not only is it the case that people who achieve financial and labour market success can still be unwell, but adults and children who have not yet achieved any one of a range of symbolic pinnacles of success, still have many sources of potential happiness at their disposal.

The data that are collected, presented, and valued in school divisions in Manitoba are almost entirely literacy and numeracy test scores (Krepski, 2016). Particularly in the middle and senior years, students increasingly associate success with high stakes performativity tests and grades/marks become a cornerstone of school life. Yet there are many other areas of development that young students identify as important for them to experience well-being (Falkenberg et al., 2021), both as children and for their preparation for adulthood. It is good to remember that school performance and achievement tests are not even properly an assessment of “knowledge and skills for life” but rather of “knowledge and skills in assessment situations” (Bonderup, 2007, p. 1). There is a domain of life pursuits that contribute to children and adult flourishing that lies beyond the knowledge and skills required in assessment situations. According to Keyes (2005), less than 4 in every 10 American youth are flourishing. While

flourishing is not equivalent to well-being, clearly there is much work to be done in schools *beyond tracking performance measures* to improve children's lives through and during schooling.

The total number of contact hours children have in schools is one way to demonstrate how what happens in schools is incredibly significant in a child's life. Children spend an enormous amount of time in schools. In 2019/2020, the most recent year available from Statistics Canada, over 5.7 million students were enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2021). Students spend 30 hours or more per week for roughly 40 weeks of the year in their school. That amounts to roughly 1,200 hours per annum for 13 consecutive years, or roughly 15,600 hours, spend in school. The treatment of children in schools through programming, curriculum choices, pedagogical approaches, school culture, and school relationships is deeply significant to the lives of millions of children. A child's experience in schools impacts them both as children and later in life as an adult. School education also plays a role in the well-being of society, or collective well-being, since experiences in schools influence children's social and moral behaviours (e.g., children may build their capacity to treat others as equals, form healthy personal relationships, participate in democratic society, etc.).

As a former high school teacher, I believe it is important to consider the degree to which schools can reasonably and feasibly furnish children with access to the educational goods identified by the Manitoba Education and Training mission statement and with the educational goods and capacities needed for children to experience well-being as children and adults. Philosophers such as Ghaeus, Macleod, Hannan, Brighouse, Swift, and others consider the ways in which prioritizing certain educational goods over others may or may not be justified. One example of these trade-offs is considering how a focus on training in schools may neglect the

well-being of children as they are children (qua child). As I have experienced as a high school teacher myself, and as reported by teacher participants in the third paper of this dissertation, there are limitations on the amount of time teacher can address students' needs in their classroom. In this context where there are limitations on teachers' time and resources, important decisions have to be made between both different kinds of educational goods as well as how to distribute these goods between students.

Seligman calls for an agenda for well-being education in the same way we teach numeracy and literacy (Seligman, 2011). The good news is that there is a narrative shift at the international, national, and provincial levels toward policy, programming, and assessment that represents a broader educational mandate that includes student well-being. The three papers in this dissertation are meant to contribute to the discourse that highlights the importance of, and how policymakers and practitioners can address well-being in schools.

Child Well-being

What constitutes children's well-being? What theory should be applied to them? These questions are the focus of this section. Children lead very different lives than adults. In several aspects of their lives, it is believed that children must be taken care of and therefore do not have decision-making power or self-determination. Children are paternalized, and in this way, children are said to not yet possess autonomy over these aspects of their lives. The state of childhood might also bring special benefits to children. Children may have access to different kinds of well-being goods than the goods that adults can access or access easily. In order to make claims

about what is, or might be, good for children then, we first need a sense of what kinds of beings children are.

A child may be defined as a human that is below the age of puberty or below the legal age of majority (UNICEF, n.d.; Oxford dictionaries, n.d.). For a discussion about making trade-offs between the short and long-term interests of children however, this definition is too vague. In addition to occupying the state of childhood by virtue of their age, children possess certain qualities that set them apart from adults (Brighouse & Swift, 2014; Hannan, 2018; Macleod, 2018; Tomlin, 2018). Brighouse and Swift (2014) describe children in this way:

- profoundly dependent on others for their well-being
- lack well-developed stable distinctive conception of what is valuable in their life
- profoundly vulnerable to other people's decisions
- can yet develop capacities that enable them to realize their own interests in life (p. 62)

What is clear from this definition is that children occupy a state where they are formulating a conception about themselves and about the world. Adults do this as well, but some will argue that the rate and degree of change in their conceptualizing throughout childhood renders the state of at least younger school-aged childhood (roughly ages 5-12) discernably unique from the state of adulthood. The notion of formulating identity and normative understandings about the world holds deep significance when thinking about how to justly raise children. For example, if a child is incapable of making safe decisions about outdoor play, then it might be justified to restrict their access to playing outside, for instance by limiting them to a fenced-in yard that has limited opportunities for dangerous or risky play. I might furthermore be justified in requiring that they adopt strict rules about safety outdoors as part of their identity before they are permitted to play beyond the fenced-in yard. There are important legal and moral debates about what it means to be in the state of childhood and which entitlements or rights are owed to

children, and those debates matter, because the collective and individual rights of children are the foundation upon which decisions about trade-offs produce a lawful and just public education system. However, as I will argue in the second paper of this dissertation, there are good reasons to think that children are more capable of making decisions about their own well-being than we have historically given them credit for. And if children are more capable of autonomous decision making than we previously thought, then perhaps giving them greater decision making powers in schools will be important for their well-being.

Of course, children from ages 0 to 18 cannot all be viewed or treated the same way. Infants display quite distinct behaviours from a toddler who display quite different behaviours from a teenager. Children also develop at their own unique pace cognitively, physically, linguistically, emotionally, socially, and in other domains of development. There are also various versions of childhood depending on a “child’s specific cross-sectional belonging” (Falkenberg & Krepski, 2020, p. 908). I understand childhood to mean the phase of life between ages 0 and 18, however, throughout this dissertation there are particular phases that I am concerned with which are grouped by age (rather than competency or other means) for the sake of convenience. In the first paper, I focus on programming for all school aged children, which means children roughly between the ages of 5 and eighteen. In the second paper which focuses on children’s autonomy, I have in mind younger children ages 5 to twelve since younger children are often presumed less capable of autonomy (Schapiro, 1999) but it applies to all school aged children (roughly 5-18). The third paper explores how teachers characterize the goods for well-being that are conferred in their high school classrooms. Therefore, the age range of primary concern in the third paper is fourteen to eighteen. As Tomlin (2019) points out, the age and competencies of

children may matter when it comes to their well-being because children may need different things at different stages of their childhood to experience well-being. I argue in the second paper that children need to experience autonomy in schools to experience well-being. In the third paper, empirical findings based on teacher accounts of what they believe contributes to students' well-being are that students experience well-being if they build the capacity for healthy personal relationships among other things.

The term well-being is a contested construct and oftentimes used interchangeably with other terms. The term “flourish” in Merriam-Webster means to “grow luxuriantly” or “thrive” (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d.). The concept of flourishing comes from a eudemonic tradition, which emphasizes striving toward excellence or a good life as an individual and a citizen (Keyes & Simoes, 2012). Some people use the terms well-being, flourishing, and happiness interchangeably. For some, *happiness* may mean the same thing as well-being, while others argue that happiness is a purely descriptive psychological term (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2020). Bradburn (1969) proposed that happiness is composed of two separable components—positive affect and negative affect where happiness is a global judgment people make by comparing their negative affect with their positive affect. Throughout this work, I use the term well-being to avoid this conceptualization of well-being as a descriptive psychological term related to only positive and negative affect. In this work, I focus on the three well-being theories presented in philosophical literature according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Crisp, 2016). Crisp (2016) offers a summary of the three distinct philosophical views for well-being which are: hedonism, desire theories, objective list theories. Hedonism is a theory that posits well-being is located in the greatest balance of pleasure over pain (Crisp, 2016). Next,

desire theories put forth that well-being consists in the satisfaction of preferences or desires, the content of which could be revealed by the choices of their possessors (Crisp, 2016). Finally, objective list theories involve a series of items or domains that together constitute a person's well-being (Crisp, 2016). Objective list items can include but do not consist solely in pleasurable experience nor in desire-satisfaction. An objective list approach to defining well-being can take the form of a list of domains with contextually appropriate satisfiers as we see in the increasingly popular social indicators research movement. Other examples include Max-Neef's Human Scale Development Index (Max-Neef, 1991) and Nussbaum's Agentive Capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2011). I take for granted here that at least the latter two theoretical approaches will sufficiently overlap when it comes to the central objectives of this dissertation project (for an account of special considerations when applying each of the three different well-being theories to children's well-being, see Skelton, 2014). Skelton (2014) levels important concerns against both the satisfaction view (too solipsistic and interior to be adequate views of children's welfare) and the objective-list view (which leaves too little room for the individual child affective responses). I leave these interesting and important debates mostly aside because I'm going to focus on why and how education policymakers and practitioners have their own views on children's well-being (papers #1 and #3) and why it is important to prioritize children's views about their own well-being (paper #2). However, I try to acknowledge where appropriate the ways in which the three theories might play a role.

Much of the research that is grounded in empirical science (e.g., health and medical research) emphasizes a conception of well-being as proper biological functioning, exhibited in the absence of disease or impairments of normal capacities. Indeed, many of the current

indicators developed for adolescent well-being measure only for the presence or absence of ill-being, e.g., drug use and crime (Lippman, et al., 2014). According to Ben-Arieh (2008), the original intent of child well-being indicators was to monitor child survival. Consequently, national social indicator systems have focused on threats to survival and well-being, bringing attention to problems that needed to be addressed (Moore et al., 2004). The social sciences, on the other hand, generally focus on objective economic factors (e.g., levels of poverty), educational factors (e.g., test scores) and social factors (e.g., family structure and divorce rates) in the analysis of well-being (Bagattini & Macleod, 2015, ix).

Throughout this dissertation, well-being is understood more broadly than it is in child indicators research. Though I will not look to present a comprehensive definition of children's well-being, my hope is that this work convinces the reader there is important work to be done clarifying what we mean by well-being in schools. To this aim, I explore debates about how children's well-being can be understood differently than adult well-being as well as debates about trade-offs between goods for well-being that are prioritized and distributed in schools.

Personal Positioning

After teaching high school for five years in the Toronto District School Board, I started work as a graduate student in Winnipeg beginning in 2014. Soon after I started the M.Ed. program, I began working as a research assistant for Dr. Falkenberg, who involved me in his research in well-being studies. Since then, I have spent time researching, speaking about, and participating in initiatives across Manitoba on topics related to student well-being and well-becoming. I was recently hired as a faculty member in the Faculty of Education in the

Developmental Studies Department at the university of Winnipeg, where I continue to do research in the area of child well-being. I have learned through this graduate journey that I am inspired to investigate aspects of children's well-being that relate to my personal upbringing, experiences, and values. It is my understanding that I am the first person on either my mother or father's side to attend university. The educational opportunities that I have experienced are interconnected, in my view, to the goods for well-being that I have been able to access, as well as the capacities for well-being that I have developed (and continue to develop) – all byproducts of opportunities I have been afforded (along with luck). In particular, I have been given opportunities to develop democratic competence, healthy personal relationships, and economic participation. It is these goods and capacities for well-being as they relate to social class, autonomy, and well-being trade-offs that are of particular interest to me and make up the areas for inquiry undertaken for this dissertation.

Significance and Focus of this Dissertation

Why is well-being in schools important to study? On the one hand, many will find a compelling answer to this question in the research that suggests that students who are well do well in school. Indeed, some researchers in positive psychology argue that well-being correlates with a student's academic performance. According to Sanchez and Vasquez (2014) there is a growing body of evidence that well-being positively correlates with more focused learning and improved outcomes. Seligman and several of his colleagues show that positive education classroom interventions have led to increased engagement in learning, enjoyment of school and slightly higher achievement (Seligman et al., 2009). I ground this dissertation research however,

in the belief that well-being is a good in itself, to be sought for its intrinsic value and not its instrumental value. This position aligns with those taken by philosophers who refer to well-being as that which is prudentially valuable (Crisp, 2016).

Implicit in this view is a broad understanding of the purpose and value of schooling. Aristotle and Plato both believe that the good life require targeted educational efforts and both explicitly refer to education as contributing to human flourishing (Meyer, 2014). John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty* conveys the strong tradition of connecting the notions of individuality, development, happiness, and education (Crisp, 2002). In this way, education is an end in itself. I share this understanding of education being integral to human flourishing and posit that there is a strong relation between education and individual development. Though it has undergone many semantic iterations, the German word *bildung* perhaps best captures this idea of education as self-cultivation. Self-cultivation in this sense refers to a process of a person acquiring a combination of theoretical wisdom (arête) and practical wisdom (phronesis) (Vogt & Neuhaus, 2021). Importantly, *bildung* denotes a complex and interpersonal process of coming to understand oneself and our place in the world. This concept is a departure from the competencies-based or learner-centric language that emphasizes functional knowledge and gaining transferable skills (Vogt & Neuhaus, 2021) or individualistic learning devoid of relationships (Biesta, 2010).

With this broad understanding of *education*, education and training starts at the very beginning of our lives and continues until death. Formal schooling on the other hand, is an institutionalized form of education and cannot possibly teach everything that would be encompassed in Plato, Aristotle, or Mill's notions of education. Nevertheless, schooling has a

significant role in children's lives. Schooling – unlike other institutions such as the family, church or extracurricular activities – is responsible for a unique combination and forms of socialization, credentialization, and self-formation processes for children over a prolonged period of time (Davies & Guppy, 2014). Across Canada, schooling is compulsory for children ages five or so, to roughly 16/18 years of age depending on the province. The three papers in this dissertation are concerned with public schooling and do not account for the contexts of home schooling and private schooling. The reason for this decision is both political and logistical. On the one hand, the inclusion of private schooling contexts in my work could serve to legitimize or promote the choice of opting out of public schools, which is a position I do not wish to endorse. Though there are some exceptions, I believe that private schools on average contribute to unjust social reproduction and inequitable access to educational goods. For different reasons, I do not address the cohort of students who are homeschooled or access alternative schooling (e.g., schooling in a hospital, on a movie set, etc.) because these contexts vary widely and each require specific treatment depending on the context. I write here about the conditions that are specific to public schooling in the province of Manitoba, with applications across the Canadian context.

During the time that children spend in public schools, they are expected to acquire educational goods that will help them to engage in civic, economic, and social life as a future adult. For example, schools educate for numeracy and literacy skills that will enable children to practically participate in various aspects of society. Further discussion on this topic is clearly needed to explain and defend a position on the purpose of schooling with specificity. However, for the scope of this dissertation, I submit that the purpose and value of schooling is the broad and well-rounded idea of self-cultivation, which includes but is not limited to the practical matter

of preparation for the labour market. Key to the view is that the purpose of schools is to facilitate opportunities for personal development and student well-being. It is this reimagined purpose that I have thread into the three papers presented here.

The first paper in this dissertation explores three foundational questions for education policymakers and practitioners interested in the well-being movement. I organize these questions into three sections, each of which address a foundational question for policymakers and practitioners concerned with student well-being. The first section addresses the question of how the educational aims for well-being fit alongside other historical aims for school education. In other words, I pose the question of how well-being in schools may be prioritized relative to the other traditional goals for school education, and how might different aims for education be incompatible? Second, I ask the question of what the “educational goods” are that are linked to student well-being in schools. For instance, should the capacity for building and engaging in healthy personal relationships be such an educational good for well-being? Third, I ask what distributive model(s) we are selecting to distribute educational goods in schools. In an unequal society with vastly unequal outcomes, this section outlines various distributive principles school policymakers and practitioners (consciously or not) must choose between when it comes to opportunities for well-being. This paper considers the moral and political values involved when selecting educational aims and educational goods for student’s well-being at both the policy and teacher-practitioner levels.

The second paper argues for how schools ought to support student autonomy, which is a key component of student well-being. Philosophical perspectives on children’s autonomy are important for understanding how policymakers and school practitioners make decisions and

potential effects of those decisions on student well-being. These perspectives and values shape public schooling, attitudes toward it, and current educational practices. Considerable debate about notions of autonomy and paternalism have focussed mostly on adults and far less on children. In particular, the topic of paternalism in schools is an area often left unexplored by school leaders. Yet, K-12 school practitioners regularly engage in forms of paternalism through acts of direction and coercion often with the goal of transformation. Paternalistic transformation is widely accepted because of an unspoken promise that schools will equip students with the capacities to exercise their liberty later in life. However, I argue that this promise rests upon the flawed assumption that children do not yet possess the capacity for reason or responsible action. In this paper, I argue that paternalistic acts in schools rest upon misguided views of what it means to be a child and outdated aims for K-12 school education. I canvass education mandates across the Canadian landscape to highlight key shifts in policy toward student inclusion, access, equity, and well-being. Next, I offer a rationale for broadening the moral and political status of children that will improve their opportunities for well-being. Toward this end, I offer a reimagining of paternalism in schools. Last, I develop a recommendations for K-12 school policy and practitioners based on a soft form of paternalism that addresses the critiques of transformation and promotes a well-being mandate.

The third paper, an empirical study, focuses on teacher perspectives, practices, and experiences in schools as they relate to student well-being. This qualitative research explores and identifies how teachers characterize educational goods for well-being in four different school program settings. Data collected from semi-structured interviews with nine high school

teachers across school programs in Winnipeg helps to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are teachers' understandings of student educational goods for well-being?
2. How are educational goods for well-being differently conferred and prioritized based on student community and school program?

This study explores teachers' understandings of student educational goods for well-being using a theoretical framework by Brighthouse, Ladd, Loeb, and Swift (2018) and looks at how those goods may be differently conferred and prioritized according to different student groups or school programs. Findings from the study demonstrate that healthy personal relationships are an important educational good and capacity for well-being, in addition to other goods such as personal fulfilment, personal autonomy, and democratic competence (in that order). Other key educational goods and capacities for well-being that participants from this study identified were welfare needs and mental health challenges.

All three papers consider how the time that children spend in schools can impact their well-being qua child and qua future adult. Each paper begins with the overall understanding that children's well-being in schools is an important and relevant area for further research. Moreover, I posit that work in this research field requires both conceptual and empirical approaches to answering questions about children's well-being in schools. Interdisciplinary work, such as this dissertation which draws upon sociology, philosophy, positive psychology, history, and the children's rights movement can offer fresh perspectives in the field of education. There is, however, a more specific thesis that guides this body of work. Each of the three papers is connected by a central theme that explores perceptions of, and decision-making about, children's well-being in schools. I take up the cause of writing explicitly about children's well-

being in schools because I believe that important decisions about children are made in schools and these decisions have significant impacts on the overall well-being of those children, (i.e., their well-being both while they are children and as future adults). If education policymakers and practitioners do not keep in mind an explicit focus on children's well-being, my fear (and my classroom experiences) are that decisions in schools will actually undermine children's well-being. Each of the three papers therefore, explores the values and principles that underpin the decision-making processes in schools as well as answer important questions about trade-offs and concessions that are made in schools. Each of these papers takes seriously questions about feasibility and trade-offs in schools. Child well-being is not a new focus for K-12 education, but the well-being narrative in both research and policy has a tendency to angle toward the aspirational without an acknowledgement of the concessions that do, can, and must take place. I take up this line of reasoning from a conceptual standpoint in the first paper of this dissertation, followed-up with an empirical perspective in the third paper. This dissertation research makes explicit the different perspectives and priorities of children's well-being in schools and consequently the different ways in which practitioners do and should prioritize certain aspects of well-being over others.

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Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners Concerned with Student Well-Being

Student well-being has become a focus for school education policy and practice across Canada and in many parts of the world (OECD, 2011). In the Canadian context, student well-being is a clearly identified area of interest by policymakers and educators in the public K-12 school system. Yet, there is still much work to be done to clarify notions of *well-being* at the level of policymaking and in classrooms. In other words, there is a need for more clarity on the theoretical foundations that underpin notions of student well-being as well as how these conceptions translate into school planning and programming across socio-political and geographic contexts. Both the conceptualization and implementation processes to address student well-being in schools are value-laden processes that involve human choices about what to prioritize for students in schools and the trade-offs associated with each of these choices. This paper contributes to the field by laying out many of the theoretical and practical challenges of promoting well-being in schools in a way that has not yet been presented.

In light of the decision-making processes embedded within school policy and practice, this paper draws attention to and engages with three foundational questions that become important for policymakers and practitioners if educating for well-being in K-12 schools is made a priority. I organize these questions into three sections, each of which address a foundational question for policymakers and practitioners concerned with student well-being. The first section addresses the question of how the educational aims for well-being fit alongside other historical aims for school education. In other words, I ask the question, how can policies and programming for well-being in schools occur relative to the other traditional goals for school education, and how might

these goals be incompatible? Second, I ask the question of what the “educational goods” are that are linked to student well-being in schools? For instance, should the capacity for building and engaging in healthy personal relationships be such an educational good for well-being? Third, I ask what policymakers and practitioners to consider the distributive model(s) they are selecting for these goods for well-being in schools. In an unequal society with vastly unequal opportunities and outcomes (i.e., unequal incomes, working conditions, living conditions, etc.), this section outlines various distributive principles school policymakers and practitioners (consciously or not) choose between when it comes to opportunities for well-being in their local context. In education research, these three broad foci have been engaged to different degrees and there has been a variety of commitment to these kinds of theoretical questions. This paper is structured in a way that clarifies the moral and political values involved when selecting educational aims and educational goods for student’s well-being. The goal is for this structure to offer greater clarity, and emphasize the importance of the design process at both the policy and teacher-practitioner levels for an education system that supports well-being qua child and qua future adult.

Purposes and Aims for Public Schooling

Preceding a discussion about the goods for well-being and their distribution in schools, it is important to contextualize the well-being movement in schools. Within the discourse of aims for education it is unclear whether or how educating for well-being fits alongside other schooling agendas. The first foundational question therefore, is: *How do educational aims for well-being fit alongside or within traditional aims for school education?*

Endorsing well-being as an educational aim raises several important philosophical questions about the purposes of formal public schooling. These include the questions of whether the pursuit of student well-being in and of itself is an acceptable goal for schooling and if it is, how it compares and competes with other socially valued goals, such as academic achievement, equity, citizenship, economic prosperity and social cohesion (Chapman, 2014). Not surprisingly, in a pluralist, or what Mignolo and Walsh (2018, p. 3) call pluriversal democratic society, there is considerable disagreement on what the aims for public schooling ought to be. There are numerous, often competing, aims for education across time, contexts, and between stakeholders. This plurality can be viewed as a strength in a democracy, acting as a buffer against more radical changes in school education. However, competing aims can also hinder or slow the development or progress in any one area. Numerous co-existing aims for public schooling also mean there is less time available to spent on any one aim. This wide assortment of educational aims has corresponding programming, pedagogical, and curricular implications. Therefore, when we speak about well-being as an aim for public schooling, we must give consideration to the landscape of educational aims within which it fits, or does not fit alongside, as well as how different aims impact programming in schools differently.

Labaree (2010) and Ravitch (2008) offer separate but complimentary historical accounts of ideological views and disputes over how school education should be directed and organized over the past two centuries.¹ Schools, they argue, are a product of a complex history of reform with several competing aims and objectives. During the first part of the 19th century, school reform

¹ The discussion in this section draws on sources that focus on the Global North with particular emphasis on the United States, a country that has considerable impact on Canadian schooling perspectives.

was at first motivated by the attempts to create a solidified republic, social order and social cohesion. For example, Noah Webster (as quoted in Ravitch, 2008) argued that schooling ought to promote a strong national identity by promoting a common language among children, “form the child, Webster urged, and you will ultimately form the nation, its government, and the character of its civil society” (Ravitch, 2008, p. 44). Webster’s endeavour to promote the aim of social cohesion seems to have struck a chord, considering he sold tens of millions of copies of his blue-backed speller (Ravitch, 2008). At roughly the same time, Thomas Jefferson advanced the ideal of educating children to protect the state and its citizens, including future citizens, from potential intrusions or threats. Jefferson wanted children to study history and to be informed enough to protect themselves against attacks on their freedoms and democracy (Ravitch, 2008, p. 45). At the end of the 19th century however, many school reformers wanted to respond more robustly to the demands of the changes from an industrialized labour market; a view that held the highest goal for a democratic school system was social efficiency and economic development. The thinking at that time – and arguably still today – was that since most children would grow up to occupy specific social roles (e.g., become farmers, laborers, industrial workers, and housewives) schools should focus on training them for these roles (Ravitch, 2008). At this time and by the early 20th century, schools also began to provide cultural capital, or positional goods, to middle class families (Labaree, 2010), and “the line between public and private schools grew sharper” (Ravitch, 2008, p. 47) where private schools conferred greater access to cultural capitals. Bourdieu argues that the acquisition of cultural capital (primarily through the education system, but also from families and community) could confer certain kinds of distinctions upon an individual and therefore material advantage (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

According to Bourdieu, the education system acts as a sorting mechanism by which groups of students are divided through a valuing process of cultural capital (Murphy & Allan, 2013). Levels of streaming beginning in middle schools were introduced in the early twentieth century, whereby streams were determined based on predictions about a child's future prospects for higher education (Ravitch, 2008).

School reformers insisted that the academic curriculum was not appropriate for all children, because most children – especially the children of immigrants and of African Americans – lacked the intellectual capacity or the need to study subjects like algebra and chemistry. Some of the efficiency experts, like John Franklin Bobbitt, argued that girls should not study such subjects because, as future housewives, they had no need or use for them. (Ravitch, 2008, p. 48)

This stratification in schools represented a departure from the original idea that all children should receive the same education that was designed to prepare them for citizenship, build a strong national identity and protect their personal freedoms.

The first half of the twentieth century showcased competing demands from reformers to focus on the quality of pedagogical approaches in classrooms and be more child centred while also expanding accountability and access to schooling based on demand from the public (Labaree, 2010). Dewey led the charge against the vocational preparatory model of social efficiency, claiming that such an approach was “self-defeating because of rapid advancements in technology and labour markets” (Ravitch, 2008, p. 49). Yet the work of creating curriculum streams and assigning students to them was already deeply entrenched. Facilitated by the invention of the group IQ test during World War I, educational psychologists were offering their services to the military to determine quickly which recruits were officer material and which were not, and when the war was over, the psychologists developed group IQ tests for schools (Ravitch,

2008, p. 52). By the early 1920s, intelligence testing was a regular feature in public education, serving the purposes and aims of social efficiency and preparation for the labour market.

More recently, public schools in the U.S. and Canada have largely continued along the path of stratification, streaming, and preparation for the labour market². Correspondingly, we can still see Webster's aims for social cohesion and socialization active in schools today. The introduction of the standards movement in the 1980's, which includes the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the No Child Left Behind policies in the USA, and the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) in Canada, all point to a commitment to evaluate the aims of the education through standardization. Divisional leaders in Manitoba for instance, have spoken about how they view the PCAP as an important "temperature check" into how they are doing (Krepski, 2016, p. 76).

Labaree (2010) and Ravitch (2008) both point out that historically two irreconcilable aims for education have operated simultaneously: social goals versus the individual hopes of parents. Many school reformers have fought for social cohesion, social efficiency and the training of productive and contributing citizens. Illustrated by the examples of Webster and Jefferson, these social aims can be complimentary but are distinct and sometimes in tension with one another. On the other hand, parents and guardians who send children to school want to accrue personal gains, educational advantages, and maintain their station and privilege in the social hierarchy (Labaree, 2010). Labaree argues that schools are a bad way to fix social problems but a good way to express, if not realize, personal dreams (p. 6). The problem is that these dreams are deeply

² There are of course exceptions to this rule, such as the initiative to destream grade 9 Mathematics and English courses started in 2015 in the Toronto District School Board.

conflicted and thus the school system is conflicted as well. Though parents may wish to include an agenda for well-being in schools, they also want schools to serve the ambitions they have for their children, while also protecting them from the ambitions of parents of other children. It may be argued that current schooling practices and policies try to have it both ways – our society is simply expanding access to higher education and expands the system upward while never really changing the educational position in the “race” (Labaree, 2008, p. 7). The school system can only let my child get ahead of yours and yours stay ahead of mine by constantly expanding the system upward, which allows for an increase in educational access to be followed by an increase in educational advantage. For instance, universities increasingly graduate more students from their undergraduate and graduate programs across Canada (Davies and Guppy, 2014) each year, which expands access to university degrees but this expansion does very little to address the individual placement within the education system (Wiseman, 2010).

It is important to note here that the tension between parental and societal influence over the education system neglects to consider the role and voice of children. As I will argue in the next paper of this dissertation, children should have greater autonomy over their own learning goals in school. Despite the ratification of the UNCRC in Canada in 1991 (UNICEF, n.d.) it is unclear how ministries of education, school boards, and schools recognize children’s capacities to decide what is in their best interest in schools. Education research however is beginning to acknowledge the role that children ought to have when determining what is good for their own well-being. Studies such as the ones by Loureiro, Grecu, de Moll and Hadjar (2020) and Powell, Graham, Fitzgerald, Thomas, and White (2018) as well as a recent study published by Falkenberg,

Ukosoanya, and Krepski (2021) in the Winnipeg context, are beginning to amplify children's voices and values when it comes to their well-being in school.

The longstanding history of parental and societal aims for education, which includes the sifting and sorting of students into social positions, raises important considerations when juxtaposed the aims of educating for student well-being. While in some cases student well-being may be compatible with some of these historical aims, there are clearly other cases when it is not. For instance, educating for social efficiency may actually expel (quite literally) any student who does not fall into a pre-identified range of social norms and utility, undoubtedly having negative impacts on their well-being. Further, the predictive streaming model is likely to perpetuate social reproduction which gives unequal access to positional goods for large groups of minoritized and made marginalized students. Teaching for national cohesion and identity may leave many, if not the majority, of Canadian students feeling alienated and objects of colonial, racial, and ethnic oppression. Even in the case where these groups of students do not feel that way, they may be treated that way. In less extreme cases, other aims for public schooling might overlap with the aim for student well-being, for example educating for economic participation. As I will introduce in the next section, preparation for the labour market can be conceived of as a good that contributes positively to students' flourishing. Indeed, students themselves cite economic reasons as one of their goals and reasons for attending school (Türken et al., 2016). Coupled with this aim however may be accompanying costs, such as student anxiety and a misleading connection made by students between economic success or stature, and overall well-being (Brighouse et al., 2018).

This broad historical context and description of public versus private parental aims illustrate the vast landscape that a well-being-in-schools agenda wants and needs to be part of. Conceptions of well-being underpinning the goals for schooling invite questions about whether well-being in and of itself represents a robust goal for schooling or whether well-being is a means by which we achieve other ends, such as academic outcomes or economic ends (Chapman, 2014). Advocates for well-being in schools face the question of whether student well-being is instrumental toward the aim of public or private aims for education, or whether the public and private aims for education operate in service to the flourishing of individuals and societies. In the former case, the aim of student well-being is in service to either parental hopes and aspirations for their children or the broader social aims of cohesion, efficiency, or improvement (and the list goes on). The latter case, by contrast, dictates that parental goals and social aims are really in service to the end of student well-being. In other words, well-being as an aim for school education is an end in itself. Both school policy and programming decisions are made based on which of these cases the decision makers agree with and also how much overlap there is between well-being initiatives, traditional preparatory aims, parental aims and others. Although not always, as I show in the next section, these aims can intersect.

Educational Goods for Well-Being

Once consideration is given to the question of how educational aims for well-being fit alongside traditional aims for school education, a second foundational question for the well-being-in-schools movement is: *What do we define as the educational goods for well-being in schools?* In the same way the discussion on educational aims shines a light on the normative

dimensions of school education, this section draws attention to the various educational goods that can be considered, but are not necessarily agreed upon, to be important for a well-being agenda in schools. The process of identifying educational goods for well-being embodies value-based decisions that beget different actions and outcomes in schools.

It is difficult to precisely define educational goods but as a starting point, the phrase *educational good* may be thought of as signifying that which is valued for helping individuals to flourish and to contribute to the flourishing of others, either in the present or future (Brighouse et al., 2018). The adjective in the term *educational good* refers to the fact that these goods emerge from an educational process (Brighouse et al., 2018). They are positives in that “they contribute to valuable outcomes for the individuals possessing them or for others in either the present or future” (p. 20). For example, cognitive skills and social emotional capacities are educational goods, because they generate value in the present and future (p. 21). Educational goods may not be exclusively accessed in schools, however, policymakers and practitioners in schools must consider which goods for well-being they wish to promote in schools. Educational goods do not constitute flourishing itself, rather, they can only provide opportunities for flourishing rather than flourishing itself (p. 21). Another way to think about educational goods is by stating what they are not (Brighouse et al, 2018, p. 19-22:

- educational goods \neq flourishing (it is opportunities to flourish; luck plays a role as well);
- educational goods \neq consumer goods (consumer goods are ultimately consumed, rather than used in the production of another good); and
- educational goods \neq tangible goods (not objects to be traded, nor are they entirely reliant on availability of resources aside from a certain conditions that I take for granted exist in Canadian public schools such as a safe school environment or caring teachers).

Educational goods then, are not material or concrete goods and therefore are not a zero-sum commodity. This is an important dissimilarity between educating for well-being and other personal goals or personal aims for education such as academic achievement or social mobility. In principle, every student should be able to access educational goods for well-being since they are not, for the most part, contingent on any material goods. While it is true that not every student can access certain material goods in life, nor can every student receive top honours or entrance into an Ivy League post-secondary institution (since this is assigned based on norm-referencing rather than criterion-referencing), it should be the case that all students can access educational goods for well-being even within a society with unequal outcomes. Barring chronic hunger, danger, and isolation, well-being is not contingent upon standards of material comparison, nor is it relative (Veenhoven, 1990). Educational goods and well-being as an outcome then, should be considered in schools as accessible to all students.

More specifically, educational goods are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions needed to enable people to flourish and to contribute to the flourishing of others (Brighouse et al., 2016; 2018). For the purposes of this paper, educational goods are goods for well-being that are conferred in the context of public schools, but that can impact students both while they are in school as well as outside of school. Consistent with Sen (Sen, 2001) and Nussbaum's capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2011), the fundamental dimension of value is not flourishing itself but opportunities for flourishing (Brighouse et al., 2016, p. 23). The emphasis on opportunity is central, "because the most educational goods can do is equip people with what they need for their lives to go well" (Brighouse et al., 2016, p. 6). This approach takes "each person as an end, asking not just about the total or average well-being but about the

opportunities available to each person” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 18). Though a capabilities approach is pluralist about value – i.e. the quality and quantities of each desired capability will vary – there are central capabilities, or educational goods for flourishing, that seem to be important on each of these accounts. Nussbaum holds that there are central capabilities (2011) while Sen (2009) gestures toward health and education as important capabilities. While the language of capabilities is useful, it runs the risk of invoking semantic debates about how this term is to be understood. Instead, I use the term educational goods which limits the concern to internal capabilities, which “are trained or developed traits and abilities, developed, in most cases, in interaction with the social, economic, familial, and political environment” (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 21). Of special interest here of course, is the development of traits in the context of public schooling.

Table 1 below lists and describes the six educational goods identified by Brighouse et al. (2018, pp. 23-25). Educational goods contribute to children’s opportunities for flourishing both while they are a child (qua child) and if all goes well, into their future (qua future adult). For each educational good, I have stated whether that good applies to the capacity for flourishing of children qua child, qua future adult, or both.

Table 1

Educational Goods with Description and Examples (adapted from Brighouse et al., 2018)

Capacity for... (present and future)	Description	Examples
Economic Productivity (human capital) <i>Mostly qua future adults</i>	- Ability to participate effectively in the economy. - Disposition to work. (p. 23)	- Cognitive skills - Literacy skills - Numeracy skills

<p>Personal Autonomy</p> <p><i>Qua child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to make and act on well-informed and well-thought-out judgements. - Engaging in activities and relationships that reflect one's sense of who they are and what matters to them. - Ability to see oneself as an individual. - Having sufficient knowledge of the relevant variables, and sufficient self-knowledge and fortitude, to make their own choices. (p. 23-24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical thinking skills - Choosing one's own beliefs and values based on knowledge of views, perspectives, and value systems. - Choosing one's own leisure pursuits, courses in school, or occupation in the face of parental pressure.
<p>Democratic Competence</p> <p><i>Mostly qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to be effective and morally aware participants in social life and political processes. - Knowledge and skills are various and depend on context. - An understanding of the history and structures of a society's political institutions. - Ability to assess evidence to bear on claims and arguments made by others. - Being able to engage. (p. 24-25) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problem solving skills - Global <p>Depends on the context; may include meaningful participation, following the law, breaking the law, or various ways of engaging in the political process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging in advocacy and/or community-based activities such as school fundraisers.
<p>Healthy Personal Relationships</p> <p><i>Qua child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A variety of relationships - Lasting, intimate, positive relationships with others (pp. 25-26) - Require certain attributes such as emotional openness, kindness, a willingness to take risks with one's feelings, trust. - Families may or may not provide the kind of environment for these qualities to develop, but schools can also facilitate opportunities for these qualities to develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deriving meaning from close personal relationships with children, parents, close friends, and even looser ties with personal acquaintances in the neighbourhood or work.
<p>Treating Others as Equals</p> <p><i>Qua child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equal respect for the basic dignity of persons underlies the idea that everybody has the same basic human rights regardless of their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding how racism, even without legal discrimination, continues to disadvantage people who are black and Indigenous, who

	<p>sex, race, religion, or nationality, etc..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All people have fundamentally equal moral status. - Does not rule out that we care about strangers as much as we do about our family members or ourselves. Nor does it rule out judgements that people are unequal with respect to attributes such as strength, intelligence, or virtue. - Grounds norms against discrimination in hiring, promotion, and government provision. - Developing and exercising the capacity to treat other people as moral equals is important also for one to strike the right balance between pursuing one's own flourishing and discharging one's obligation to contribute to the flourishing of others. 	<p>continue to be disadvantaged due not only to continuing material effects of legal discrimination but also to their treatment by others who often unconsciously, assume superiority.</p> <p>– as with gender, sexuality, or physical or mental abilities</p> <p>The impact is worse if the slighted themselves have adopted the attitude that they are inferior, or, while not sharing it, are nonetheless disposed to accept the slights as their due.</p>
<p>Personal Fulfillment</p> <p><i>Qua child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex and satisfying labour and projects that engage one's physical, aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual faculties. - Opportunities to exercise and develop ones talents and meet challenges. -The capacity to find joy and fulfillment from experiences and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding great satisfaction in music, literature, the arts, games and sports, mathematics and science, and religious practice. - Are exposed to – and can develop enthusiasms for and competence in – activities that they would never have encountered through familial or communal networks.

Lindblom (2018) critiques this framework on account of its educational goods rendering too narrow an interpretation of values, arguing for a more inclusive account of educational goods and a different individuation of them. What Lindblom's modifiers point to is the central predicament that any list of educational goods poses: the challenge of what goes on the list and

how different goods are weighted or valued. Considering such weighting, however, raises an important distinction between professional roles and professional tiers within the education system. At the classroom level, educational goods for well-being may be administered in ways that only sometimes reflect the espoused aims for schooling. The way that educational goods are identified and defined at the policy or administrative levels may depart from or even conflict with the ways in which classroom teachers understand and teach for well-being. Both tiers are concerned with providing opportunities for students to progress toward some identified aims. While the intended purpose of the framework for educational goods in Table 1 is to assist policymakers with their decisions about how to promote flourishing in schools, an argument can be made that this framework works equally well for teachers and decision-making at the classroom level.

A list such as the one in Table 1 above does not offer a final answer on the question of which educational goods ought to be promoted in schools. The purpose of listing the above six educational goods is to demonstrate how there will be side effects, trade-offs, and unintended consequences involved in prioritizing one set of goods for flourishing over others. As mentioned above, lists of educational goods will be controversial and invite disagreement over what goes on the list and how each educational good ought to be weighted. However, these list approaches are well-suited to the goal of promoting well-being in the field of education. At the ministerial and divisional levels, these lists can help to organize resource allocation, metrics of reporting and data-informed decision making. Items related to school buildings, staffing, programs, and initiatives can be categorized into well-being domains which can then be followed up through accountability measures and quantitative data sets. At the classroom level, a list of educational

goods for well-being can help to organize lesson planning, classroom priorities, and teaching pedagogies. Therefore, while I do not necessarily advocate for the list in Table 1 in particular (though it seems like a sturdy place to start), it is a clear representation of how education policymakers and practitioners might organize their decision making to correspond with educational goods for promoting well-being in schools.

In speaking with numerous preservice and practicing teachers on this subject (see the third paper in this dissertation, entitled *Social Class and Access to Well-being Goods in K-12 Schools*), it is clear to me that each educator has a different understanding of which educational goods for well-being can or should be prioritized in schools. These differences are in part a reflection of the stratified needs of students from different backgrounds, cultures, socio-economic labels, and more. Education practitioners do their best to respond to the complex well-being needs that students, parents, and communities have identified. In my experience, the educational goods for student well-being that teachers support range from providing for basic security and welfare needs through school initiatives such as breakfast, lunch or winter coat programs, anti-bullying programs, and mental health and social-emotional supports, to facilitating leadership opportunities, learning enrichment opportunities, and global citizenship opportunities. The challenge for the classroom teacher is which priority or emphasis to give to which educational good in the face of finite resources (including time) available. Take as an example the fictitious classroom teacher Ms. Lee, who values preparing her students for the grade 12 provincial exams. Of course, Ms. Lee wants her students to do well so that they can both feel good about their accomplishment and increase their grades toward acceptance into a post-secondary program for later labour market success. Ms. Lee, however, may also view her students' achievements on the

provincial exams as an accountability measure for her own job performance. But this value may compete with her values to teach for personal fulfillment, autonomy, and treating her students equitably. Perhaps, for instance, spending time preparing for the provincial examination might further exacerbate inequalities among students, since there might be a number of students in the class for whom that preparation is unhelpful because they need more fundamental gaps in their knowledge addressed first. Time spent preparing for the examination might only serve to help the students who are already positioned to do well, do even better. The time Ms. Lee spends preparing for the test takes away from the time that she can organize lessons that are more autonomy-supportive where students can direct their own learning towards projects that better match their individual interests. The decisions about how to prioritize educational goods in Ms. Lee's and every other classroom have direct impacts on the opportunities for well-being experienced by students.

Brighouse and colleagues (2018) propose that there are independent values to be taken into consideration in addition to the educational goods listed in Table 1, such as special goods of childhood, parental interests, and democratic protections. Acknowledgement of these other educational goods outside of this framework is where, in many cases, we find the intersection between the public, social, and parental aims listed in the preceding section, and the educational goods that create opportunities for individual flourishing discussed in this section. Put side by side, we see how parental aims might conflict with or constrain both social aims and educational goods for well-being, such as personal freedom and autonomy for students. Another example of aims and goods in tension occurs when democratic equality is severely undermined as schools increasingly operate within a broader and global system of social inequality. In fact, schools are

in many ways increasingly and aggressively promoting social inequality (Labaree, 2008) through the sifting and sorting process that rewards cultural capitals students often access from their familial background. These examples not only highlight the need for clarity on the list of educational goods itself, but also beg the question of how to make decisions about the fair and equitable distribution of educational goods for student well-being. I address this concern in the next section.

Distributing Opportunities for Student Well-Being

So far, I have inquired into both the aims for school education and the educational goods for well-being in schools. The third foundational question that decision-makers working for and in schools must ask is: *How should we distribute educational goods for well-being within and across schools?* In other words, how should we distribute opportunities for developing capacities for well-being like those listed in Table 1? As mentioned in each of the preceding sections, we live in a world with extreme and durable inequalities. In certain areas of the globe, there are devastatingly high numbers of children whose basic welfare rights are violated. Some of these abhorrent circumstances include: 570 million children living in extreme poverty, up to 1 billion children currently experiencing sexual, physical, or psychological violence, 119,000 children dying every week from preventable causes such as unsafe drinking water, and 250 million children without access to good quality education (UN General Assembly, 2015). This global disparity injustice leaves many questions to be addressed, one of which is how to mitigate inequality in and across schools.

The focus of this section is on how much the public education system in Canada and within

schools/divisions can feasibly neutralize the effects of inequality for children and the role that methodological approaches to distributive justice have in reproducing or challenging school inequalities. Asking school education to equalize life chances in the absence of other egalitarian social and economic programming is futile since, “equality of educational opportunity implies major changes in society at large”, including changes in the “distribution of political power between races and among social classes” and “cannot be achieved by the efforts of the educational system alone” (Bowles et al., 2005, p. 12). Yet, schools are a critical site for students to access educational goods. Opportunities distributed within and across schools have impacts on society and for individual students. Schools should procure the same access to educational goods irrespective of students’ race, sex, ethnicity or social class (Macleod, 2018).

Several decades ago, Jean Anyon demonstrated in her research the role that socially stratified schools have in reproducing inequality, revealing the hidden curriculum of work attached to the way that teachers approach curricular learning in their classrooms. For example, school teachers in what is labelled lower class schools (i.e., schools where most of the parents occupied blue collar jobs) tend to focus on rote memorization, while teachers in executive elite schools (i.e., schools where most fathers in study were top executives such as presidents and vice-presidents in multinational corporations or financial firms on Wall street) focus on not just understanding but manipulating the rules and conventions of curriculum (Anyon, 1981). Anyon makes the case that despite similarities in curriculum topics and materials, there are profound differences in pedagogical approaches and curriculum-in-use across different socio-economic school cultures. School knowledge in working-class schools is about mechanical behaviours and rote learning rather than understanding and sustained conception. According to Anyon (1981),

working-class children are not offered what for them would be cultural capital, namely knowledge of and skills for manipulating ideas and symbols, e.g., “historical knowledge and analysis that legitimates their dissent and furthers their own class in society and in social transformation” (Anyon, 1981, p. 34). In the same vein, Lareau (2011) depicts how upper-class parents and families bolster their private aims for education with an approach she calls “concerted cultivation.” By contrast, families with lower social economic status (SES) demonstrate more of a hands-off approach to their children’s education outside of school hours. Through a combination of social forces and hidden curriculums in schools, we do not have to look far to see the resulting inequitable outcomes for students. These inequalities particularly affect racialized and lower-SES students, who are already oppressed, and thus we see inequities in educational outcomes persist over time and across generations. Gillborn (2008) puts it bluntly: “conspiracy is not only a useful metaphor for how the education system operates, but it also accurately describes the nature of the problem and the scale of the task facing anti-racists” (p. 233). Given this urgent educational issue, the well-being in schools agenda cannot avoid the pressing distribution questions that accompany such persistent challenges in schools. It is fundamental to consider the principle of distribution that should be operative for students to access opportunities and outcomes for well-being.

Equality of opportunity has been among the most enduring and broadly embraced political ideals in the twentieth century (Gordon, 2017). Jencks (1988) points out that *no one* argues that educational opportunity should not be equal. However, because there is disagreement about what a good, successful, and fair society looks like, there is disagreement about the meaning and

implementation of educational opportunity. Many arguments have been explored on what equality of opportunity can and should look like in schools (see for instance Meyer, 2014).

Brighthouse et al. (2018) argue that educational decision makers should consider at least three different notions of distribution: 1.) adequacy, 2.) equality, and 3.) helping the least advantaged. These distributive values refer to educational goods as a whole and not to each individual good, and importantly, that “decision makers cannot directly distribute educational goods or prospects for flourishing” (Brighthouse et al., 2018, p. 31), since luck and choice are both at play.

The first principle of adequacy (also sometimes referred to as the principle of *sufficiency*) dictates that all schools should ensure all students have an adequate amount of educational goods to access some threshold of overall flourishing (Anderson, 2007; Brighthouse et al., 2018; Frankfurt, 1987; Raz, 1978; Satz, 2007). The second principle of equality can be considered as supplementary to the adequacy principle. As demonstrated by Lareau (2011), we live in a society with substantial economic and social inequalities whereby some children benefit from private investments of educational goods (what Lareau calls the principle of concerted cultivation) and therefore possess cultural capitals that are recognized and rewarded in schools. Equalizing educational goods would require extremely unequal investments in children (Ben-Shahar, 2016; Brighthouse, 2000; Brighthouse & Swift, 2014), while the result of a more equal distribution of educational goods (i.e., opportunities for flourishing) would not necessarily procure egalitarianism or equality of flourishing. The third principle of distribution is benefitting the least advantaged. Somewhat self-explanatory by its label, this principle requires value-based decisions about what constitutes advantages as well as predictions about opportunities for flourishing in

the future. Predicting future opportunities for success based on current investments is tricky, and it is one thing to,

distribute educational goods (or the resources to produce them) in such a way as to increase the educational goods possessed by the worse off members of society but it is another thing to distribute educational resources in ways that do the most for their overall prospects for flourishing. (Brighouse et al., 2018, p. 35)

In a society that has consented/assented to unequal outcomes, it is likely the changes required to prioritize the least advantaged would result in massive revolts and backlash.

While Brighouse and his colleagues focus their distribution concerns at the policymaking level, Jencks (1988) offers a way to consider questions of inequality of opportunity in schools at the classroom level and how teachers ought to determine resource allocation in schools, particularly when schools inherit broader social problems. At the policy and administrative levels, there are concrete ways distributive concerns can be addressed. Namely, through prioritizations within mission and value statements, curricular changes, initiatives, training, and corresponding resource allocations. Another central concern for Jencks resides in decisions about the distribution of the main educational resources in classrooms, such as teacher time, energy, and attention, since “classroom teachers decide how to allocate their time, energy, and attention within the classroom and to what end” (Brighouse et al., 2018, p. 31). Jencks (1988) delineates five possible options of responding to the distribution question to address inequality in the classroom (see Table 2). These distribution models at the classroom level but with modification, can also apply at the policy and administrative levels.

Table 2

Principles of Distribution of Resources by a Classroom Teacher (based on Jencks, 1988)

Distribution Principle	Description
Democratic equality	Everyone gets equal time and attention, regardless of how well they read, try, have access to resources/security/other needs at home, want, or how much they or others will benefit.
Moralistic justice	Rewards virtue and punishes vice. Virtue involves effort, and this view involves rewarding those who make the most effort to learn. The class is bound by a contract of “I’ll do my best if you’ll do yours”. This system should focus on effort, but oftentimes it is only actual achievement that is assessed (which depends not only on effort but also on ability, prior knowledge, and environmental protective factors).
Weak humane justice	Compensate those students who have gotten less than their proportionate share of advantages by giving them more than their proportionate share of attention. The “weak” variant only requires that teachers compensate those who have been shortchanged at home or in early schooling (and not genetically). All children have an equal claim on <i>educational resources</i> (adding together home and institutional resources).
Strong humane justice	Requires that teachers compensate those who have been shortchanged in any way in the past including genetically. This involves giving the most attention to the struggling students, regardless of their reasons for struggle. This position holds equality of outcomes as its goal.
Utilitarianism	Suggests that every activity is a race for unequal rewards. Races are open to all, run on a level playing field, and judged solely on the basis of performance. The prizes should go to the best.

Considering the five principles in Table 2, it is unclear what justice and fair equality of opportunity in the classroom ought to look like. It is possible as well that resource distribution in the classroom is not just about teachers distributing extra time and help but also about teachers forming close and influential relationships with students. It is likely that teachers will form particularly close relationships with select students they teach. It is further plausible that in some cases the potential a teacher sees in a student (based on merit; the utilitarianism model) may dictate when these close relationships occur. While students who are labelled to have low literacy skills or to be low in achievement may get additional supports from the system as a

whole, for instance through a resource teacher, consultant, or clinician, it is not clear whether an influential caring relationship is formed with those students (versus between teachers and students who remind them of themselves).

When I teach Jencks's framework of five distributive principles for social equity to teacher candidates in the Bachelor of Education program, I take a poll to see which of the five they think they will adopt as teachers. The highest number of votes often will go to weak humane justice and the lowest to utilitarianism. However, the margins are quite small and there is an almost equal distribution across all five options. These informal polls confirm the importance of the third foundational question discussed in this section. While everyone can agree that fair equality of opportunity for well-being is good, educators do not agree on how to achieve such fairness. Invariably, a teacher candidate will ask why they cannot just use a combination of the five different distribution principles at different times. Some teachers might like the idea of cycling through the different approaches based on what intuitively feels right to them in the moment. This have-it-all approach has its own implications that require the same rigor of justification and acknowledgement of trade-offs as those based on one principle of distribution.

Something I keep in mind throughout this paper, and in particular with the list of distribution principles (Table 2) is that while some education practitioners may be willing to equalize access to educational goods to counter the effects of background inequalities, schools operate within a society and polis that is willing to tolerate sizable inequalities. So, it may be challenging for educators to mitigate differences in how children respond to opportunities provided in schools. Decision makers at both the policy and classroom levels will likely face the

need for trade-offs between different distributive values in addition to weighing different educational goods and educational aims against one another.

What also needs to be kept in mind is that how one defines the aims of school education fundamentally impacts which principle of resource distribution one sees as appropriate. For instance, if someone promotes an aim of school education that justifies the form of stratification of the student population described in the first section of this chapter, “equalizing access to educational goods” is not even on the agenda.

The purpose of this section was to demonstrate how impactful the distribution question is that accompanies any identified school educational aim or educational good for student well-being in schools. How one answers the third foundational question discussed in this section will determine the kinds of efforts that are made and how groups of children are identified to receive the goods that will improve their reception of opportunities for developing capacities for well-being.

Three foundational questions in practice

Thus far, I have aimed to show there is a need for more clarity on the theoretical foundations that underpin policies and programming for well-being in schools. The three foundational questions I pose here are designed to demonstrate that both the conceptualization and implementation processes to address student well-being in schools are value-laden processes. The complex set of values and beliefs that govern decision-making processes involve human choices about what to prioritize for students in schools and there are important trade-offs associated with each of these choices. If these three foundational questions are going

unnoticed or hidden at the subconscious level for decision-makers, then negative consequences of certain decisions may be overlooked. Though this is also true for decisions that are not concerned with student well-being, the process of asking these questions is particularly salient in the case of well-being in schools because of the explicit shifts toward prioritizing well-being in schools.

Let us take two fictitious examples to illustrate how these three foundational questions have an important role in the decision-making process. For instance, a policy maker Mariam (she/her) and grade 7 teacher Eric (he/him) each have important decisions to make in their roles. Mariam works at a Provincial Ministry of Education in Canada and reports to the Deputy Minister, while Eric works in a diverse school community in an urban center in a large Canadian city and is accountable to his students, families, principal and other education stakeholders. Mariam is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing curricular priorities for the province, which has implications for resource allocation, staffing, data collection processes among others. Eric is tasked with planning his school year beginning with the first two weeks of lesson plans and activities for students. Each has a deep concern for well-being and its deliberate promotion in schools. Both Mariam and Eric get started with the process of asking the three foundational questions proposed here, beginning with: How do educational aims for well-being fit alongside or within traditional aims for school education? In Mariam's case, she needs to consider how much weight she will give student well-being relative to historical curricular priorities and aims such as national identity or streaming options for the labour market. She is facing pressure to increase the emphasis on STEM-related curriculum and increase the number of instructional hours for mathematics in order to promote a stronger more competitive labour market. She is

also facing pressures to increase the “advanced” curriculum opportunities through further streaming in order to meet the ambitions of parents who wish for their child to get ahead. Finally, Miriam also wishes to foster social cohesion and a strong national identity so she must also arrange the curriculum reforms in such a way that all students are acquire much of the same understandings and participate in knowledge economies as a community of citizens. For a brief moment, Miriam thinks that the answer must lie in the middle of each of these aims. If she could only strike the right balance, then she wonders if she can *have it all*. Miriam is excited to sees ways that some of these priorities are compatible. For instance, if she increases the focus on STEM and mathematics across the province, this *can* also compliment the goal of strengthening the future labour market and foster social cohesion through shared understandings of STEM subjects. However, Miriam also starts to see that there are likely trade-offs involved in this curricular reform no matter what she chooses, even if she decide to include each of the priorities in a list. Building competitive advantage (on both the individual and societal levels) will require streaming which will almost certainly undermine social cohesion. Shifting toward STEM and streaming may also undermine certain forms of well-being, since students who do not like or do well in STEM areas may suffer and this shift will necessarily take away from other perhaps more pleasurable subjects such as dance, drama, visual art, trades, or other subjects. Miriam must get clarity on the weighting of each value that will govern the curricular reform and when there are trade-offs to be made, she must have clarity on the negative consequences. If she is to hold a concern for student well-being, Miriam must also view each of these priorities and trade-offs through the lens of student well-being, by asking how each of these impacts can lead to positive improvements for student well-being or whether they will increase the potential for student ill-

being. Similarly, in the case of Eric planning his first two weeks of school, he needs to consider how to present the core values and aims for the school year as well as how he wants to set the tone for the classroom culture, which includes routines, interactions and infrastructure. Eric believes that prioritizing stratification and labour market preparation calls for him to start the year off with a strict rigorous academic focus (which includes discussion about marks and how students will be ranked) as well as a hierarchical culture of competition and skill development that will produce conscientious workers (e.g., focus on time management, multi-tasking, and grit). On the other hand, Eric considers how social cohesion and educating for civic participation might call for a more democratic approach to the classroom culture which would require that the first two weeks include student voices and feedback when setting up the classroom culture. Eric also wishes to include his concern for student well-being in his classroom culture, and understands that some of the traditional aims for education may cause his students stress, anxiety or alienation. Some of these aims also seem to be in conflict with one another, such as cohesion and competition. For a moment, Eric thinks that the answer must lie in the middle of each of these aims. He wistfully thinks that if he could only strike the right balance, then he can have it all. But like Miriam, he sees clearly how he must decide the degree to which he is willing to endorse each of these considerations in light of the trade-offs that are required.

Next, Miriam and Eric turn to the business of asking themselves: What do I define as the educational goods for well-being in schools? In other words, they both wish to clarify how they understand and operationalize the capabilities for well-being and what that means for their decisions about curricular reform (Miriam) and organizing the beginning of the school year (Eric). Miriam begins to make her list, which includes student's feeling a sense of belonging,

connection, safety, enjoyment, hope, and freedom in (and because of) school. She starts to wonder how these educational goods for well-being might be promoted through her STEM curricular reform. She also wonders whether these goods are exhaustive and whether they ought to be equally valued across different contexts. For instance, in some regions of the province, there are different cultural backgrounds that make up the student population. Miriam must decide whether she should design the curriculum reform based on her personal understandings or whether and to what degree she should consult different communities. She must also think about the ways in which these educational goods for well-being may be addressed indirectly through her STEM curricular reform or directly through new curriculum, programming, or initiatives. Finally, Miriam will face the task of selecting whether or to what degree she will collect data (and what kinds of data) about these educational goods for well-being across the province. Eric also sits down to make his list of educational goods for well-being, which looks quite different from Miriam's, since he has a different background, set of beliefs and experiences and is positioned differently. Eric's list includes: cultivating passions, overcoming challenges, confidence, communication skills, problem solving skills, and health. His first two weeks of school will be organized around many of these understandings of what capabilities for well-being are important. Because Eric prioritizes problem solving and overcoming challenges, he plans lots of games and challenges for his students in the first couple of weeks to get them thinking in those ways. Eric's belief that the capacity for strong communication skills and confidence will also contribute to student well-being led him to plan lots of group discussions and sharing about personal strengths and attributes. Some of these activities may indeed serve the intended purpose, but some may also inadvertently undermine some of Miriam's goals for

students. For instance, Eric's emphasis on problem solving and confidence may run up against Miriam's curricular priorities for connection, belonging and safety. Once again, they may each believe that it is possible to come up with an exhaustive list of educational goods for well-being in schools, but they will still face the difficult task of how to prioritize each of these goods in different contexts and among different individual and groups of students.

Which brings us to the third foundational question that Miriam and Eric must answer: How should I distribute educational goods for well-being within and across schools? For Miriam, she will be concerned with how to support the implementation process for her new STEM curricular changes along with a well-being in schools agenda. Shifts in priorities and mandates require considerable resources for knowledge mobilization such as staff training and awareness. In addition to school practitioners and leaders being made aware of the changes, new classroom resources that reflect the new curriculum mandate must be developed and implemented in classrooms. Miriam faces the question of how to prioritize different school communities and contexts when it comes to building capacity across the province. Does she follow the adequacy principle, equality principle, or help the least advantaged? In principle, Miriam may believe in prioritizing school communities who are the least advantaged by measures of educational background, income, and racialization, she understands that there are limits to how many resources she can allocate in these communities before she compromises her public image or job security. Therefore, she leans toward an sufficiency approach which calls for a distribution of resources unlikely to raise too many concerns about a lack of opportunity from communities who experience more privileges. Eric faces a similar distribution question in his classroom regarding his limited time, effort, and resources. In the first two weeks of school, Eric thinks it

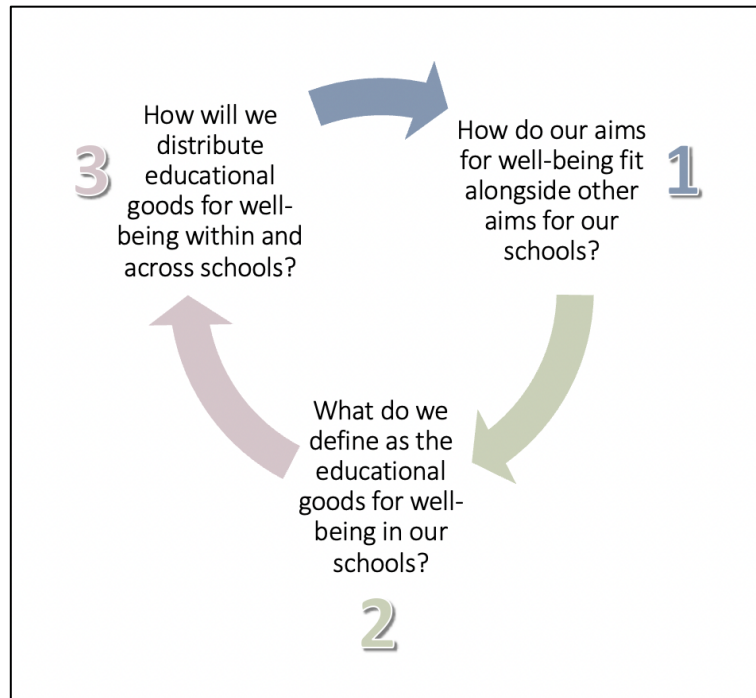
might be best to use Jencks's democratic equality approach giving everyone equal dollops of time and energy. One negative effect of this distribution model is that it prevents Eric from offering more support at a critical period with the students whose well-being would benefit the most from his time and attention. The examples of Miriam and Eric offer only a peek into the layered and complex considerations that are brought about through the process of asking these foundational questions. A well-being in schools agenda calls for greater clarity about the ways in which policy makers and practitioners in situations like Miriam's and Eric's think about their decision making processes.

Conclusion

Well-being as an explicit aim for school education is a relatively new concept and requires a new approach at both the policy and classroom levels. This paper posed three foundational questions to decision makers at the policy and classroom level within the context of a concern for student well-being: (1) How does well-being fit alongside the aims for school education? (2) What do we define as the educational goods for well-being in schools? and (3) How should we distribute these goods in schools? This paper recommends this process of questioning to all policymakers and practitioners who wish to take seriously student well-being in schools.

Figure 1

Three Foundational Questions for Policy Makers and Practitioners



By posing these questions, supported by relevant literature such as the work cited here, policy makers and practitioners who promote the student well-being agenda will find greater clarity and efficacy for that very agenda. Issues raised through these kinds of equity-based questions should be clarified at the policy level, which includes how those policies are to be implemented at the school and classroom levels, as well as by teachers and practitioners in classrooms.

In my limited experience, most people who enter the teaching profession do so because they care about the well-being of students. The teachers that I know and have worked with prioritize building good relationships with their students and spend the bulk of their time and energy trying to figure out ways to support their students in ways they think will contribute to their overall well-being. But teachers face system-wide expectations and competing responsibilities that directly result from the issues raised by the three foundational questions posed in this chapter. For instance, how can teachers be both responsive to an individual student's needs and respond to general educational standards? How should teachers choose the

educational goods to confer to students? How should teachers think about the distribution of educational goods in their classrooms? Teachers operate in a setting that is largely centred on developing personal relationships with students, families and communities, and each year they must adapt to context-specific features of their classroom makeup. Administrators and policy makers, on the other hand, focus on what is universal across classrooms. Their focus generally lies on broad political and social aims that are measurable and can be accounted for to the public. These two broadly defined groups are positioned differently, as shown throughout this paper, and their different positions need to be kept in mind when trying to answer the three foundational questions posed in this paper.

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Reimagining Paternalism for a Well-being Mandate in K-12 School Education

We often take for granted that it is wrong to treat adults in the same way we treat children. In fact, treating an adult like a child is oftentimes considered an insult to an adult's intellect or competence. Children, the thinking goes, are a different class of humans with different capabilities, entitlements, and interests. And if they are a different class, then they require different kinds of treatment. The treatment of children and their rights and moral entitlements have been legally, politically, and socially negotiated over time. The constraints on power that adults have over children vary across contexts, but in general there is an enormous amount of freedom for adults in their treatment toward children. Judgements by adults on behalf of children often take the form of paternalistic acts. Adults paternalize children by making decisions without their consent about their daily environment, routine, interactions, and their physical, linguistic, moral, and spiritual development just to name a few. Not surprisingly, conceptual and practical concerns and debates about paternalism exist both in the case of adults (Dworkin, 2015/2020) and children (Carey, 2017; Gheaus, 2015; Gheaus et al., 2019), with far less attention given to the case of children. Disagreement about the moral and political status of children and what constitutes justified or unjustified paternalism in the case of children are ongoing and consequential (e.g., Bou-Habib & Olsareti, 2015; Brighthouse and Swift, 2014; Gheaus, 2018b; Grill, 2019; Hannan, 2018/2019; Macleod, 2015/2018; Tomlin, 2018) not only for the parent-child relationship, but also for the field of K-12 school education. Education practitioners in schools have the role of supporting students' well-being and facilitating learning opportunities for children roughly ages 5 to 18 (see the first paper in this dissertation entitled *Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners Concerned with Student Well-being*).

Educative processes during these twelve years or so include a myriad of decisions about children's capacities for autonomy and how they ought to be educated. As described in the first paper of this dissertation, one of the central aims for school education has traditionally been to assimilate children into social order, social cohesion, and to occupy social roles. These educative processes render a deep psychological restructuring of children, often labelled *transformation*. In fact, the word transformation is quite commonplace – in curriculum documents and education research, for example. As Yacek (2020) points out: the terms *transformative pedagogy*, *transformative learning*, and *transformational teaching* may call up high-minded educational ideals and fond memories of influential teachers, but they simultaneously refer to a process of cognitive restructuring, i.e., changing the content and patterns of thoughts for students. Raising important ethical questions, transformation through paternalistic measures has perhaps remained an under-litigated goal for education because of an spoken or unspoken promise that schools will equip students with the capacities to exercise their liberty (their right to autonomy) later in life. But, what if we have it wrong? What if children are capable and morally entitled to exercise their liberty far more broadly than we allow currently in schools? And even further, what if adults are actually undermining children's current and future well-being by paternalizing them in certain ways? These highly disputed concepts play a role in how paternalism is understood and enacted by adult decision makers in K-12 education.

The focus of this paper is to highlight the intersection between educating for well-being and how children are paternalized in schools. I argue that paternalistic acts in K-12 schools often rest upon misguided views of what it means to be a child and outdated notions of the purpose for K-12 school education. I highlight some relevant K-12 policy shifts toward inclusion, access,

equity, and well-being across Canada. Further, I advance that there are reasons to broaden the moral and political status of children in schools. Considering broadened recognition of children's status and this updated context for education across Canada, I conclude with a reimagining of paternalism in schools grounded in Yacek's (2020) work on the goal of transformation, Drerup's (2017) weak paternalism, and Feinburg's (1986) soft paternalism. I advance that in general, we should adopt a soft paternalism approach in schools, maximizing children's opportunities for autonomy, but that there are some notable exceptions. Limitations and objections to the soft paternalism view will also be explored.

This work intends to contribute to re-envisioning the values, priorities, and assumptions that underpin decisions that are made in schools – which significantly impact students experiences as students and their future well-being. Recognizing children's capabilities for, and entitlements to, autonomy will influence decision-making processes when educators think about what is in the best interests of children.

The context, scope, and recommendations in this paper are limited by a non-idealizing approach (Rawls, 1999) to conceptualizing school education. This approach takes for granted that there are durable structures and systems in Canadian K-12 education systems (and beyond) that are unlikely to change significantly in the short term. What I hope to provide instead are recommendations that K-12 practitioners can think and act on within current systems and structures and in situations where there is not full compliance. Durable structures, however, are not impervious to change. I will now begin by highlighting the shifts across Canada toward the inclusion of students' well-being as an educational purpose in schools.

Context: Purpose of Education and Canadian Shifts toward Well-being

In education policies, mandates, and public discourses across Canadian school systems, the term “well-being” can likely be found more than ever before. International recognition of well-being as a concern for school education, such as OECD’s Pan-International Assessment Program (PISA) (OECD, 2019) and Canada’s adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989) likely played a role in this shift. Global emphasis on well-being such as the Happy Planet Index (WEAll, 2018), World Happiness Report (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, n.d.) and other quality of life (QoL) indicators (Tsai, 2011) showcase the importance for well-being as an end in itself for both individuals and societies. The Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health (JCSH), established by provincial, territorial, and federal governments in 2005, recently signed the 2020-2025 agreement as a means of bringing together Education and Health sectors across the country in order to improve health, well-being, and achievement outcomes in Canadian children and youth (JCSH, 2022). In addition to initiatives at the federal level, there are varying but widespread levels of commitment by provincial governments, school divisions, and schools to address the well-being of students in K-12 schools across Canada. Many school sectors (e.g., school boards, school divisions or provincial ministries of Education) across Canada now emphasize responsiveness, EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion), and have a focus on well-being. In particular, the impacts of the covid-19 pandemic have been framed in terms of students’ well-being (e.g., Alberta annual report, 2021). Students sense of belonging, connectedness, physical and emotional health have been placed under a spotlight throughout the shifts to online learning and mask wearing. In the document entitled *Planning for the 2021-22 School Year*, the Ministry of Education in Ontario states, “To ensure readiness for

the 2021-22 school year, the ministry encourages school boards to address the following topics prior to the start of student instruction: health and safety protocols, mental health and well-being; and learning recovery and intervention strategies” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022, p. 12).

Curricular reforms and strategic planning no longer focus exclusively on skills building that emphasize only training for specific roles in the workplace on creating a solidified republic, social order, and social cohesion (Labaree, 2010; Ravitch, 2008). It is important to note that prioritizing well-being in education processes or viewing well-being as an end and not a means in educative processes is not a new concept (Noddings, 2003; Brighouse, 2006). In 2006/07 the First Nations Education Steering Committee out of British Columbia, for example, describes a set of learning principles specific to First Peoples and the first two out of nine principles are “Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors” and “Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)” (Aboriginal Education Council, n.d.). Many years later, K-12 curricula across Canada call for teaching approaches that are place-based, responsive, and promote agency, for instance, by explicitly emphasizing the depth, complexity, and opportunity in inquiry processes and different learning communities (Manitoba Education and Training, 2020; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014). A search on the public domain for the Ministry/Department of Education websites reveals that documents in each province across Canada contains an explicit and direct relation to well-being in schools’ initiatives, conceptualizations, commitments, programs, or assessment tools. Following are several examples that demonstrate this relationship.

The Ministry of Education and Child Care in British Columbia offers a vision for student success which includes among its six principles: “healthy and effective learning environments” and “student centred learning” (Ministry of Education and Child Care in British Columbia, 2022) which presumably takes into consideration what students consider to be goods that contribute to their well-being. In 2021, British Columbia’s Ministry of Education also published an 18-page document entitled *Key Principles and Strategies for K-12 Mental Health Promotion*, which outlines principles that include “strengths-based approaches” and “cultural responsiveness and humility” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2021). Alberta Education’s (2009) *Framework for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Wellness* outlines a vision of wellness education, which is for students to be “educated, informed and contributing members of society and to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be well in every sense of the word—emotionally, intellectually, physically, socially and spiritually” (p. 3). Alberta’s wellness education program is meant to nurture the whole child, to create transdisciplinary learning experiences, and to enable transitions through wellness-related courses (Alberta Education, 2009). The mandate for the 2022-2023 year listed on Saskatchewan’s Ministry of Education and Training website states, “The ministry is committed to improving the learning success and well-being of all Saskatchewan children and youth and the enhancement of family literacy” (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2022). Another notable example can be found in Manitoba’s *K-12 Education Action Plan*, released in early 2022. The Action Plan is based upon seventy-five recommendations from the Manitoba Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education. The Action Plan includes as its second of four pillars, “Student Engagement and Well-Being: to respond to diverse life experiences, engage students, promote well-being, support successful transitions and leverage

inter-sectoral partnerships” (Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, 2022). Quebec’s policy document, *Educational Success, Health and Well-Being: Effective action in schools* (Insitut National de Santé Publique du Quebec, 2012) is a synthesis of recommendations issued by the Insitut National de Santé Publique du Quebec. The document comprises one component of a decision support tool that is intended to help managers and staff in education and health networks to promote educational success, health, and well-being among students in Quebec schools. In 2014, a report of the Minister’s panel on Education published a report with the striking title, *Disrupting the Status Quo: Nova Scotians demand a better future for every student*. The report calls itself the first comprehensive review of Nova Scotia’s education system in 25 years. Along with recommendations, the report contains survey responses from 1,900 Nova Scotians on various topics related to public education. Three of the seven themes outlined in the report, are, “ensure that inclusion is working for everyone, create a positive climate for learning, and collaborate for improved student health and well-being” (Minister’s panel on Education, 2014). Finally, in Prince Edward Island, Student Well-being teams have been tasked with the *mission* “to empower strength, resilience and well-being in Island school-aged children and their families.” (PEI Education and Lifelong Learning, 2022). The above are just select examples across the country of provincial commitments to integrating an explicit focus on well-being in schools.

Simultaneous shifts are taking place across the country in the areas of equity and diversity. Equity and inclusion initiatives in school systems offer access to opportunities for well-being, for all students, but in particular for students who experience forms of oppression, marginalization, and/or disadvantage. Mandates, outcomes, and objectives to address equity and inclusion have only increased in the aftermath the Black Lives Matter movement, the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission's (2012) *Calls to Action*, and other social movements swelling across social media platforms, workplaces, and the entertainment industry. One leading provincial response is Ontario's commitment to "Strengthening and Modernizing Education" includes the commitment to "building an equitable education system" and commits to "invest in support programs and resources to fight racism and discrimination in classrooms. For example, we have announced resources and supports to combat Islamophobia in schools, address antisemitism in schools, and support success of Black students." (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022). Another example is the second outcome identified by the Alberta Ministry of Education (2021) to ensure that "First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in Alberta are successful" (p. 56) depending of course on how educators in this region understand the term "success". In Manitoba, the Indigenous Inclusion Directorate office commits to "putting students at the centre" and "inclusive and culturally safe learning environments" through strategies that include, "respecting and listening to students, employing a holistic approach to supporting students, demonstrating respect for world views, values, identities, and traditions, and valuing and celebrating differences" (Manitoba Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Learning, 2021).

In addition to specific commitments to principles of equity and diversity, many school divisions across Canada have Safe and Healthy schools initiatives and priorities. For example, in 2015 the Government of Saskatchewan published a document entitled, *Deepening the Discussion: Gender and sexual diversity*, which addresses the following areas related to student well-being: 1.) Human rights, 2.) Gender and sexual diversity, 3.) First Nations and Métis ways of knowing, 4.) Assumptions, privilege, and oppression, 5.) Comprehensive school community health, 6.) Creating inclusive schools (Government of Saskatchewan, n.d.). These efforts to

address equity and inclusion aim to broaden access to opportunities for well-being for students both while they are in school and into their futures.

It should be clear from the examples presented above that, well-being is a stated priority for school education across Canada (though the matter of degree and status among other aims can be argued, see the first paper in this dissertation). These shifts toward educating for well-being call for a renewed understanding of what it means to educate the child and therefore require a reimagining paternalism in schools. It follows then that paternalizing children in schools for the sake of historical aims for education such as streaming children into pathways for future labour market opportunities is also outdated. Educating for the “three r’s” reading, ‘riting and ‘rithmetic, (as they were commonly referred to in the mid-twentieth century) is a product of a “traditional” view of both the aims for school education as well as what it means to be a child. The focus of this paper is to bring both together by making the form of paternalism consistent with an autonomy-based understanding of children and child well-being. Next, I address these notions directly. I will first address the way that we conceptualize what it means to be a child and how the moral and political status children are believed to hold, affects how they are viewed and treated in schools.

The Moral and Political Status of School Children

The class of children is generally understood to refer to an age-based category of humans. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines children as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier” (United Nations, 1989). Age as the decisive criterion for determining

the threshold between child- and adulthood, however, is not always useful, since it does not take into account developing competencies or capabilities as a person grows. An infant possesses quite different characteristics than a 7 or 8 year-old and twelve-year-old may more closely resemble a nineteen year-old than an infant. The nature of consciousness, agency, expression, cognition, size, physical needs, and the comprehension and manipulation of information changes quite radically in childhood. The UNCRC recognizes the child as a special being that grows and acquires enhanced competencies (Lansdown, 2005). All children in schools (generally ranging from 4 or 5 years old to eighteen years old) clearly do not possess the same competencies or interests and should not be treated in the same way. Humans are also always in a state of both being and becoming. Children especially are in a process of physical, cognitive, and emotional development with various progressions occurring during a child's time in school. These progressions in childhood are vital to keep in mind when discussing children's autonomy and paternalism in schools.

There may be certain characteristics of childhood however, as a phase of life, that appear to be exclusive to childhood and tied to their development during this stage. For instance, children are dependent and vulnerable in ways that most adults are not, by virtue of their age and being newer to the world (Brighouse & Swift, 2014, p. 58). Children's dependency and vulnerability is more profound and asymmetric than the vulnerability that adults experience (Brighouse, 2002; Brighouse & Swift, 2014). Unlike adults, children (especially young children) normally cannot withdraw or withhold something in their relationships, for example children under 12 cannot often choose to leave the home when they please or cease communicating with their caregivers. Children have little experience with setting their own boundaries in

relationships, perhaps because they are fearful of undesirable consequences or punishments. These attributes of children raise questions about children's moral status and entitlement to protection. Children's vulnerability generates an obligation for parents, caregivers, and educators who must care for and protect their welfare. While this protection is understood by the majority of adults with the best of intentions, acts of protection may inadvertently undermine children's political status and liberty. If children need protection from adults because of a special moral status by virtue of their vulnerability, then it must also be true that children's political status is not the same as that of adults. This distinction in moral and political status is in one sense claimed on biological grounds (Brighouse, 2002) but in another sense, is dependent upon assumptions about children's cognitive abilities. The latter is where the debate about children's capacities for rational thinking and autonomy become important, particularly for school-aged children who can increasingly take care of their well-being interests.

It has also been argued that another feature of children is that they lack stable normative maxims (Brighouse and Swift, 2014) or stable preference structures (Noggle, 2002). In other words, children may not have the ability to make judgements or decisions based upon consistent value structures. On their way toward possessing adult rationality, children are recognized as progressively acquiring the cognitive abilities of adults. On this account, children are conceptualized as incomplete adults and must pass progressively through cognitive developmental stages on their way to adulthood. Archer (2015b) calls this view "the basic view of children." Schapiro (1999) endorses the basic view of children through her assertion that childhood is the moral equivalent of the state of nature. Stuck in something like the state of nature, children lack the capacity to make judgements or claims based on moral principles and

so they live in a state of “normative instability” (De Wispelaere & Weinstock, 2012; Schapiro, 1999; Weinstock, 2018). The distinction that is made between adults and children on the basic view is grounded in the idea that children are not yet rational (or sufficiently rational) agents, are not yet autonomous beings (since rational decision-making is essential for genuine autonomy), and therefore do not have the political status of personhood or of a full person. The basic view of childhood has moral implications insofar as it provides a strong justification for paternalistic behaviours by adults on behalf of children. It is easy to see how children’s autonomous status matters a great deal, since it affects their moral entitlements and is relevant to the justifiability of legal, social, economic, and political arrangements (Hannan, 2019), such as public schooling.

Hannan (2019) challenges the bar set for autonomy given the variation in human capacities, and the extent to which our powers vary from moment to moment. She argues that in fact the unified and stable rationality we ascribe to adults is often a myth, since you and I commonly act irrationally (Hannan, 2019, p. 116). She suggests that it is important to look at autonomous decision making as not a unified construct but rather something that is operational at different times and in different domains. And if we use this framing of autonomy, we will find that some children may act “more rationally” or with more stability than some adults do in certain domains. This squares with the research that finds there are only small differences in decision making capacity between individuals from mid-adolescence onward (Casey & Caudle, 2013; Spear, 2000). Overriding children’s judgements about how to direct their lives then may prevent children who were otherwise capable of autonomy from developing or exercising normative conceptions about themselves and the world.

Theorists such as Macleod and Gheaus challenge the basic view of children and the widespread assumption that a sharp line can be drawn between the moral and political status of children and adults in virtue of their respective autonomy. I endorse the view that states that the sharply drawn contrast between adult rationality and childhood rationality is misguided. Macleod (2018) suggests that the basic view of childhood presents “a narrow valorization of rational agency and autonomy that is common in a great deal of contemporary liberal political philosophy” (p. 3). In what may be called the dynamic view, Gheaus (2018b) resists the conceptualization of the attributes of children through a deficit model and instead seeing the attributes of children as the vehicles for accessing special goods of childhood, e.g., goods for their well-being. For example, Gheaus (2015) points out that children possess, to a much higher degree than usually acknowledged and to a higher degree than average adults, certain epistemic abilities as well as artistic and philosophical abilities. Along the same line, Carnevale (2021) rejects universalized stage-based developmental models and instead proposes a hermeneutical agential conception of children and childhood. What he calls a “Childhood Ethics” is an ontology rooted in Charles Taylor’s ideas on agency and hermeneutical inquiry (Carnevale, 2021), which is supported by empirical accounts of children’s moral experiences that demonstrate their strong abilities to discern and evaluate competing values and priorities. Carnevale (2021) sees these processes as what he labels evidence of agential expression in children. In other words, children’s strong ability to discern between and evaluate competing values and priorities demonstrates that children are capable of autonomy.

And so, while most people can agree that infants perhaps do not possess the capacities for rationality required by any view of autonomy (Hannan, 2019), the subject under

consideration here is whether school-aged children can be self-governing. There are good reasons to think that school-aged children can be autonomous using these newer understandings of what it means to be autonomous. And if school aged children have great capacities for autonomy, then exercising these capacities will impact their well-being and expand their entitlements to make decisions about their own learning. Next, I turn to the relationship between children's well-being and children's autonomy.

Child Well-being as it Relates to Autonomy in Schools

As I have established earlier on, schools and school educators are increasingly responsible for attending to children's well-being in schools. I have also tried to establish that children have developing capacities for making decisions about their own lives, which is a necessary component of experiencing well-being. This claim is complicated in the case of infants, since it can be argued that they cannot make and act upon stable judgements or decisions. But I think that even in these cases, children can make certain decisions and communicate those decisions through their behaviours or nonverbal forms of communication (e.g., smiling, signing, crying, etc.) which gives them some access into well-being. Infants also have agency interests qua future adults (or older child) that must be protected. Though it may not be a reflection of stable maxims, when an infant communicates she is embarking on the journey of communicating her values, interests, and priorities. An autonomy supportive environment that recognizes these efforts from the infant will positively impact the infants future agency interests. However, this paper is concerned with children over the age of 5 which I take to be a different case than infants. By the time children reach school age, they develop and understand their values and

better communicate their values. However, this capacity to make and act on their own decisions in schools can either enhance or undermine their well-being. Brighthouse and Swift (2014, p. 52) argue that we think of a person as having two kinds of interests: 1.) an interest in anything that contributes to their well-being, and 2.) an interest in making their own decisions, even if those decisions undermine their overall well-being (this is also referred to as a dignity or agency interest). Autonomy on the one hand is important because I am likely the authority on what will best serve my own well-being. However, even in cases where my choice does not optimize my overall well-being, the choice in it of itself brings value to me. My authorship or endorsement of a particular decision about my life has added value when it comes to my well-being.

To attend to children's well-being in schools, it is helpful to have an account of children's well-being and delineate the kinds of opportunities for well-being that can and should be offered to children in schools (see second foundational question in the paper entitled *Three Foundational Questions for Policy Makers and Practitioners Who Have a Concern for Well-being*). Well-being, of course, is a deeply contested concept. Different theories of well-being offer different and sometimes competing accounts of what it means to live a flourishing life (Magnusson & Krepski, forthcoming). In Western traditions, well-being is normally understood as indicating what is non-instrumentally or ultimately good for a person or having prudential value (Crisp, 2016). It is a measure of how well a person's life is going for that person, or from the perspective of their own interests. Over 2500 years of debating the concept of well-being has led to sophisticated theories and rich frameworks for well-being. In a taxonomy originally introduced by Parfit (1984), three main clusters of theories of well-being may be categorized as hedonism, preference satisfaction, and objective list theories (see also, Crisp, 2016; Magnusson and Krepski,

forthcoming). While this paper does not discuss the merits and challenges for each theory, there are some important points I might be able to make about the general concept of well-being and how it might be applied to children. Different theories of well-being provide different accounts of what is ultimately good for a person and why. Hedonism takes well-being as the balance of pleasure over pain, where pleasure can be understood broadly to include a range of positive feelings and mental states (Crisp, 2016). Preference satisfaction, or desire fulfillment theories posit that well-being consists in the fulfillment of a person's desires, such that what is ultimately good for a person is getting the things they want, whatever they happen to be (Crisp, 2016). Finally, objective list theories advance that what is ultimately good for a person is to be in possession of a particular list of objective goods, such as health, love, family, friendship, leisure, knowledge, freedom, fulfillment, and many others (Crisp, 2016).

While I do not want to defend one view over the other here, I take for granted that there will be aspects of well-being that exist on all three views. For instance, it is conceivable that security, health, and positive relationships are intrinsically good and have prudential value on all three accounts. In particular, I contend that there are good reasons to think of autonomy as valuable on all three views and if I am capable of autonomy, I generally want to exercise that capability. Autonomy here is understood as the ability to make one's own decisions. Autonomy has also been defined as "the inherited fundamental propensity for any organism to be self-organized and self-ruled" (Chirkov, 2009, p. 254). On a hedonic account of well-being, autonomy is an important, if not necessary under 'normal' circumstances, requirement if I am to maximize my number of pleasurable and pleasant experiences. Because I am the only one that can be the judge of what those experiences are that will give me pleasure, I will require the freedom to

pursue my desires to experience well-being. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule, for instance, if I am hooked up to an experience machine, or if I am a brainwashed member of a cult, I may still be able to access well-being without autonomy. On a preference satisfaction theory of well-being, similar reasons account for why autonomy is important, since my preferences must be “my own” and I will need the freedom to satisfy those preferences. Haworth (1984) argues that “the good to be maximized is satisfaction of, specifically, autonomous preferences” (p. 16). People who endorse idealized preferences may object to prioritizing autonomy, but that position would reveal them to be more of an objective list theorist since they would be advocating for a particular (and elitist) understanding of what would be good for a person. Finally, on an objective list view, autonomy will regularly make an appearance as a key domain for well-being. Though some collectivist cultures may exclude or minimize the role that autonomy plays in well-being, in the North American context, autonomy is often (though not always) held as a key component of what objectively contributes to one’s well-being, as the following objective list of theories of well-being demonstrate. Falkenberg (2019) argues in his paper, *Framing Human Well-being and Well-becoming: An integrated systems approach*, that there are five components of what it means to flourish: 1) having agentic capabilities linked to human needs; 2) experiencing situational opportunities to engage one’s agentic capabilities in relevant life domains; 3) enjoying life; 4) living a meaningful life; 5) experiencing personal and communal connections that contribute to one’s well-being. My interpretation of this framework is that having and the opportunity to engage one’s agentic capabilities implies that I can engage in my capability for autonomous thoughts, actions, and decisions. Though the term agency is often, but not always, used synonymously with autonomy, Cummins (2014) posits that the ascription of agency goes

further that the notion of autonomy, since it leads to “the recognition of value grounded in system identity” (p. 110). If agency is more broadly construed than autonomy, it stands to reason that the broad concept of agency includes within it notions of autonomy. Autonomy, (sometimes listed as agency) is a concept that figures prominently in objective lists for children’s well-being as well. According to positive psychologists, along with aspects like hope, optimism, gratitude, and a positive self-concept, children’s happiness and well-being are inseparable from their experience of autonomy in pursuing freely chosen lifegoals, actions, and behaviors (Chirkov, 2009). Ryan and Deci’s (2002) self-determination theory advances the idea that congruence between one’s basic needs and core values spur individual agency that, ultimately, results in overall well-being. Autonomy is one of the six dimensions of Ryff and Keyes’s (1995) understanding of psychological well-being, whereby someone scoring high on the dimension of autonomy “is self-determining and independent, able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways, regulates behavior from within, evaluates self by personal standards” (p. 727).

Let us say for arguments sake that any well-being theory applies to children in the same way they apply to adults. Under a hedonic view, children’s lives are going well if they experience pleasure over pain. Under a preference satisfaction view, they are experiencing well-being if their desires are fulfilled. And under an objective list account, they are experiencing well-being if a certain set of criteria are met. In much of the literature on children’s well-being, it is agreed upon that children’s well-being comprises of at least some components that appear on an objective list (Skelton, 2019). The problem with strictly objective list views is that they endorse the claim that something can be good for a child even if he or she is indifferent to or has an aversion to it. From a *basic view* of children, these objections may be easily cast aside or

overlooked because on this view, children lack the capacities to properly endorse a course of action for their well-being. However, if you reject the basic view, as I do here, then it is deeply problematic to claim that something is good for a child without their endorsement of that claim. A child's endorsement does not necessarily need to be grounded in stable and rational maxims associated with a certain type of adult rationality to qualify. Rather, as Mullin (2007 as cited by Hannan, 2019) argues, we are autonomous when we act on those things we care about deeply based on our values at that time. It is because the prevalence of the basic view of children, coupled with a standard for autonomy that necessarily discriminates against children, particularly when it comes to school education, that autonomy has been underexamined as a component of well-being for children overall.

For the most part, philosophical views on well-being have been worked out with little or no attention to children or the special features of children. But there are reasons to think that we should consider the well-being of children differently than the well-being of adults. Children's well-being is unique, for instance, in that we must consider their well-being in two ways: the well-being of children qua children and the well-being of children qua future adults. There is a preparatory dimension of children's well-being that applies differently to adults. Each of the three theories (and their hybrid versions) would need to answer to the appropriate trade-offs that are made between these two states of being for children. Tomlin (2019) presents the option of a list-based theory of well-being for children where sometimes an item may be *all* that matters to well-being, other times it may not matter at all, but its overall contribution to well-being will grow or diminish gradually. He describes it like the mixing desk of a recording studio. At the very beginning of life, we might set physical health and physical pleasure at the very

highest setting and have autonomy and sexual relationships set to zero. At the age of two, on average, unstructured play might be set very high. By 13, that may have decreased, with autonomy playing a bigger role. The point is, any plausible view is not actually going to be a view about the account for children and the account for adults but rather a set of goods which continuously and gradually vary in importance, including continuing on into adulthood (Tomlin, 2019). One possible response to the question of what constitutes children's well-being is to make amendments to that which appears true generally about children's well-being between the stages of childhood and individual children. This approach takes seriously the idea that there are some differences in the nature of well-being (and its causes) for infants, young children, and older children (Skelton, 2019) and implies that autonomy can be important at various stages in various ways. While I won't engage further in these debates or provide a list of what children's well-being consists in (see Skelton, 2019), what I want to highlight here is that in the case of children, well-being ought to be considered differently than in the case of adults (Falkenberg & Krepski, 2020). Furthermore, for each theory of well-being when applied to children, autonomy – the ability to govern oneself – figures prominently (even though autonomy is not a conceptually necessary on all three theories). With these concepts of children's well-being and the importance of autonomy in childhood in mind, it is wise to keep in mind objections to the view that autonomy is important. Conly (2013) argues for a paternalism that "forces people to act, or refrain from acting, according to their best interests (p. 3) but even Conly accepts that there are situations where there is just not enough information upon which you can predict future benefits that would justify paternalism (e.g., arranged marriages, or paternalizing ones career choice). I contend that paternalizing children in schools fits within these kinds of cases because

the benefits to children's well-being when they learn in ways that reflect their interests and their endorsements outweigh the perceived benefits of paternalizing them in schools. I now turn to a discussion of well-being in school.

Thus far, I have shown that (a) child well-being needs to be differently understood from adult well-being and (b) autonomy is an important but often neglected component of child well-being. Next, I turn to the question of what children's well-being in schools consists of. School educators and school environments cannot address all of the same aspects of well-being provided for in the home and in community. Public school teachers, for instance, are not positioned to address bedtimes, screen time, or religious instruction in the same way that caregivers do. Anecdotally, whenever I speak to groups of educators about the topic of children's autonomy and paternalism, within minutes, they begin to transport the conversation to their views as a parent. Quite simply, parents have different roles and responsibilities from educators. While it may be the case that parents' role in paternalizing and transforming children ought to be constrained (see Brighthouse and Swift (2014) for an insightful discussion on possible constraints), the subject in this paper is about how school practitioners understand and enact paternalism. Often school educators enact measures according to what they believe to be in a student's best interest based on their personal beliefs and the way they understand their educative responsibility in school. Historically, these responsibilities focussed on knowledge dissemination and testing for the sake of producing a productive and unified nation-state (Ravitch, 2008). A more prominent well-being mandate in schools means that we require an understanding of how to facilitate opportunities for students to access well-being in schools.

Objective list approaches are popular across schools, school divisions, and government levels (Magnusson & Krepski, forthcoming), likely for the reasons stated above and because they lend themselves best to the measurability and accountability culture of neoliberal government policies (Peters, 2011). Broad domains such as physical, emotional, cognitive, and sometimes spiritual well-being typically appear on the list (e.g., *Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, n.d.*). But often these lists either leave out details about how to create opportunities for these domains of well-being, or when they are defined their ends look an awful lot like the business-as-usual model of training children to become productive labourers. To help frame well-being in schools in more detail, Brighouse, Ladd, Loeb, and Swift (Brighouse et al., 2018) developed an *educational goods* framework that identifies those goods for well-being that can and should emerge from educational process. In this sense, educational goods can be thought of as those components that will provide opportunities for individual flourishing and will contribute to the flourishing of others, either in the present or future (Brighouse et al., 2018). On their list of educational goods for well-being are: economic productivity, democratic competence, healthy personal relationships, treating others as equals, personal fulfillment, and finally, personal autonomy (Brighouse et al., 2018). Soutter and her colleagues (Soutter et al., 2014) offer another conceptual framework for well-being in schools, which includes seven domains: having, being, relating, thinking, feeling, functioning, and striving. In this framework, “being” and “functioning” have strong ties to notions of autonomy. As Falkenberg states,

if schooling is to develop agentic capabilities that would allow students to address their human needs, schooling has to greatly expand or reimagine the foci to encompass the wide range of capability domains included in the proposed rich understanding of human needs: capabilities linked to satisfying our need for creation, our need for affection, our need for idleness, our need for identity, and so on. (Falkenberg, 2019, p. 20)

Each of these well-being-in-schools frameworks capture a full range of educational purposes for well-being, with opportunities for children to exercise their autonomy.

Reimagining Paternalism in Schools

So far what I have aimed to demonstrate is that there are shifting aims for K-12 education toward well-being, which includes not just an explicit focus on subjective well-being, but also on conditional features of well-being such as inclusivity, equity and diversity initiatives, and environmental conditions for well-being. These shifting aims for education stand in juxtaposition to traditional aims for school education such as social cohesion and sorting into social roles (see the first paper in this dissertation). Underpinning traditional aims for education, are views and values about the stage of childhood and children's capabilities; and as a result, conclusions about how paternalism should operate in schools. However, an education system that views children as powerful thinkers and is concerned with their well-being, requires an updated understanding of when paternalism may be justified. As I have argued, there are good reasons to extend our notions of rationality, which in turn broadens the moral and political status of children beyond the *basic view* that is associated with traditional aims for schooling. I have also outlined why I think children are capable of autonomy and therefore are entitled to opportunities to exercise their autonomy. Finally, I canvassed different approaches to well-being and talked about what this might mean for well-being in schools, giving special attention to the role that autonomy plays in well-being. Taken together, these claims set the context for the focus of this paper, which is to advance a form of paternalism that is consistent with an autonomy-based understanding of children's well-being in schools. I now turn to the task of

weaving these positions together to reimagine what kind of paternalism if any may be justified in schools that have students' well-being as a central aim.

New understandings on both childhood and the aims for schooling call for a frank conversation about the reasons for, and limits to, paternalism in schools (Birnbacher, 2015; Archard, 2015). I take the position that whether you hold an objective list, hedonic, or preference satisfaction view of well-being, people need some degree of autonomy and the chance to develop and exercise that autonomy if they are to have good lives. Just as individual and community well-being as an aim for education is distinct from traditional aims for schooling, autonomy promotion in schools for the sake of well-being is different from the traditional aims of producing autonomy for a civically engaged citizen or a self-supporting taxpayer. These traditional aims may be constitutive of, but in nearly all cases will not be equivalent to, student well-being.

The view that children must be behaviourally and psychologically controlled (Barber, 1996) or managed (Cummings, 2000) is birthed from the oft well-meaning paternalistic view that the enculturation processes in schools are put in place by adults for students' current and future good. Traditional aims for education considered paternalism as a necessary and beneficial approach in school classrooms. Characteristic of all paternalistic acts, is that the act's agent considers "her judgment or agency to be (or as likely to be), in some respect, superior" to the judgement of the other person (Shiffrin, 2000, p. 218). Consciously or unconsciously, educators enact a habituation process which "presents itself as a ritual of force and inscription" viewed as a cultural necessity (Kennedy, 2006, p. 66). This has also been described as the benevolent interference position (Hannan, 2017). The result of this interference is considerable pressure on

children to adopt the skills, aptitudes, abilities and dispositions that are valued and measured at school. Herein lies the problem of transformation in schools. Oftentimes cited as a goal for education, transformative learning can run up against children's autonomy interests and well-being interests. Even "if the transformative educator has an impressive record of churning out happily transformed students, we cannot be sure that a serious infraction to their autonomy has not occurred" (Yacek, 2020, p. 8).

Schools are well established as sites for transformative educational processes (Koller, 2020), which includes social, cultural, and personal transformation. Enculturation processes in schools address both social and cognitive ways of thinking and being. Giesinger (2019) categorizes two aspects of educational address: the *directive* aspect and the *epistemic* aspect. The *directive* aspect reacts to what is perceived as inappropriate behaviours on the side of students. It starts with the common call for silence in class and might result in harsher disciplinary measures. The *directive* aspects include instances when teachers summon, direct, or command learners in the educational situation to do certain things, oftentimes in connection with motivating and encouraging messages (Giesinger, 2019, p. 56). On the other hand, it is an example of an epistemic approach to transformation, or educating children, when teachers communicate descriptive and normative views. That is, when teachers communicate beliefs as to what is the case and values or norms that express what is good and right. Subjective well-being as a directive or epistemic aim has played a minimal role in traditional aims for education, and therefore in schooling processes. Multiple and competing aims are left for individual teachers to interpret, sort, and prioritize. Not only that, but ironically, educators are being asked to now take on the labour of attending to children's anxiety, stress, and other mental and psychological

states of ill-being, which in many cases are a direct result of enacting traditional aims, and consequent directive aspects, enacted in the form of evaluation and competition.

So, what does all of this mean for whether paternalism can be justified in a school education system concerned for child well-being? And what exactly do we mean by the term *paternalism*, since there are several different definitions and understandings of paternalism. In the case of children, paternalism (Dworkin, 1972; Mill, 1859) may be defined as the interference with a child's liberty of action justified by reasons referring exclusively to the welfare, good, happiness, needs, interests or values of the child concerned (Dworkin, 1972). In other words, paternalism occurs when adults make decisions on behalf of individual children and against their will or without their consent, because the adults believe that those decisions are in the best interests of the individual child. Quong (2010) offers a slightly different version of paternalism, advancing that "an act is paternalistic if it is motivated by a negative judgement about' another person's ability" (p. 80). *Strong paternalists* believe that it can be legitimate to interfere with a person's ends (e.g., because they regard these ends as irrational), while a *weak paternalist* assumes that only such interferences are legitimate when they intercede with the means an agent employs to achieve her ends (Drerup, 2017). If we think of interference not as a physical interference, but as coercion, cognitive restructuring, or epistemic interventions (e.g., changing the ways that children understand themselves, or their place in it) then each of these forms of paternalism in school education presents what Yacek (2020) argues are serious problems of transformative consent, controversial direction and transformative trauma. As far as paternalism is concerned, transformative consent poses a serious problem if an updated schooling mandate calls for autonomy-supportive environments. In other words, a student cannot consent to a

transformation because the values and preferences they “would use to assess the subjective value of the outcome change through the transformative experience” (Yacek, 2020, p. 7). The person I am and the things I endorse before the transformation are different than the person I am or the things I might endorse after the transformation. In developing a new paternalism in schools more consistent with a concern for well-being, I consider how the challenge of transformative consent might be overcome using weak paternalist approach in schools.

If children have access to their own rationality and are capable of autonomy at various points in various domains, then it follows that in many or most cases they should be able to offer or withhold consent (and not simply assent) to the ends and means of the schooling processes. However, as Yacek (2020) points out, a transformative experience introduces both an epistemic and a subjective discontinuity into the course of our experience. And the phenomenon of epistemic discontinuity compromises our ability to cognitively simulate what it would be like to undergo the experience in advance (Yacek, 2020, p. 6). To use Yacek’s example, it is impossible to know what ice cream tastes before you have the experience of eating ice cream. It is also impossible to consent to being transformed when you have no opportunity to access knowledge of what that transformation might be like. Epistemically, transformation brings about a fundamental and enduring shift in what it is like to be ourselves, one which we cannot cognitively simulate beforehand and therefore cannot consent to (Yacek, 2020). Yacek offers a way out of this moral dilemma that is consistent with a weak paternalist approach. He states that the consent can rest not upon the outcome of the transformation but rather upon the revelatory value of having the transformative experience. For example, if a child wishes to find out what ice cream tastes like, then they are consenting to the experience of discovering that experience

rather than consenting to becoming a person who dreams about or has cravings for ice cream. In the case of ice cream, it is likely that if a student has tried frozen yogurt they will have a good sense for whether they would like to try ice cream. Also, if the student doesn't like ice cream, they are not irreversibly changed as a result of trying the ice cream. But what about the case of a student who has never read or been exposed to Shakespeare being asked if they would like to intensively study the Shakespeare play Macbeth for one month. In this case, it is likely that the student would have experience reading a play in the past or some exposure to poetry with language that is different from their everyday language, but that student can not necessarily anticipate the ways in which the experience of studying that play might transform their (conscious and unconscious) understandings of what counts as high culture, quality writing, life lessons, and shape other views on life, death, love, war, family, free will, humour and more.

If students were required to offer consent in school settings to a transformative experience for its revelatory value, prior to the transformation, teacher's would have a much higher standard of consultation with students prior to subjecting them to a transformative experience. Practically speaking, this might involve a process where school educators map out different "transformative opportunities" for well-being for students. Students would also have the opportunity to engage in a process of information gathering or communicative action (Habermas, 1972) prior to taking up a transformative experience. Habermas defines communicative action as happening "wherever the actions of the agents involved are coordinated not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching mutual understanding" (Habermas, 1984, p. 286). In being able to engage in discourse with educators, students' interests and the goods for well-being can be identified, agreed on and hopefully

realized (Fleming & Murphy, 2010). This approach toward learning and communication in classrooms disrupts power hierarchies. Assuming there are enough resources in the form of teacher's time, students would be given the opportunity to exercise and develop their autonomy through the process of making and acting on their decision for transformation. A soft paternalist approach requires that educators only assist students in the process of sifting through which *means* (how to go about transformative or revelatory experiences) might best offer opportunities for them to be well, or experience well-being. And if a student does not wish to undergo a stated goal that would result in transformation, they would be free to do that, though I do not expect this would be the case for all twelve years of their public schooling experience.

The current non-consultative process of transformation in schools undermines children's autonomy, opportunities to build capacities for normative judgements, and well-being qua child and qua future adult. Finally, two conceptions of paternalism will help to find a place to land when it comes to the competing aims and tasks of school education. *Hard paternalism* is the view that benevolent interferences into the domain of autonomous judgment or liberty of action of an agent is justified even when the agent is sufficiently competent and autonomous. Hard paternalism is when the benevolent interference condition is coupled with a child's fully voluntary and autonomous choices (Grill, 2019). In other words, the child's will is overridden by an adult because the adult has made a judgement about the inferiority of the child's decision (to secure their own well-being). A form of weak paternalism (since interventions concerns only the means and not the ends), *soft paternalists* only regard interventions as justified in cases in which the agent is (probably) not sufficiently competent and autonomous. If a person is wandering over an old bridge that may soon collapse (to use Mill's famous example), a soft paternalist

would try to make sure that the person *actually knows* about the condition of the bridge. If this is the case, a soft paternalist would not stop the person from walking over the bridge (even though this is imprudent and dangerous). Hard paternalists would stop the person even if she made a sufficiently voluntary and autonomous decision, e.g., because she loves the thrill (Drerup, 2017). The benevolent interference is coupled only with a choice that is substantially *nonvoluntary*. In other words, where choices are “as alien to [us] as the choices of someone else” (Feinberg, 1986, p. 12 as cited by Grill, 2019, p. 127). Recall that *weak paternalism* assumes that interferences are legitimate when they relate to the means an agent employs to achieve her ends. Consistent with weak paternalism, soft paternalism commits to an adult offering the best available information they have to the child about a decision in case the student may wish to change her mind. However, a soft paternalist view does not promote the act of intervention in the means quite as strongly as the weak paternalist does. A soft paternalist view fits well in the case of children in schools because the educative process is so often communicative and dialogical. Because of its relational nature, teachers in schools are well positioned to confer with children about their ends which supports them in their own decision making. Because different children develop different competencies at different times, educators in schools on this view would support children’s well-being by exposing them to the range of possibilities and by making information available to children about their choices that are nonvoluntary or naïve, because children are newer to the world than adults are. This approach would also take into consideration information that a student might seek for their well-being qua child and their well-being qua future adult.

I offer four examples to demonstrate some possible consequences of a soft paternalist approach. Imagine a student has an educational goal of learning a new language both because she enjoys languages and for the sake of her well-being qua future adult. She wants to dedicate her class time towards that goal. An educator might have several conversations with the student about the conditions for learning a new language. They might look up information together about the amount of time it typically takes to learn a new language, the optimal conditions under which to learn a new language, opportunities to speak that language once it's been acquired, etc. Once the student has more information about the processes involved in learning a new language, she may decide to abandon that goal in the short term and apply for a more feasible and effective student exchange program for the following year. Another student might be interested in doing a lengthy project on Rubik's cubes. The educator might discuss the range of potential future benefits such a project might have, for instance, learning about the history of an invention, problem solving, potential applications to mathematical thinking and coding. But in the end, the student goes forward with the project in hopes of making it to the highly unlikely world championships of cubing. A soft paternalism would not prevent the student from pursuing such aims. A third example – and likely the one that will strike to the heart of most objections to this view – is a student who wishes to pursue a project about assault rifles. Let us say further that this student shows antisocial behaviours, speaks about white supremacy, and comes from what we suspect is a politically “alt-right” community. A soft paternalism must accept the cost of a student choosing their own ends whatever those ends may be. However, this approach doesn't abandon the social, political, and legal constraints of our society. Just like the means of learning a new language and Rubik's cubing were explored, so too would the educator engage in ongoing

conversations about legal, social, and political implications and constraints for firearms. One final example might demonstrate the other side of the coin. Imagine a student wishes to use his class time to learn about creation stories from an Indigenous Elder in his mother's community and create artwork that represents that heritage. A soft paternalism dictates that the school educator, alongside the student, learn more about legal, social, and political implications and constraints for learning about his Indigenous background.

As I have shown, there are good reasons to think that children are capable of autonomy. Therefore, under a soft paternalist approach, children would experience very little interventions. However, this is a textured approach and can also be thought of like the mixing deck, depending on the competencies of the student. Educators must exercise their professional judgement to determine the ways in which a soft approach might be suitable depending on the student. It is important to distinguish between a soft paternalism and transformative schooling, because the latter is typically carried out in a non-consultative fashion, without student's awareness or consent for either the means or ends of transformation. A soft paternalist approach in schooling for well-being might strike the most optimal balance between recognizing children as autonomous agents with full moral and political status and educating for equity, diversity and well-being, whichever theory of well-being one holds. A soft paternalism does not coerce, direct, or non-consensually transform children but rather, it offers opportunities for children to develop capabilities and acquire and use information that they may otherwise be unaware of by virtue of being newer to the world than the educating adult.

While this approach might seem quite radical to some educators upon first reading, there are many cases where a slight turn of phrase can change a setting from a coercive one to an

autonomy-supportive one. For instance, if a group of children are rambunctious, instead of an educator saying, “Everyone wait quietly in line!” or “Everyone settle down now and listen to me!” they might say “What is your plan for the day?” or “What would you like to do next?” Following students’ interests, educators can still formulate guiding questions. Prompts, such as “Who is responsible for WWII?”, “Why do we have inflation”, “What counts as culture?” or “Can you make a formula for perimeter?” are all complex non-coercive questions that might interest individual or groups of students. Soft paternalism can offer opportunities not just for autonomy but for the range of well-being goods such as those proposed by Brighouse and colleagues (e.g., Brighouse et al., 2018). Only, a soft approach does not presuppose that a single educator or the school education system knows what is best for students’ current and future well-being. Rather, educative processes explicitly offer children opportunities to collect more information about various aspects of their well-being prior to making decisions about their educative means and ends. This approach will yield all kinds of new opportunities to engage in decision-making processes for children. Not only will this shift help them to be able to make decisions in childhood, but it will quite possibly assist in their adulthood to be someone who owns and understands her own maxims and values (Weinstock, 2018).

Recommendations and Exceptions

As I have written at the outset, I wish to present a view that can be operational under non-ideal conditions. The examples of a soft paternalism presented above are difficult to implement given the current structures and systems in place for schools. If school educators wish to take a soft paternalist approach under the current slow-to-shift landscape, some general

characteristics should emerge. First, students could expect that their time in school would facilitate the expression of their agentic capabilities that would allow them to address their human needs for well-being. Students would be given greater opportunities to make choices about their ends and means wherever possible. Second, it would no longer be taken for granted that adult judgements are more rational and always superior when it comes to a child's well-being. The role of the educator on this view is reimagined as a mentor and someone who prioritizes well-being. The role of mentor is not to change children's minds about their ends, or transform them in specific ways, but rather to support the conditions and means for students to achieve their ends. Part of this is consistent with the literature on autonomy supportive environments (Hui & Tsang, 2012; Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2010) where autonomy entitlements in schools should take priority. Notably, teachers who are autonomy-supportive also experience a greater personal achievement, psychological needs satisfaction and well-being, and less emotional strain (Hui & Tsang, 2012, p. 5). Next, the structure of schools might be slowly reimagined as places for children to intermingle and select the pathways for their own education. Like the mixing deck, some students may choose to "turn up" their opportunities for personal fulfillment while others may choose to focus on economic productivity or citizenship. Long-term reimagining might allow for teenagers to have access to free play and seven year-olds access to car mechanics. Students would be able to discern and govern how they access goods for their well-being with the caring support of educators. Moving into a soft form of paternalism could land on a spectrum anywhere from no schooling (Riley, 2020) or a free schooling model (Gray, 2014) to modifications to the current structures allowing for more self-governing. This will

require teachers to listen to students' perspectives, to offer help when student's get stuck, to encourage students' initiatives and to provide time for self-paced learning (Hui & Tsang, 2012).

Because of the differences between children and between children and adults, I propose some notable exceptions to the soft view of paternalism in schools. There are cases where hard paternalism is likely necessary or justified, typically in the case of very young school aged children. Hard paternalism might be appropriate for instance when educators are protecting the security or basic welfare for children as children and qua future adults. In these cases, protection would occur to avoid suffering substantial physical harm of the individual or others or to avoid high risk outcomes. Examples might include helmet safety, fire drills, and school yard boundaries, while a nonexample might be wearing hats or running in the hallway. I ground this in the idea of retrospective consent (Clayton, 2012), which suggests that later in life children would be likely to thank adults having used such forms of hard paternalism that involve the children's health, safety, and life. One other possible form of hard paternalism in schools is for the protection of the nurturance for children as children to avoid substantial psychological and emotional harm. Examples might include preventing persistent or significant acts of bullying and nonexamples include children learning to cope with their own and others' instances of aggression. I also ground these exceptions in a child's entitlement to enjoy well-being qua child. These exceptions require professional judgement about high-risk harms, i.e., harms that have high stakes. This raises questions about measurement, data collection processes and best available evidence when making determinations about high-risk harms. Work I leave to another project.

Limitations and Objections

There are a few notable limitations with the soft paternalist view. In associating a child's entitlements to autonomy with the satisfaction of idealized as opposed to actual competencies, the idealized interpretation undermines a child's rationality and potentially runs up against the problems of transformation. Further, educators can never know for certain what the idealized version or necessary and relevant information are for a child to have in order to achieve their ends. Educators also do not know what the consequences of their interventions will be. They might intend to bring about positive consequences for the child, but in fact there will be no effect, or the opposite effect. The hope here is that by convincing educators to make a shift toward a soft paternalism approach, even if at times flawed, children will be better off than under other forms of paternalism, all things considered.

There is also work left to be done in determining how much moral direction or public values educators can justify. Defending and educating for knowledge of basic rights, jurisprudence, and liberties are matters raised in the example of the student who wished to learn about firearms and the student who wished to learn about Indigenous Creation stories. Critics of broadening student autonomy might argue that transformative processes in schools endanger students' ability to access well-being. This view supposes that an elite group knows best for children's well-being, a notion that I have tried to reject here. Relatedly, less influence from schools on children potentially opens the door for more influence from home and community. What about the student who develops dangerous ultra-right conservative views about the superiority of White folks from his community? Potential costs will be incurred on a soft paternalist view, and many will be uncomfortable with this view for school classrooms. The flip side, as I mentioned above, is that those students from made-marginalized communities who

have been colonized in schools and alienated through schools from their heritage language, cultural norms, and traditions may be better off. Another hope in extending children's autonomy in schools is that all children would become better thinkers and communicative actors (Habermas, 1972). Childhood is the time to try on and try out identities in a safe space that allows for freedoms of expression and self-governance.

Finally, the issues raised in this paper skirt around the fact that families are a social determinant for children's school and overall success. Bedtime stories, discussions over dinner, family culture, parenting styles, each have an enormous impact on children's prospects. Children from different families receive different amounts and types of these positional goods. This concern raises distributive justice questions: Who will benefit most and least from a soft paternalism approach with a well-being framework? Materially, there are still economic and civic ends tied to education and educational outcomes. Some of which are linked to opportunities for well-being. In 1980, sociologist Anyon published a study entitled *The Hidden Curriculum of Work*, in which she found that only upper-class elite students were offered the opportunity to gain "knowledge of and practice in manipulating the socially legitimated tools of analysis of systems" (p. 89). Ideally, supporting student autonomy would disrupt social reproduction by giving students from all socioeconomic backgrounds access to making and acting on their own decisions. There is further work to be done that considers a teacher's role to confer *just* opportunities and benefits to her students.

In this paper, I argued for a soft paternalism approach in schools. Though this can look differently depending on the readiness and resources of each school or classroom, the takeaway from this view should be that children are entitled to determine their own learning and

educational goods for well-being to a far greater degree than is currently promoted in schools.

This position contributes to the existing literature on student well-being and student autonomy. I

will end with a compelling thought from Hannan (2019). We have certainly gotten autonomy-

capacities wrong in the past, viewing women for instance, as incapable of autonomy. And so, as

she suggests, we should err on the side of greater autonomy for children.

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Social Class and Access to Well-being Goods in K-12 Schools

Across Canada, public school education concerns not only the academic success of students but also the well-being of children both as children and as future adults. Ministries of Education and public school divisions across the country publish mission statements and mandates that include sentiments about equal opportunity for all children to develop the knowledge, skills and characteristics that will lead them to become successful. For instance, in 2022 the vision and mission statement for K-12 public schooling in Manitoba, where this study takes place, is:

Vision

All Manitoba children and students succeed, no matter where they live, their backgrounds, or their individual circumstances.

Mission

To ensure responsive, equitable and high-quality child care and learning from early childhood through to high school graduation to support all children and students to reach their full potential (Manitoba Education and Training, n.d.).

Yet, public school vision and missions such as this one may espouse certain values that are not reflected or practiced in the classroom. Classroom teachers are entrusted to deliver high quality and equitable support for all students; however it is not clear what these supports are intended for or what outcomes are included in the notion of students reaching their full potential. As a result, students have unequal access to educational goods for well-being and success (see paper 1 in this dissertation). School divisions in Manitoba oftentimes equate the discourse of success with reporting to the Ministry of Education and Training on quantitative measures, such as high school graduation rates, credit accumulation, attendance, and performance measures (Krepski, 2017). If “what gets measured gets done,” it seems unclear how statements about all students

finding success and reaching their full potential are practically translated in the classroom. Because formal assessments and data collection in schools centre on a narrow range of well-being goods, namely graduation and performativity on tests, classroom teachers are almost certainly interpreting their roles and responsibilities beyond graduation and performativity on tests differently (from one another). As is acknowledged in the mission statement above, teachers are also working with students from diverse backgrounds and individual circumstances. For all students to experience success, teachers must be expected to differentiate their approach between different individual and groups of students. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education in Manitoba, like other provinces across the country, has elected to fund different schooling options and different programs in schools, such as French Immersion and the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Each program carries with it a unique emphasis and prioritization of educational goods and values. What constitutes student success and well-being therefore, is certainly not the same for each individual student, or for all groups of students. Social stratification between students who come from different backgrounds and have different interests or abilities is part of the schooling process. With this interest in stratified well-being opportunities in mind, this study explores teachers' experiences and perceptions of inequalities of opportunities for well-being between groups of students in schools and across different school programs.

Through interviews with nine high school classroom teachers across different settings in Winnipeg MB, this study explores the kinds of skills, attitudes, and abilities that teachers emphasize in their work. The purpose of this research is to explore and identify which educational goods for well-being are the focus for high school classroom teachers working in

different school settings. Through accounts of teacher-participants, I am able to present a picture of how students across different settings access different educational goods for well-being. These educational goods include skills believed to be useful in the labour market as well as aptitudes that foster individual and collective well-being, such as democratic participation and citizenship, personal fulfillment, and stable and caring relationships. In some discourses, the term well-being can often be reduced to either mental health, or medicalized understandings of wellness (Bagattini & Macleod, 2015). However, well-being in school is defined for this study more broadly than just mental health, and includes both a child's current and future well-being. Using a framework developed by Brighouse et al. (2016; 2018), well-being is understood as something that schools can provide opportunities to achieve by building capacities for relationships, participation, self-awareness, productivity, and more. This work recognizes that opportunities for well-being are not equally distributed or emphasized across schools and school programs. It has been reported that school superintendents in Manitoba think minoritized groups, lower socio-economic groups and English Language Learners (ELL) students are predominantly given instruction in literacy and numeracy skills, while more affluent students are offered a more robust version of school success which includes more opportunities for well-being while they are in school and beyond (Krepski, 2017). This example demonstrates the kinds of trade-offs that can be made in schools between different groups of students (e.g., a focus on preparation and training for students who are ELL, which may neglect their well-being in other ways).

Teachers prioritize and make trade-offs between educational goods between different groups of students and between different educational priorities. Structural limitations on

teachers' time and resources simply demand that important decisions are made between both different kinds of educational goods as well as ways in which these goods are distributed. Sociologists of education (Anyon, 1981; Apple, 1979; Davies & Guppy, 2010; Davies & Rizk, 2018) and critical theorists (Bourdieu, 1977; Dei, 1996, Friere, 1972, Ladson-Billings, 1998; 2014) argue that knowledge, skills, and positional goods are made available to the advantaged social groups but are withheld from the working or disadvantaged social classes. Demonstrating this phenomenon at the classroom level, Anyon's (1981) study entitled *Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work* demonstrates that teaching approaches in classrooms vary significantly depending on the social class of the students and school. Approaches to curriculum, pedagogy, discipline, and socialization varies according to the social background of the students. Teachers' stratified approaches are likely grounded in precedents within a school culture and the desire for collegial synchronicity (Shah, 2012). In turn, stratified teacher approaches lead to the social reproduction of stratified learning experiences and outcomes according to social class (Anyon, 1981). It is this differentiation of approaches, or priorities, between school settings that is the focus for this study. In particular, the question that is asked here concerns the conception of well-being that teachers have for their students in different school programs.

While the phenomenon of economic social reproduction and its impacts on educational outcomes is well documented and researched (Wotherspoon, 2014), there is much less available research on how different well-being goods are socially reproduced. In other words, there is a paucity in the research on how aspects of well-being beyond school performance and labour market outcomes are differently distributed among social classes. This qualitative research study aims to explore and uncover some of the ways in which teachers identify, prioritize, and respond

to the perceived well-being needs of their students across different school programs. The focus for this study is to explore the well-being goods that teachers are concerned by in differently stratified or organized groups of students.

Local Context and Significance

This empirical research takes place in Winnipeg, Manitoba, a culturally diverse province that reflects some (but not all) of the diversity across Canada. Manitoba is one of the most ethnically diverse provinces in Canada and Winnipeg is the home for 76.9 percent of newcomers to Manitoba (Government of Manitoba, 2008). The 2016 census data shows that 26% of Winnipeg was comprised of visible minorities (City of Winnipeg, 2016). Winnipeg's rich cultural landscape includes the largest Indigenous ancestry population in Canada--over 90,000 people, or over 9% of the city's population (City of Winnipeg, 2016). It has been predicted that Manitoba may be the first majority non-White province in recent Canadian history (Robertson, 2017). As with all large cities, there are striking differences in social and economic factors between the different regions in Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg neighbourhood cluster profiles show large gaps in unemployment, access to transportation, income, unemployment, mobility, and educational attainment across neighbourhoods – and in particular between inner-city and suburban communities (City of Winnipeg, 2016). Correspondingly, there is great diversity found in schools. In September of 2017, there were 207,158 students enrolled in K-12 public schools across Manitoba (Manitoba Education and Training, n.d.) and of those students, 15,883 (7.7%) were recorded as students who were learning English as an Additional Language (Manitoba Education and Training, n.d.; Statistics Canada, 2014). In 2016, 10,501 (5%) children were living

in the care of Manitoba Child and Family Services across the province; 60% of these children are permanent wards of the province (The Office of the Children's Advocate, 2016). According to Manitoba Education and Training, (n.d.), 9,205 (4.4%) students in Manitoba are self-identified as Indigenous, though it is suspected many choose not to declare their cultural heritage. School practitioners and census data report a much higher number than this as Indigenous (Krepski, 2017, Statistics Canada, 2014). Manitoba, along with many other provinces, consistently reports systemic inequalities between racial and cultural groups by the measurement of educational outcomes. For example, in Grade 3 reading, the percentage of students who met or exceeded Provincial Expectations were 27.5% of Indigenous but 51.8% of Non-Indigenous students. Graduation rates (using the student tracking method following students between 2012-2016) for Indigenous students were 47.6% compared with 86.2% for Non-Indigenous students (Manitoba Education and Training, n.d.), a gap of nearly 40 percentage-points. To my knowledge, educational data is not yet publicly available for newcomers to Canada in Manitoba, but graduation data from Toronto shows an average difference of 17 percentage points between Canadian born students and students not born in Canada, while Black students born outside of Canada average 40 percentage points below Canadian born students (Brown, 2008). These and other inequalities of outcomes between groups of students raise questions about curriculum choices, assessment choices, and socio-historical causes for outcome discrepancies between groups. We may also look "further up the river" so to speak, in order to uncover a complex set of socio-political contexts and groupings, and therefore classroom contexts, that reveal differences in opportunities for well-being which both contribute to unequal academic outcomes as well as well-being outcomes.

Though social class status and cultural grouping are distinct, people who are currently or historically racialized or minoritized are impacted by social class. Smith (1984), an anthropologist, posits that the “cultural or ideological dimension of class relations is more important than is often assumed” (p. 467). Class structures are pervasive in Canadian society, including in Winnipeg, and rest upon constructs and categorizations enforced with the language and tools that assert power and dominance. The pervasiveness of class structures can be found when dominant classes assert their power through a binary discourse of superiority such as superior/inferior, rational/irrational, pass/fail, educated/uneducated, intelligent/slow, etc. (Shahjahan, 2011). For example, in Winnipeg the phrase “north end” often connotes specific deficit categories like “poor”, “uneducated”, “unemployment”, or “dangerous.”

These boundaries or ascribed statuses define distinctions between groups of people and can define statuses between groups of students. It is in these ways that groups of students are part of the *class system*. Statistics in Canada show that unequal education and labour market outcomes are, on average, linked to students’ background (Davies & Guppy, 2010; Wotherspoon, 2014). Perhaps we might understand some of the complexities that contribute to this phenomenon when we reveal differences in opportunities for well-being. More importantly, stratified opportunities for well-being in schools must be addressed if our goal is to educate for the well-being of all students in an equitable manner. This research is concerned, therefore, with differences and inequalities in educational experiences and opportunities to access educational goods for well-being in select classroom communities in Winnipeg.

Purpose, Objectives, and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore and identify which educational goods for well-being are the focus for high school classroom teachers working in schools of different settings. This study also explores whether the educational goods that teacher's prioritize vary across settings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine high school teachers in Winnipeg working in four different school programs. Differences between participant responses from different school programs were one way to explore stratifications between the experiences and perspectives of teachers and the way they see their role in the provision of student well-being. Social class backgrounds of students in the different school programs were of interest in this study, though the construct of social class is not easy to define because its boundaries are blurred and widely contested. Historically, social class has been conceptualized as constituting a gradation of statuses with "no sharp breaks, and no agreed-upon classes" (Smith, 1984, p. 468). Through a sociological and anthropological lens, *social class* often denotes a set of people who share similar status with regard to metrics like wealth, income, education, and occupation (Davies & Guppy, 2010) and as the relationships between social groups that may be characterised by disparity, discrimination, power, and exploitation (Ostrove & Cole, 2003). Participants in this study describe the social status of students they work with (and their familial background) based on anecdotal observations, discussions with students and their families, geographic location of their schools and their student's social positioning in relation to other groups of students.

Student access to educational goods for well-being in schools are the core focus for this study. *Well-being goods* in this context means those goods that can be conferred throughout K-12 public schooling and will contribute to a student's overall well-being. In their book entitled

Educational Goods: Values, evidence, and decision making , Brighthouse, Swift, Ladd, and Loeb

(2016, 2018) identify six core well-being goods that are conferred through education, which are: economic productivity, personal autonomy, democratic competence, healthy personal relationships, treating others as equals and personal fulfillment. Educational goods for well-being refers to those capacities that will enable students to procure well-being in the future (well-becoming) as students and later as adults.

Embedded within this general purpose of the study, the specific objectives are:

1. To explore teachers' understanding of the well-being needs of their students.
2. To explore the well-being goods that teachers are focussed on conferring to their students in different programs.

The research questions that this study looks to answer are:

1. What are teachers' understandings of student educational goods for well-being?
2. How are well-being goods differently conferred and prioritized based on student community and school program?

The study is focused on answering the research questions, and by answering the research questions, the study's objectives will be addressed. These objectives and research questions explore specific well-being priorities within the Winnipeg context with potential for applications to other school contexts across the country and beyond. The findings from this study will contribute to the body of work that explores inequalities between groups of students in schools and different school programs. This work also contributes to the growing literature on well-being/becoming in schools, offering a frame for organizing the goods for well-being through the perspectives of teachers in different school settings.

Literature Review

A focus on educational goods for well-being requires a working understanding of what it means to be in the phase of childhood and how well-being might be distinct in this phase from adult well-being. Children are vulnerable, dependent, and require that their well-being may sometimes be secured through different means than the well-being of adults (Brighthouse & Swift, 2014). Children are also born into a social world with durable inequalities. We have, as a Canadian society, informally and formally agreed to a certain amount of unequal outcomes. In terms of well-being, research has shown that as one moves down the social class ladder (as defined by socioeconomic metrics), mortality and morbidity increase in almost every disease category, including psychological disorders (Anderson & Armstead, 1995; Hanvey & Avar, 1994; Berthelot, Wilkins, & Ng, 2002). Having committed ourselves to an economic system that produces a high level of inequality among adults, it may be argued that we adults acquire some kind of obligation to neutralize the effects of such inequality on children (Gordon, 2017; Jencks, 1972). School communities and teachers in particular have the responsibility to facilitate opportunities and procure goods for student well-being during the roughly 1,200 hours per year that students are in their care.

Importantly, we must consider and acknowledge that many children are denied their welfare rights as well as their political and moral rights, particularly while there is no consensus on how to precisely understand these rights. In certain areas of the world, there are astonishing and devastating numbers of children whose basic welfare rights are not met. Some of these abhorrent circumstances globally include: 570 million children living in extreme poverty, up to 1 billion children currently experiencing sexual, physical, or psychological violence, 119,000 children dying every week from preventable causes such as unsafe drinking water, and 250

million children without access to good quality education (UN General Assembly, 2015). All children have the right to these basic needs and resources (UN General Assembly, 1989). Amidst these inequalities, there is a critical role that education plays in the class mobility or constraint of individuals and groups of children. Through the nine interviews in this study, details about how school education processes contribute to or reproduce social inequalities and unequal opportunity for well-being are unearthed.

Student Well-being

According to Raghavan and Alexandrova (2015), the concept of child well-being has shifted in recent decades toward a more holistic and aspirational view, moving away from the singular emphasis on child protection, child welfare, and child saving. Beyond simply providing for children's basic security, Ben-Arieh and others (Ben-Arieh, 2008; Ben-Arieh et al., 2014) argue that the concept of child well-being should include and promote all of the good aspects of childhood, including the intrapersonal, interpersonal, familial, and social components of their experience. Initially focused heavily on child survival and other child health outcomes, the 2012 report, titled *Children in an Urban World*, has a full 13 domains of well-being (UNICEF, 2012). The vision of the Youth 2030 Strategy also speaks to a broader understanding of well-being in its vision, which is

a world in which the human rights of every young person are realized; that ensures every young person is empowered to achieve their full potential; and that recognizes young people's agency, resilience and their positive contributions as agents of change" (United Nations Youth Strategy, 2018).

Facilitating opportunities for developing young people's capacities for agency, resilience, and confidence to make positive contributions falls naturally, but not exclusively, falls within the

mandate of public schooling. It would be both unrealistic and undesirable for schools to have the sole responsibility of ensuring for example that all children's basic welfare, cognitive, emotional, and social needs are met. Yet it is certainly the responsibility of schools to facilitate *select opportunities* for the multidimensional components of well-being. Provincial and divisional mission statements certainly provide some direction for school practitioners on how and which well-being goods and capacities to procure for their students. Mission statements, however, are oftentimes broad and open to various interpretations as well as modified with some degree of frequency, depending on the political persuasion of the local government and individuals in senior leadership roles. There is still much work to be done if we wish to work toward more standardized and robust accountability measures on those aspects in provincial and local mission statements that link to well-being. My work is taking a first, but important step toward collecting empirical data about how teachers understand student well-being in their classrooms.

Theoretical Framework: Well-being Goods

Teachers are required to negotiate complex terrain every day in the classroom. Schools have many articulated and unarticulated goals that teachers are required to use their professional judgement to prioritize and execute. As a way of understanding these educational goals, Brighthouse et al. (2018) classify and categorize a list of educational goods that support student well-being, both while they are students and in the future as adults. The adjective *educational* signifies these goods emerge from an educational process, one that is broadly understood to include the contributions of schools, families, and communities. Constructing a comprehensive list of the specific knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attitudes that enable

people to access well-being and contribute to the well-being of others would be an unmanageable task, as the list would be long and the precise items on it would vary across contexts. For the purposes of this study, an adaptation of the six goods for well-being offered by Brighouse et al. (2018) serves as a guiding framework for well-being goods and well-being capacities for students. An adapted version of the six educational goods with their description and example can be found on Table 1 below. Adaptations have been made to the descriptions and examples for the purposes of this study.

Table 1

Educational goods for well-being (adapted from Brighouse et al, 2018, p. 23-25)

Capacity for... (present and future)	Description	Examples
Economic Productivity (human capital) <i>Mostly qua future adults</i>	-Ability to participate effectively in the economy. -Disposition to work. (p. 23)	-Cognitive skills -Literacy skills -Numeracy skills
Personal Autonomy <i>Que child and qua future adults</i>	-Ability to make and act on well-informed and well-thought-out judgements. -Engaging in activities and relationships that reflect ones sense of who they are and what matters to them. -Having sufficient knowledge of the relevant variables, and sufficient self-knowledge and fortitude, to make their own choices. (p. 23-24)	-Choosing one's own spiritual or religious beliefs based on knowledge of many religious and non-religious views. -Choosing one's own occupation in the face of parental pressure.
Democratic Competence <i>Mostly qua future adults</i>	-Ability to be effective and morally aware participants in social life and political processes. -Knowledge and skills are various and depend on context.	-Depends on the context; may include meaningful participation, obedience to the law, breaking the law, or various ways of engaging in the political process.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -An understanding of the history and structures of a society's political institutions. -Ability to assess evidence to bear on claims and arguments made by others. -Being able to engage. (p. 24-25) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being able to engage and acquiring the capacity for democratic competence
<p>Healthy Personal Relationships</p> <p><i>Qua child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A variety of relationships -Lasting, intimate, positive relationships with others (p. 25-26) -Require certain attributes such as emotional openness, kindness, a willingness to take risks with one's feelings, trust. -Families may or may not provide the kind of environment for these qualities to develop, but schools can also facilitate opportunities for these qualities to develop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deriving meaning from close personal relationships with children, parents, close friends, and even looser ties with personal acquaintances in the neighbourhood or work.
<p>Treating Others as Equals</p> <p><i>Que child and qua future adults</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Equal respect for the basic dignity of persons underlies the idea that everybody has the same basic human rights regardless of their sex, race, religion, or nationality. -All people have fundamentally equal moral status. -Does not rule out that we care about strangers as much as we do about our family members or ourselves. Nor does it rule out judgements that people are unequal with respect to attributes such as strength, intelligence, or virtue. -Grounds norms against discrimination in hiring, promotion, and government provision. -Developing and exercising the capacity to treat other people as moral equals is important also for one to strike the right balance between pursuing one's own flourishing and discharging one's obligation to contribute to the flourishing of others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Understandings racism, even without legal discrimination, continues to disadvantage people who are black and Indigenous who continue to be disadvantaged due not only to continuing material effects of legal discrimination but also to their treatment by others who often unconsciously, assume superiority. Sights grounded in racial superiority – as with gender, sexuality, or physical or mental abilities – undermines the self-respect and self-confidence of the slighted, making it harder for them to flourish. The impact is worse if the slighted themselves share the attitude that they are inferior, or, while not sharing it, are nonetheless disposed to accept the slights as their due.

Personal Fulfillment <i>Que child and qua future adults</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complex and satisfying labour and projects that engage one’s physical, aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual faculties. -Opportunities to exercise and develop ones talents and meet challenges. -The capacity to find joy and fulfillment from experiences and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Finding satisfaction in music, literature, the arts, games and sports, mathematics and science, and religious practice. -Children are exposed to – and can develop enthusiasms for and competence in – activities that they would never have encountered through familial or communal networks.
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Educational *goods* consist of the “knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attitudes that inhere in people and have the potential to contribute to their own flourishing [well-being] and the flourishing [well-being] of others” (Brighouse, et al., 2016, p. 5). Importantly, the well-being goods that classroom teachers identify as the goods needed for their students’ well-being are roughly speaking what guides teachers’ decisions, practices and therefore shape many student experiences. For instance, if a classroom teacher values the educational good for well-being of *healthy personal relationships*, then they might spend considerable time forming purposeful student groupings, discussing social skills and dilemmas, build strong connections with their students, and get to know their students’ families, peer groups, and community.

Well-being capacities refers to those capacities that will enable them to procure well-being both as children and into the future. This domain speaks to the opportunities that are available to each individual person based on their abilities and dispositions, or agency, to execute their capacity. Sen (1985) refers to a person’s “capability” as “the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for her to achieve” (p.22). Capability, Sen argues, is a kind of substantive freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations. A functioning is active realization of one or more capabilities. Functionings are beings and doings that are the

outgrowths or realizations of capabilities, where “capabilities are important because of the way in which they may lead to functionings” (Sen, 1985, p. 23).

Individuals and their functioning, however, cannot be separated from their environment. Each of us lives in a political, social, and economic environment which determines opportunities for individuals to exercise the freedoms created by a combination of personal abilities and capacities (Sen, 1985). The school environment determines a large part of the environmental opportunities and freedoms for children and adolescents. Not only do teachers select which abilities they focus on honing, but they also make guesses about what kinds of environments students will find themselves in in the future; and therefore, intentionally or unintentionally, focus on those particular capacities that will offer freedoms of a certain nature and are useful in certain class contexts.

Educational goods are not the same as well-being, but rather refer to opportunities for well-being, since luck and choice also play a role in outcomes. Educational goods are not like consumer goods such as gold bars or units of oil. Educational goods are not ultimately consumed but rather they are used in the production of another good, namely well-being. Finally, educational goods are not tangible goods. They cannot be traded and are not reliant on natural material resources. Educational goods therefore are not a zero-sum commodity. Educational goods contribute to valuable outcomes or to what has prudential value for a persona and for others either in the present or into the future (Brighouse et al., 2018, p. 20). Cognitive skills and social emotional capacities are educational goods because they generate value in the form of opportunities for well-being in the present and future (Brighouse et al., 2018, p. 21).

Distributive Concerns

Once the matter of identifying educational goods is provisionally accepted, the task of weighting these different values becomes of central concern. Weighing various educational goods against one another calls for an understanding of the side effects, trade-offs, and unintended consequences involved in prioritizing one over the other. Clarity “about distributive considerations helps one to avoid commonly used but vague terms such as social justice and equity, which often mean different things to different people” (Brighthouse et al., 2018, p. 2; see discussion in the first paper entitled *Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners with a Concern for Well-being* on distribution models). This research study organizes the responses from nine teachers in different school communities in ways that highlight some of the potential or latent trade-offs and prioritizations between educational goods in their classrooms and schools. The process of evaluating which educational goods to prioritize in classrooms involves judgements about their role as an educator, what qualifies as good practices, and what kinds of well-being goods are more or less essential. And these values often conflict. For example, a classroom teacher’s aim to prepare her students for the Manitoba grade 12 provincial exams can be motivated by wanting her students to do well both so that they can feel good about their accomplishment and increase their GPA that will potentially help them be accepted into a post-secondary program. The teacher may also view her student’s achievement on this test as an accountability measure for her own job performance. But this aim may compete with her aims to address mental health, culturally responsive teaching, learning theory, or how to differentiate learning goals for students. Several competing educational goods (e.g., economic productivity/academic success versus personal fulfilment) may run up against

one another and decisions will have to be made about which goods to prioritize. Stratifications between different groups of students and student communities may indeed reveal that prioritization structures look quite different, depending on the school or student group, which contributes to unequal opportunities for well-being in schools.

Finally, the educational goods identified in the theoretical framework chosen for this study serve as a starting point rather than an exhaustive list. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, several educational goods emerge that do not fit clearly into the structured list offered by Brighouse et al. (2018). Also notable is that basic welfare rights do not appear on the list. It would be erroneous to neglect completely aspects of welfare rights, like security, particularly when many view these aspects as fundamental and a necessary condition for securing other forms of well-being (Maslow, 1954). The framework by Brighouse et al. (2018) does not identify welfare goods such as safety and nutrition perhaps because they fall outside of what they consider to be educational goods or perhaps because access to welfare goods reduce ill-being rather than promote well-being per se. Findings in this study consider seriously the role that basic security needs have in teacher decision-making insofar as it compares to - or potentially takes away from – the focus in schools on other important domains of well-being. This shift in focus also points to areas of inequity between school communities. This study, therefore, is concerned with a broader and more holistic understanding of well-being. The objective in this study is not to validate or check up on the specific relevance of the list, but rather to bring attention to the well-being goods and capacities that teachers identify for their students. This work also looks to discover whether there is a contrast between groups of students from different student communities and social class backgrounds.

Social Equality, Critical Theory, and Well-being

This study explores opportunities to access educational goods for well-being in school, with the goal of contributing to the discourse on how to make schools and society more equitable. But just how much can the school system feasibly neutralize the negative effects of inequality for children? Bowles et al. (2009) argue that expecting education to equalize life chances, or opportunities, in the absence of other egalitarian social and economic programming is futile. Bowles et al. (2009) argue that “equality of educational opportunity implies major changes in society at large,” including changes in the “distribution of political power between races and among social classes” and “cannot be achieved by the efforts of the educational system alone” (p. 12). Yet, there is little doubt that programming and curriculum in schools have some impact on students and society. A mandate for initiatives and strategies that focus on well-being in school will provide more opportunities for student well-being overall and so distribution principles become a key consideration when considering who gets greater access to certain opportunities (Brighthouse et al., 2019). A critical theory perspective raises further considerations about whether initiatives such as the well-being agenda in schools is a tokenistic and shallow treatment of the symptoms of inequality, while the causes of deeper social problems go unchecked. Under a critical theory framework, the well-being policy may, like other social equality driven policies and initiatives, provide privileged educators with an alibi for complicit educational neglect (Lather, 2004).

Critical theory is a research approach that is concerned with the interrogation and disruption of current power structures responsible for the oppression and marginalizing of

certain groups. According to Anyon (1981), student experiences in different schools and school programs constitute categorically different settings and experiences, which gives rise to systematically unequal preparation for performance in future settings. Sociologists argue that we live in a society with stratified groups, and that this stratification is one way to represent social inequality. Social stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into rankings of socioeconomic tiers based on factors like wealth, income, race, education, and power (Davies & Guppy, 2010). Stratification is not about individual inequalities, but about systematic inequalities based on group membership and it is the structure of society that affects a person's social standing and not any one individual. One key determinant of social standing is the social standing of our parents. Parents tend to pass their social position on to their children (Davies & Guppy, 2010). People inherit not only social standing but also the cultural norms – or cultural capitals – that accompany a certain lifestyle or social status. Although the terms *socioeconomic status* (SES) and *class* are often used interchangeably, the two concepts are not conceptually equivalent (Ostrove & Cole, 2003). SES organizes people according to social and economic dimensions along which individuals in a society are stratified and the indicators are generally quantifiable (e.g., income, occupation, and education level) (Krieger et al., 1997; Ostrove & Cole, 2003). The components of SES are the basis on which class hierarchies are constructed. However, class, like other cultural variables such as ethnicity and gender, implies particular relationships between social groups that may be characterised by disparity, discrimination, power, and exploitation (Ostrove & Cole, 2003). Individuals encounter privilege or adversity based on their class membership (Ostrove & Cole, 2003). According to Davies and Guppy (2010), *class* consists of a set of people who share similar status regarding factors like wealth, income, education, and

occupation. Individuals can socialize with and marry members of other classes, which allows people to move from one class to another. Yet we can, without any difficulty at all, find evidence of durable inequality between social classes. Durable inequality “depends heavily on the institutionalization of categorical pairs” (Tilly, 1998, p. 8), and these pairs are often unequal ones, such as black/white, citizen/noncitizen, male/female, married/unmarried, parent/childless, rich/poor, English speaking/French speaking, homeowner/renter, etc. Socioeconomic status continues to parallel ethnicity in Canada with Aboriginal, Black, Arabic, West Asian, and Latin American people at an economic disadvantage (Wu et al., 2003). For many Canadians of ethnic minority status, mobility in SES may be even more difficult to achieve due to systemic discrimination that reduces income, lower returns on educational achievement, and limits entry into elite political and professional positions (Basavarahappa & Jones, 1999; Dhalla et al., 2002; Lian & Matthews, 1998; Nakhaie, 1997). The limited options that are available to made-marginalized groups of students reflect deep societal ambivalence toward minorities and immigrants (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Beliefs about student groups based on implicit biases impact student outcomes, students’ self-concepts and students’ well-being. Students’ beliefs about themselves are influenced by teachers’ attitudes toward them and the ways in which teachers’ expectations of particular students are communicated. Teachers’ low expectations, particularly of minority and poor students, limit students’ options and future career opportunities (Oakes, 1987; Rist, 1996). And for those students who manage to negotiate sociocultural borders between home and school and achieve academic success, such success often comes at a heavy psychological price (Ogbu, 2004). Cultural minority students are also more likely to experience social exclusion

related to group membership (Newman et al., 2007). Patterns of such psychological and social tensions have important consequences for students' interpersonal relationships, motivation, engagement, and involvement with school and overall well-being (Betts, 2011). For the groups of students then who face low expectations from teachers and personal challenges from the pressures of assimilation, questions about equality of opportunity do not reside only in the domain of academic success. It seems plausible that low expectations by teachers limit students' capabilities for well-being in school.

Social class and groupings according to school program affects the care and treatment individuals receive in the social world. Research in psychology has identified the tendency amongst practitioners and researchers to view people of low-SES as disorganized, inarticulate, apathetic, and insufficiently skilled to engage in or benefit from the therapeutic process (Smith, 2005. According to Tilly (1998) agents in education setting incorporate paired and unequal categories at crucial organizational boundaries that result in exploitation and opportunity hoarding. Emulation and adaptation reinforce the effectiveness of categorical distinctions (Tilly, 1998). In schools, such categorizations draw the line between appropriate/inappropriate or proper/improper behaviour, and pass/fail or successful/unsuccessful students. Critical theorists believe these constructs and categorizations are ones that provide those in power with the language and tools to assert power, dominance, and imposition through a binary discourse of superiority such as superior/inferior, rational/irrational, veridical/intuitive (Shahjahan, 2011). These boundaries, or ascribed statuses, define ties and distinctions between members. One additional way that critical theorists understand and talk about categorization uses the idea of different groups having varied access to social capital. Social capital is defined by Bourdieu and

Wacquant (1992) as, “the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (p. 119). Particularly relevant to this study, Bourdieu (1984) argues that individuals of different social locations are socialized differently. Viewed through the lens of well-being, the kinds of well-being goods and needs that teachers identify in different school communities may indeed be evidence of and a contributor to stratified socialization and social reproductive process.

Education has long been identified as one of the mechanisms by which power, privilege, and class are reproduced. According to Wiseman (2010), a child’s family background and a school community’s socioeconomic makeup are the best predictors of student achievement. A statistical analysis of educational attainment based on socio-economic backgrounds or socio-economic gradient carried out in the Canadian context demonstrated that “it persists over time and space” (Davies & Guppy, 2014, p. 116). Espeland and Sauder (2007), discuss what they name as our high-stakes performativity and accountability culture where “public measures affect the distribution of resources, redefine statuses which can become reified and enduring, produce and reinforce inequality, and transform the language in which power presents and defends itself” (p. 4). Therefore, and in light of the disparities between cultural and racialized groups for instance, in Manitoba and across Canada in educational outcomes, it is crucial to consider the role of this group membership when studying the impacts of class on access to educational goods for well-being in schools.

Methods

In her study *Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work* (1981), Anyon makes the case that despite similarities in some curriculum topics and materials, there are profound differences in the curriculum and pedagogical approaches in different socio-economic school cultures. Importantly, she found that in working-class schools, teachers approached curricular learning as mechanical behaviours and rote learning rather than teaching for understanding and sustained conception. Based on Anyon's (1981) field observations and interviews in different schools, she concludes that working-class children are not offered what for them would be cultural capital: knowledge and skill at manipulating ideas and symbols, e.g., "historical knowledge and analysis that legitimates their dissent and furthers their own class in society and in social transformation" (p. 34). While the methodological approach selected for my study is inspired by the one used in Anyon's (1981) study, there are also obvious differences. This study involved nine semi-structured interviews with teachers from four different school communities; and while Anyon focussed in her study on curricular content and curriculum-in-use, this study focused on educational goods and capacities for well-being in schools.

The qualitative interview method chosen for this study aims to provide thick description (Ponterotto, 2006) about teachers' conceptions of well-being for their respective students. By looking at trends and patterns between each of the four school communities, which depend to some degree on the social class background of the students in the school, areas for further inquiry emerged in the findings. Perceptions of the well-being needs of their students (both goods and capacities) as described in the interviews offer insight into how teachers make decisions about providing for their students' well-being in classrooms. Profiles of educational

goods and capacities for well-being that are prioritized differently based on school community emerged.

To gain a better understanding of the perspectives of high school teachers working in select school communities across Winnipeg, the research model for this study was a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews guided by an interview protocol (see Appendix E. Throughout the research process, this method was viewed as a process of inquiry that is “not a mechanical technique but part of the larger process of reasoning, argumentation, and critical thinking” (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). As noted by Crowe et al. (2011), the qualitative interview approach is particularly useful when there is a desire to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, event, or phenomenon of interest, in its natural real-life context. Through the interview format, perspectives and self-reported behaviours of teachers who are currently practicing in the field emerged organically.

Participants and School Communities

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted between March and July of 2020. Interviews were conducted with teachers who were working at the time of the interviews in a high school setting in Winnipeg and had more than four years of teaching experience. High school teachers are chosen for this study because of their positioning in the K-12 continuum. Grades 9-12 teachers have special responsibilities to prepare their students for civic, economic, and school life after high school graduation, which includes a range the possible pathways (e.g., work, post-secondary education, apprenticeship programs, gap year activities). Considering these pathways, teachers have a special focus in high school that extends beyond the role of

early and middle years teachers, who primarily function to prepare their students for the next stage of K-12 schooling. Trade-offs between well-being goods qua child and well-being goods qua future adults (i.e., preparatory goods) therefore may be more prominent and identifiable at the secondary level.

In addition to serving unique student populations, each of the four school programs has distinct characteristics. The International Baccalaureate Program (IB) is marketed by the International Baccalaureate accreditation body as a program that encourages students to “think critically and solve complex problems” and become part of a program that “can lead them to some of the highest-ranking universities around the world” (International Baccalaureate, 2022a). One of their most recent blog articles (International Baccalaureate, 2022b) is entitled “Past, present, future: the IB is a leading edge in a changing world” indicating that the IB program provides a step above other educational opportunities. The MET school program follows the Big Picture Learning Network’s “One Student at a Time” philosophy, which includes two days each week of internship in field placements, inquiry-based research projects, portfolios of learning and presentations about their learning to community (Seven Oaks School Division, n.d.). The French Immersion program in Manitoba espouses to develop proud, confident, engaged, plurilingual global citizens (Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, n.d.).

Purposeful sampling by school communities and different programs was desired to answer the research questions for this study. Though this study would have benefited from investigating into the social class backgrounds of students (and its role in opportunities for educational goods), in practice it was quite difficult to definitively cluster students into social classes. Therefore, this study instead focused on groups of students in schools and across

different school programs. As part of the interview process, teachers were asked to describe their student backgrounds as best they could. The following table outlines the individual participants by pseudonym as well as the stratified categorization of four distinct school communities in accordance with these descriptions:

Table 2

Description of participants, program, and student community

Teachers	School Community	Identify as First Nations or Métis (%)	Not Canadian Citizens/ First Generation Canadian (%)	Average Ind. Employment Income/Median Household Income (\$)	Description of student backgrounds
Zoe	International Baccalaureate Programs	*NA	*NA	*NA	Highly motivated, diverse backgrounds (race, religion, and gender)
Lee					Culturally diverse. Many middle and upper-middle class students.
Mei	MET Schools	*NA	*NA	*NA	High % with anxiety or depression, or mental health issues. Many low income.
Tom					Diverse student population, many living with anxiety.
Ben					Mixed w many ADD/ADHD & newcomers.
Ann	Core Programs	21.8	8.9 / 21.9	45,621 / 54,463	Low SES.
Cal		8.1	24.5 / 55.2	35,968 / 80, 694	Mostly newcomers.
Pam					Culturally & economically diverse; many kids in foster homes.
Jen	French Immersion				Mixed income/middle class neighbourhood

*Because the IB and MET programs attract students from a wide catchment, it is not possible to use census data to make determinations of social class background based on the school location.

**Data sourced from City of Winnipeg, 2016.

Recruitment

Before recruitment took place, this research study was approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. Teachers were recruited through a variety of approaches. In the case of one school division, a letter was forwarded to high school principals across the division (Appendix C) and in some cases those school principals forwarded a recruitment email with a recruitment letter to their teaching staff (see Appendices C and B). Teachers were also contacted by email through informal social channels with the invitation to participate (Appendix B). Interested participants were invited to contact me through email to set up an interview and ask any questions. A total of nine teachers agreed to be involved in the study.

Data Collection

The specific steps involved in the data collection process are fairly standard to qualitative research in the field of Education. Interviews took place between March and July of 2020, mainly over zoom with one exception, which took place in person. Interviews were conducted during the covid-19 pandemic, however because it was so early in the pandemic, teacher responses focussed mainly on pre-pandemic well-being concerns. The duration of interviews ranged from 60 to 75 minutes. Each participant signed a consent form (Appendix A) at the outset of the interview and were given the opportunity to ask questions throughout. Participants were also reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty. Interviews were

recorded using VoiceRecordPro application on the PI's password protected phone and transcribed onto a Microsoft word file. Participants were given the opportunity to review their transcripts through a member checking process and make any changes they wished. There were minimal to no physical, psychological and/or emotional risks that seemed to arise for the participants in this study. Once the interviews were complete, participants were thanked for their time and sent an honorarium (\$20 gift card), which was approved by the Research Ethics Board in advance.

The structure of the interview guide (Appendix E) was crafted in a way that did not ask participants to directly comment on, or provide examples for, each of the six educational goods. Rather, the guide asks broad questions about how participants understand their students' well-being needs and how they teach for well-being. This approach allowed me to mine participant transcripts for the phrases and ideas that could be classified under the six educational goods and potentially offer a more accurate picture of how they give consideration (or do not give consideration) to each of these goods. However, this approach runs the risk of missing important information, ideas, or examples that participants could have shared for each educational good. Perhaps, for instance, participants just did not think to mention a particular educational good on that particular day of the interview while they indeed prioritize this good in their daily practice. Further limitations to this study are outlined below.

Data Analysis

Once member checks were completed, each transcript was migrated into the qualitative analysis program NVivo. NVivo is a program that allows researchers to categorize and visualize

data in different ways in a process known as Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Each transcript was then coded using both structural and emergent themes using a systematic approach. A code “in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2016, p. 4).

Following Saldaña (2016, p. 22), some questions that were considered when working on preliminary codes were: (a) What are people doing? What are they trying to accomplish? (b) How exactly do they do this? What specific means and/or strategies do they use? (c) How do members talk about, characterize, and understand what is going on? (d) What assumptions are they making?

In the data analysis process, *structural codes* consisted of the six educational goods for well-being from Brighouse et al. (2018), using the definitions and examples above as a guide for categorization properties. Subcategories were also identified, such as “critical thinking” under “democratic competence” and “good communication with teachers” under “healthy personal relationships.” *Emergent codes* constituted any codes that fell outside of the structural codes. For example, when teachers spoke about the importance of sleep and addressing sleep habits with students, this emergent code was labelled “sleep.”

A total of 74 codes were identified, which included both structural and emergent codes. A complete list of all codes is provided in Tables 2 and 3 below. Once all the codes were identified for each transcript, parent and child codes were identified. Parent codes were defined as broad categories while child codes were subcategories nested within parent codes. In the case of the structural codes, the six educational goods defined by the theoretical framework were defined

as the parent codes, while child codes (or subcodes) were identified within each parent code (e.g., the code teacher-student communications was defined as a child code under healthy personal relationships). The process for emergent codes was a little bit different. Once all the emergent codes were identified, then a clustering process took place where I defined a parent code based on a group of child codes that were closely related. In other words, codes were clustered together by theme in a process that is common in qualitative research (Creswell, 2008; see Tables 2 and 3). Lastly, many phrases were coded under more than one child code. Take the following quote as an example:

Really what I try and do is I'm learning to know where the line is in terms of pushing students in terms of academics, but walking back with individual students when that's not working. An example that I can give you is a student who has been diagnosed with anxiety in my advisory. Sometimes she'll come to school and she'll be in tears and so I've learned to work with her and talk with her and give her the space to make decisions about what she wants to do. (Ben, MET program teacher)

This quote was assigned the structural code "personal autonomy," and emergent codes "anxiety," and "academic success." In the second phase of the analysis process, "personal autonomy," and "trade-offs" were assigned parent codes, while "anxiety" was assigned a child code grouped under the parent code of mental health. "Academic success" was assigned a child code under the parent code of "trade-offs."

Finally, the CAQDAS produced several visual representations of the codes and themes that correspond to each research question. Code frequency overall was compared, as well as themes from different school programs in order to determine the substantive differences between schools whose students come from different school programs. In addition to school programs, the categorization of different goods for well-being by Brighouse et al. (2018) guided the organization of the data analysis and findings.

Findings

As mentioned above, the objectives for this study were to explore teachers' understanding of the well-being needs of their students and the well-being goods that teachers are focussed on conferring to their students across different school settings. The research questions that this study looked to answer were:

1. What are teachers' understandings of student educational goods for well-being?
2. How are well-being goods differently conferred and prioritized based on student community and school program?

Following, I first outline the educational goods for well-being that were identified in nine interviews through structural codes and emergent codes (Research Question 1), before moving on to reviewing stratifications of educational goods for well-being by school community (Research Question 2).

Educational Goods for Well-Being: Findings Concerning Research Question 1

The Structural Codes

The cumulative findings from all nine interviews by coding frequency clustered into structural themes (i.e., the framework by Brighouse et al., 2019) are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Summary of structural codes

Parent code	Child code	Number of coding references	Aggregate coding references
Democratic competence		26	43
	Critical thinking	15	
	Sustainability (environmental)	2	

Economic productivity		11	27
	Career preparation	9	
	Perseverance	7	
Healthy personal relationships		16	66
	Communication with teachers	16	
	Need for community	5	
	Respectful behaviour	1	
	Teacher-student relationships	28	
Personal autonomy		13	45
	Boundaries	2	
	Rules	5	
	Confidence in learning	6	
	Power and authority	6	
	Problem solving skills	6	
	Student voice and choice	7	
Personal fulfillment		13	54
	Identity and self-discovery	20	
	Self-esteem and self-worth	19	
	Well-being as ongoing and unique	2	
Treating others as equals		10	10

As Table 2 shows, the theme that appeared most frequently when participants were asked about goods for well-being in their classrooms were healthy personal relationships (n= 66 where n is the number of coded items) with teacher student relationships accounting for 28 codes, or 42% of codes within this theme. The theme that appeared second most frequently is personal fulfilment (n=54) with identity and self-discovery (n=20 or 52%) and self-esteem and self-worth (n=19 or 35%) appearing most frequently in this theme. On the other hand, the least frequent educational good that appeared was treating others as equals while the second least frequent educational good was economic productivity (n=27). One potential reason for economic productivity appearing so little may be that the questions focussed on identifying educational goods for well-being when perhaps teachers see economic productivity as something outside of

well-being. For each of the six educational goods, subthemes and key examples arose. In what follows, I discuss these recurring subthemes and key examples for each of the six educational goods defined in the theoretical framework, organized by most frequent to least frequent.

Healthy Personal Relationships. The educational good for well-being that appeared most frequently in all nine interviews combined was healthy personal relationships (n=66), which are defined as intimate, positive relationships with others and require certain attributes such as emotional openness, kindness, a willingness to take risks with one's feelings. Lee stated one of the more common sentiments in the field of education which is that "the relationship is the most important thing." The relationship that emerged as the focus in these interviews was the student-teacher relationship. All participants spoke about the importance of a good relational rapport with students, building positive relationships with students, and maintaining an open and personal relationship with students. Building trust with students was a core idea throughout the theme of healthy personal relationships. Participants also spoke about how positive and trusting relationships between students and teachers, renders greater or improved academic achievement. Examples of teachers building trust with students included getting to know student interests, being available to support students in crisis or hard times and respecting the knowledge that they bring with them to school. Sustained contact with students was a recurring theme both for MET school teachers, who work with the same students all four years of high school, as well as core teachers and IB teachers who spoke about the benefits of teaching the same students repeatedly. Finally, the connection between mental health and positive teacher-

student relationships was raised by three participants. One quote that illustrates this connection came from Zoe, who said,

Really, I think that many issues surrounding their own mental health would be dissipated if they felt like you know they had a connection with that person, that adult, in the in the classroom and they think it can talk to them about what is going on. (Zoe, IB teacher)

This quote shows that teachers believe they can, and/or that it is important to, provide opportunities for healthy personal relationships for students as well as contribute to their current well-being.

Relatedly, the ways that teachers and student communicate with one another was highlighted as important for students' healthy personal relationships. Examples of ways that students communicate with teachers include, crying in their class, expressing that they want to drop out, speaking about their stress or anxiety, sharing personal details about their life or interests, and even talking to their teacher about crisis situations. Two participants spoke about how they take on the role of a guidance counselor at times with their students. For instance, Tom explains that,

I've been saying this year that I don't get preps anymore or I don't plan to work because I'm just setting myself up... and I know that there will be one or two kids who will be crying and will stay behind and I'll talk to them. I'm basically like a part-time counselor. I just prepare for the fact that these kids, or somebody, is going to be in a crisis and I'll have to respond to that crisis. Most of it is mental health stuff this year. It's like, 'Oh can I talk to you?' and she cries and tells me about suicidal ideation. (Tom, MET program teacher)

This quote demonstrates the relationship that Tom appears to have with his students, which includes regular and open communication as well as the invisible labour that he takes on (a theme which will be explored further on under the emergent parent code of "Teachers' own mental health"). Not all students feel comfortable opening up about personal issues to their

teachers, however. For instance, Jen, Zoe, and Cal all spoke about how they often do not know what is going on with their students under the surface of things. Cal mentioned that he is aware that many of his students communicate about personal concerns to his female teaching partner and he wonders whether his gender identity/expression may have something to do with students not opening up to him,

We have these school surveys that say kids are like super anxious and super depressed, but then I don't see it, so I don't know if the kids aren't sharing with me because I'm a male, or because I'm you know less personable. I don't know they're not sharing because of their culture. (Cal, Core teacher)

If open communication and trusting relationships with teachers are important components of the healthy personal relationship domain in schools, then identifying barriers for students to communicate openly with their teachers is an area that may require further attention and inquiry.

Finally, the need that students have for community appeared in four different interviews. These participants spoke about the importance of community in the classroom and school, as well as having a peer community. There seemed to be a connection between community and feelings of motivation to learn and connectedness to school.

Personal Fulfilment. After healthy personal relationships, participants identified personal fulfilment as an educational good that concerns them the most. Personal fulfilment is defined by Brighouse et al. (2018) as complex and satisfying labour including opportunities to exercise and develop one's talents and meet challenges. Child codes in this domain are identity and self-discovery, self-esteem and self-worth, and well-being as unique and ongoing. These child codes reveal that participants are mainly concerned with students' self-knowledge and confidence or

belief in themselves to achieve personal fulfilment. Lee speaks about students “being ready to learn and being comfortable in their own skin.” Several participants from the MET and Core communities commented on how many of their students just do not try in school because they do not believe they can or will be successful. Ann mentioned that she worries about whether her students “feel brave enough and confident enough to continue and be successful” after they leave what she calls “the bubble” of high school. Participants suggested that students are still figuring out their place in school, in their family, in their peer groups, and in society and that the process of identity formation is still incomplete while they are in high school. Mei spoke about how her students do not have confidence in who they are and what they’re good at,

We spend a month to two months talking about identity and belonging and what does that mean for them. And many of them don’t really know the answer because they’ve never really had that opportunity to discuss it. And so what does it mean and what are you good at? And a lot of them think “Nothing! I’m good at nothing!” and so it lets us know that we need to change that narrative because it’s not like you’re good at nothing. So just having those things and that confidence you know. (Mei, MET program teacher)

Taking time to talk to her students about what they’re good at seems to address the domain of personal fulfilment. While Mei taught at the grade nine level in the MET school at the time of her interview, Ben spoke about the career development credit at the MET school at the grade 12 level and its potential for developing personal fulfilment:

Our career development credit is a credit that is delivered through internships. We notice a remarkable improvement in how students carry themselves and interact with each other as a result of when they start working with adults in their internship. So around mid grade 9 we’ll see a massive leap in maturity and confidence because they’re spending their time around adult mentors all day usually doing something that kids are interested in. (Ben, MET program teacher)

Ben went on to explain the benefits for students’ sense of self through the workplace and project-based programming:

Students don't know themselves very well because they're not given the opportunity to understand themselves through work, through conversation, through other people. So, are we giving students the opportunity to think and reflect about who they are, what motivates them and what their interests are? Giving them the space to pursue that. (Ben, MET program teacher)

The programming at the MET school appears to contribute with intention to building students' capacity for personal fulfillment through internships. Though they do not offer internships, Lee spoke about the IB program and its portfolio of required courses as a schooling process that "creates the well-rounded student who should have by the time they leave high school a very clear idea if they do love history or if chemistry really is for them or maybe the pathway is going to be different." Ann and Mei spoke the most about students' self-confidence and self-worth. Both participants emphasized how much they wanted all of their students to have enough self-confidence, self-awareness, and self-worth to be successful, or in other words to overcome challenges, once they graduate from high school. These concerns may be a result of them both teaching mostly grade nine students, since this transition year can be difficult and yield specific experiences related to identity formation. However, throughout high school the theme of personal fulfilment appeared to be a concern for teachers in this study.

Personal Autonomy. This educational good is defined as the ability to make and act on well-informed and well-thought-out judgements as well as engaging in activities and relationships that reflect one's sense of who they are and what matters to them (Brighthouse et al., 2018, p. 23-24). The child codes identified by participants in this study were "boundaries," "rules," "confidence in learning," "power and authority," "problem solving skills," and "student voice and choice." For this particular theme, the codes were divided into two interpretations of

personal autonomy: the importance of limiting students' autonomy for the sake of giving them stability and routine, and broadening students' autonomy to help them explore their freedoms.

In terms of limiting students' autonomy, participants spoke about the importance of structure, routine, and stability in the school environment. Ann commented that "For myself when I say boundaries I mean like boundaries slash rules. Especially in grade nine 'cause they are coming from junior high, and all of a sudden they have all this freedom, one of my boundaries is that you're not late for my class." If a student is late to Ann's class, she asks them to wait in the hallway until she lets them in. In this case, Ann wants to carve out rules for her students so that they do not lose focus of the school routines and expectations. Perhaps she does not believe that certain students will exercise their autonomy or freedom in a way that will best serve their current well-being (by not missing class content) and future well-being (to help them develop punctual habits) and so she implements rules and consequences to help them make the kinds of choices that will serve their well-being. Ben coupled the notions of support and structure together as important for students. He says, "I think students really need structure and support at the same time. To have consistency for kids to know what to expect and know who I am and to provide formative assessment." Here, he is indicating that he does not offer students full autonomy, but that he guides his students in predictable and supportive ways. For these autonomy-limiting interpretations, routine and predictability are implemented for their students to feel safe and successful. One educational good seems to trump another (e.g., the need for students to feel safe or access academic opportunities trumps their access to freedom and self-determination). The inference on this view is that in order for students to build the capacity for

autonomy, it is important to limit their options and freedoms perhaps in what teachers view as age-appropriate ways.

Several participants spoke about the importance of autonomy-supportive approaches and about how they adapt to various individual student needs according to interests and abilities. Student voice and choice was cited (n=7) by Ben, Mei, Pam, and Zoe. Pam seemed particularly enthusiastic about offering students choices in her classroom, to the point where she invites students to tell her what kinds of assessment she could be doing besides giving tests: “I’ve given choice all the time and I say to them ‘if you have a better way to do this, then tell me and they can’t think of a better idea’” (Pam, Core teacher). Pam noted that her students don’t have suggestions for how else she can assess their learning, but that she is often changing her approaches to assessment and evaluation. Similarly, Zoe mentioned that she picks texts that are reflective of her students’ experiences and backgrounds. For example, she chooses texts in response to the lived experiences of some of her students. Tom, Mei and Cal all used the phrase “problem solving skills” when answering the question about what they wish to confer to their students while they work with them in their classrooms. Some of the problem solving skills appeared to be linked to students’ developing academic abilities for the sake of academic success, but there were other ways in which problem solving was understood. For instance, problem solving was conceptualized more broadly by Mei who expressed a concern for her students becoming self-sufficient later in life,

I think one of the things is the not knowing piece. A lot of them struggle with “I don’t know how to do this” or “I’ve never been told” and it’s interesting because they live in a world where google is so readily available to them. Like, not knowing how to take the bus or not knowing how to do something when it’s so easy to look up. It can really drive me bonkers, and so that attitude of ‘Well, I don’t know how to do this so I’m not doing it’ my

hope is that when they graduate they may not know how to do something, but they can go and ask so-and-so or know they can go and look it up. (Mei, MET program teacher)

This quote perhaps best exemplifies a desire for students to develop the ability to make and act on well-informed and well-thought-out judgements. Mei further shared that she asks her students to set personal, academic, and well-being goals at the beginning of each year and that she supports them in various ways to achieve those goals by the end of the year. Finally, Ben emphasized that it was important to him that he helps his students learn about “things that are important to them” and “giving them the opportunity to share their voice in workshops, through community, through sharing with their peers, sharing ideas.” This last quote shows how perhaps personal autonomy and personal fulfilment may be connected in schools. Ben’s quote suggests that when his students autonomously choose learning pathways that are important to them, they have special opportunities to experience personal fulfillment. This quote also loosely connects these two educational goods to healthy personal relationships since there is a component of communicating and sharing the learning in community.

Democratic Competence. This educational good is defined as the ability to “be effective and morally aware participants in social life and political processes” and “the ability to assess evidence to bear on claims and arguments made by others” (Brighthouse et al., 2018, p. 24-25). As Table 2 above shows, the child codes identified by participants, in addition to comments coded generally as democratic competence (n=26), were critical thinking (n=15) and sustainability (n=2).

General skills and competencies were identified under the area of democratic competence by eight of the nine participants. Some items that teacher-participants highlighted

for students in this category were: applying their learning to new concepts and problems, taking action on their learning in their community, thinking critically about media and information, applying a critical lens to their learning, engaging in logical reasoning, expressing their opinion in different ways, discussing hard topics and questions about matters of justice and how the world works, and becoming lifelong active learners. Pam spoke about how she hopes that her students will view themselves as both learners and educators out in the world. She aptly points out that in today's technological age,

[Students] have access to so much information but without context they can't fully understand what they're seeing or... and those dinner table conversations I hope, not that they're going to be argumentative, but that they're going to be able to identify you know, how their parents are seeing things, and how they're seeing things and that they can be educators as well as learners. I know not every family works like that but that's the ideal situation. Or when they are given a voice, what are they going to say? I want them to ask inward and outward questions. (Pam, Core teacher)

Democratic competence for Pam and other participants demands that teachers have an appreciation for the lived reality and social context of their students and helping their students become consciously and deliberately aware of how other people see things; and then assess the views they are exposed to, eventually finding the courage and voice to express some of their own views and continue to ask questions.

Relatedly, the phrase "critical thinking" was used by six participants. In every case, critically thinking was presented as something desirable and important for development. Participants expressed that they want their students to develop critical thinking skills through and about their academic subject areas as well as critical thinking skills needed for daily life. The emphasis for nearly all participants, seemed to be about developing these skills for the future,

rather than for their current well-being. Jen echoes Pam's sentiments about preparing students to be able to assess and express different perspectives when she stated that,

[students] are going to need to be able to think critically and not only be able to express their opinion but also try to be objective about things and write things down in different ways. And create too. It's all of those things put together and also trying to give them cultural experiences. There is not just one culture either. French language is spoken in how many different cultures across the globe, right?" (Jen, French Immersion teacher).

As a French immersion teacher, Jen shared the view that communication, creating, cultural experiences, and critical thinking are all linked together. Critical thinking on this view, is part of what it means to participate in social life and political processes. Critical thinking seems to also be linked with a student's sense of identity and connection to the world. When asked about what kinds of goods for well-being he prioritizes, Tom noted

Critical thinking is the first one that pops into my head. And that goes back to what I was saying before about active learners and seeing yourself as part of this world and when you are taking in any information, that it's filtered through this critical thinking filter. That's really important." (Tom, MET program teacher).

The process of becoming a social actor in the world seems to be top of mind for most of the teachers in this study. For example, Zoe spoke passionately about how she integrates pedagogies for compassion, empathy-building, and advocacy in her class,

We talk a lot about compassion, about critical thinking, about being able to be open minded and understanding, right, because there are so many concerns that our world has that we're certainly not going to be able to address without a real thinking and feeling population that has empathy for other people so that we can you know tackle these enormous concerns that we have in terms of the environment, gender, as well as indigenous rights and black rights and I mean there are a whole gamut of experiences that, well, intersectionality that they all end up in the same place right. (Zoe, IB program teacher)

Zoe's statements about compassion, critical thinking, and understanding intersectionality highlight how democratic competence and treating others as equals may be connected in

schools. Zoe wants her students to feel connected to their communities and the world, which for her, calls for thinking and feeling about other people's circumstances. In this way, to participate in community and to see others with compassion seems to link the educational goods of democratic competence and treating others as equals.

Economic Productivity. This educational good is defined as the ability to participate effectively in the economy and having a disposition to work (Brighthouse et al., 2018, p. 23).

Economic productivity rendered 11 codes with nine additional codes for career preparation and seven codes for perseverance. Eight participants touched upon the theme of economic preparation and success at least once. However, relative to other educational goods for well-being, this ranked second to last. Notably, Lee pushed back on the idea that high school teachers should focus on preparing students for university and economic success.

A lot of these students think that that will be a failure and so I think our overarching expectation of what success looks like is far too linked to economic success. And single mindedness, right? That 'I'm going to be a doctor', which they all are, none of us are that sick really. And then if I change my mind, it's a failure. So that I'm just going to sort of put that out there. So, what are the things I could confer on students that could make them more well in themselves and more well in their relationships and so thereby promoting the wellness of others: self-awareness I think it's just the number one. (Lee, IB program teacher)

Lee implied that a student's self-awareness, and decision-making based on knowledge of oneself, is more important than pursuing advantageous labour market opportunities that do not reflect one's interests or strengths. Rather, pursuing labour market opportunities that do not match one's interests and strengths creates a sense of failure or missed opportunity. However, the seven other participants noted that they wish to prepare their students for success after they leave high school, which includes economic success. Ann shared that she would like to

conduct a study one day to follow-up with students who do not attend post-secondary education five years after they graduate to learn more about how high school could have helped them to be more successful after graduation. Ben sees a direct connection between career development and other aspects of well-being,

I have found that the career development credit is really useful as a vehicle for having conversations and assigning work that can speak to the idea of well-being. The career development curriculum talks about work-life boundaries, interactions with people, thinking about our own selves in a workplace, it talks about self-management, personal growth, so I find it a pretty useful curriculum. (Ben, MET program teacher)

Ben's approach demonstrates how it is possible to think about economic productivity through a lens of well-being in schools. Finally, perseverance was raised by Cal and Ann on several occasions. They spoke about the importance of resilience, learning to cope with failure, demonstrating grit, and overcoming challenges which can be traits linked to economic productivity and honing a disposition to work.

Treating Others as Equals. The least frequently cited educational good that from the nine participants in this study was treating others as equals, which Brighouse et al. (2018) characterizes as having equal respect for all persons and viewing all people as having fundamentally equal moral status. This educational good includes the idea that everybody has the same basic human rights regardless of their sex, race, religion, nationality, and so forth. A total of 10 general codes were classified under this theme, with no child codes identified. Four participants, Tom, Ann, Lee and Zoe, identified this educational good as important to them, with Zoe accounting for six of the 11 total references (55%) in this category. Most of the comments focused on academic and curricular connections that include a focus on moral issues related to

equity. For example, Tom spoke about how he infuses social justice and equity into his math problems: “I do a lot of problems of the day and a lot of them have a social justice component. They’re not just looking at the train travelling in this direction... they’re talking about ... all I can think of is corona virus, thinking about infectious diseases and looking at statistics around that and the inequities of that” (Tom, MET school teacher). Zoe spoke about how she selects texts that address the complexity of social issues and diversity to try and build empathy. Ann also conveyed that building empathy is a disposition that is important to her. She recalled a group of students she worked with two years earlier,

As for dispositions and attitudes, definitely empathy. It’s hard with teenagers. I had a group two years ago that were really homophobic. More so than normal teenagers who are just kind of uncomfortable with sexuality. They were just like always making homophobic comments and all this kind of stuff and so just over and over again saying even if you’re joking. So, you know so empathy is a big one that I would like them to take away with them. (Ann, Core teacher)

However, Ann never shared with me whether she addressed this problem in her classroom either through or outside of her curriculum. Zoe, who teaches English Language Arts, spoke in detail about how she incorporates equity education in her classes,

We talk a lot about equity. We also talk a lot about compassion, about critical thinking, about being able to be open minded and understanding, right, because there are so many concerns that our world has that we’re certainly not going to be able to address without a real thinking and feeling population that has empathy for other people so that we can you know tackle these enormous concerns that we have in terms of the environment, gender, as well as Indigenous rights and Black rights and I mean there are a whole gamut of experiences that, well, intersectionality that they all end up in the same place right? (Zoe, IB program teacher)

There is a connection for Zoe between empathy, critical thinking, and learning about experiences that expose human rights issues and anti-oppression. Treating others as equals however, did not

appear to be a primary consideration for most of the participants in this study when asked about the well-being needs of their students.

Summary of Emergent Codes and Themes

In addition to the structured themes organized by Brighouse et al.'s (2019) educational goods, many important themes emerged in the coding process. The overall findings from all nine interviews by coding frequency clustered into emergent themes is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Summary of emergent codes

Parent code	Child code	Number of coding references	Aggregate coding references
Assessment and evaluation		1	5
	Data collection	1	
	School surveys	1	
	Reporting success	2	
Communication skills		5	6
	Collaboration	1	
Diversity		10	11
	Culturally responsive curriculum	1	
Learning strategies		17	41
	Engagement	7	
	Homework	1	
	Learning theory	5	
	Motivation	1	
	Attendance	3	
	Need for routine	3	
	Physical classroom spaces	1	
	Self-regulation	3	
Literacy skills		8	9
	Financial literacy	1	
Teachers own mental health		8	20
	Invisible labour for teachers	12	
		31	228

Trade-offs between goods for well-being	Academic preparation		36	
	Academic success		35	
	Causes and responsibility		2	
	Distributive justice (academic)		31	
	Distributive justice (non-academic)		20	
	Expectations from the school		1	
	Expectations from the family		10	
	Preparation for the future		36	
	Shift in teacher expectations		8	
	Stratification by SES or school		18	
Welfare needs			14	113
	Cell phones		6	
	Criminal behaviour		1	
	Maslow's hierarchy of needs		2	
	Mental health		25	
		Crisis	6	
		Anxiety	17	
		Guidance dept.	3	
		Stress	5	
	Need to be seen		3	
	Nutrition program		4	
	Poverty		4	
	Self-care		2	
		Exercise/meditation	1	
	Self-harm		5	
	Sense of safety		5	
	Sleep		10	

In what follows, I report on each of the parent codes in order of the frequency in which they were identified in the interviews.

Trade-offs between Goods for Well-being. Participants explicitly or implicitly stated that they make trade-offs between different kinds of goods for well-being in their classroom. Participants spoke about academic trade-offs they make, such as catching kids up who fall behind versus providing enrichment, as well as trade-offs between academic and social-

emotional needs. They also spoke about prioritizing between different kinds of well-being needs, such as addressing nutrition, sleep, or cell phone use. And they described how it can be difficult to know which students to spend the most time with. In terms of academic preparation (n= 36) and academic success (n= 35) , participants commented on how they do their best to prepare students for the next stage of their academic journey. Cal, for instance, sees part of his role as preparing his students to be competitive at the university level,

I'm a little bit sceptical about those post-secondary environments, I don't see them as welcoming friendly areas where students can succeed. I see them as sort of as cutthroat organizations that are meant to weed out people. That's not a judgment on them that's just how I view them. It's almost like you have a quota of this many people can get into medicine so this is how we're going to decide that. And so I want my students to be able to navigate that... that weeding out process successfully and not get weeded out so I'm looking at those things as my, this is what society has set up as the filters or success in the economic productivity. OK well I'm going to do my best to prepare students to get through those filters. (Cal, Core teacher)

Though it isn't made explicit, it seems as though Cal trades off what may have otherwise been his preferred approach to learning math to prepare his students for a less inclusive and less friendly approach to learning in a post-secondary environment. Zoe and Jen mentioned how they make trade-offs, such as using teaching skills that they find less useful and relevant to their student population that, however, prepare students for the provincial standardized test in grade 12, which counts for 30% of their grade. Ben raised how academic success and mental health are connected, and that he works deliberately to strike the right balance between addressing the two:

I think academic success plays a role in mental health. Like if a student is doing well in something academically that can often help them in other areas. We're never going to solve everything. But am I able to differentiate with them so that they can do work that they feel successful in without their anxiety in...? Are they able to do work that they're successful in while acknowledging that they have attention deficit? Self-harm, if they're feeling successful and happy and content in their schoolwork, then that can draw them

out of that space of depression or questioning or whatever? So, I do consider mental health important, but I'm also aware that if I just focused on that with everybody that needed it, it would be a slippery slope to then not moving forward and it snowballing other issues coming in. (Ben, MET program teacher)

As this quotation suggests, Ben is aware of the trade-offs that he is making between focusing on mental health versus academic success and believes that the trade-offs he is making optimizes how he can support students' overall well-being. Ben also shared that he is learning more and more how to respond to each of his students, depending on their unique and changing needs. In some cases, this requires high academic expectations, and in other cases, he might understand that a student needs to take frequent mental breaks. These academic trade-offs are connected to at least two other themes, learning strategies and welfare needs, both of which will be covered below.

Other trade-offs that were identified were managing expectations from the school as well as the family. In particular, participants who work with students who are new to Canada discussed the process of navigating cultural differences between home life and school as well as noticing how sometimes expectations at home can impact student's well-being. Participants themselves recognized how they put pressure on their students and that encouraging students without putting too much pressure on them can be such a delicate balance to strike.

Finally, both academic and non-academic distributive concerns were raised for this theme. Earlier we saw that Cal tried to prepare his students for success in competitive post-secondary environments, but he has questions about how our society has agreed to streaming out students who do not succeed in a fixed amount of time: "for me it's just more when the students fail in that environment, as a society why do we then stream them out. Why don't we give them an opportunity to re-do, or to find success?" (Cal, Core teacher). Cal's concerns point

to a question of distributive justice and how school systems distribute opportunities for success. By streaming children in or out of certain options, students are given more or less access to certain fields of study and future career options as well as certain kinds of opportunities for flourishing. Relatedly, Ben shared his personal challenges with the growing list of competing priorities, both academic and non-academic, for teachers to respond to the needs of students.

The number of students who are struggling with mental health is increasing exponentially. I don't have an answer for why. And the pressures that we as teachers are put under in terms of the content that we have to deliver, feeding kids, being a police officer, being a social worker, like all these other hats that we have to wear. It ... no wonder our PISA scores suck, right? It just... it's remarkable. I think kids are really resilient, but I worry at the same time they're not. I worry that they're not able to handle these new challenges that they're facing. (Ben, MET program teacher)

The context of Ben's quote above seems to be that we are living in a rapidly changing world with new pressures and demands on students, which in turn implicates further demands on teachers beyond teaching curricular content. These further demands require prioritizations and trade-offs when there is no increase in resources or funding. Zoe finds a similar phenomenon to be true at her school,

So, it's just every teenager every person in our postmodern society is dealing with a certain amount of anxiety and depression and other problems, mental health problems, and then beyond that they're further impacted by an incredible amount of work and in some cases not enough support. (Zoe, IB program teacher)

She, like Ben, believes that in the wider social context our students live in today, there is a prevalence of anxiety and depression. If there are not enough resources or supports to address these factors that lead to ill-being or negative outcomes, then there is a resource and distribution concern that teachers seem to be left to address as best they can. Jen shared that "the unfortunate thing about French immersion is that we are pretty pressed for resources" since very few support staff speak French. She explained that students who require resource

support for academic or non-academic concerns often cannot access help in most subjects. Lee also shared a concrete example of when she needed to tell her students that she has finite resources and time,

We ended up having a couple of evening sessions and when I did that it, basically again went back to: 'just get it done. It doesn't have to be perfect, it just needs to pass. You could be working for perfect but you don't have time for that. It's too late, you know. You just have to get it done.' But also saying, look I'm not spending the entire evening here with you. This is already however many hours that I'm not with my family and that I have given these to you but that's it. There are limits to time and resources. (Lee, IB program teacher)

Distributive justice concerns arose when participants discussed the treatment of students from different backgrounds, different streams, and different schools. More will be discussed on this topic below.

Finally, distributive justice concerns were raised indirectly when participants spoke about stratifications, or streaming, between schools and classrooms. Three participants unequivocally stated that the level of academic and non-academic attention and support they could offer students was a direct result of the school culture and resources they had available to them. As one example, at his former school, Tom would see kids in the hallway and think to himself that he needed to check in with them, but would often not get around to it,

In my old school, I felt (and this is one of the best things about switching to my current school) I always felt I was pulled in eight directions and you know, I would have kids come in for math and I could tell that this one kid is struggling and I had this happen a lot. I would make a mental note 'this kid is struggling, when I see them in the hallway I have to pull them aside and check on them' but then I just wouldn't because other things would come up and teaching in a traditional high school or middle school is just insanity thrown at you all day. It was very different there. (Tom, MET program teacher)

Notably, Tom uses the imagery of insanity being thrown at him to describe his workday at his former school. If a teacher sees their work in schools in this way, there is good reason to think

that important trade-offs are occurring for teachers in Tom's situation. Also notable is that Tom describes the shift away from the insanity as one of the "best things about switching" to the MET school. Though he did not elaborate on why this shift is positive, it seems plausible that he experiences more job satisfaction when he works within a context that allows him to support students in richer ways.

Pam also expressed that she sees the way she can support her students as stratified, perhaps sometimes by courses she teaches,

So, specifically what I teach is grade 9 math science, grade 11 biology. So that provides a really interesting perspective on the students in the system. Grade 9 is mandatory, grade 11 is optional (the class I teach). I think I'm becoming more aware of the bias that I have just entering those classes and how I navigate the curriculum based on the fact that these kids need to have it and these kids are choosing it; is different, I guess. I think the classroom teacher means I should be, or I strive to identify barriers and then it's my job to either eliminate them or reduce them. If I can't do that, because some things are very outside of my control, then my job is to help students navigate them. So, it's complicated. (Pam, Core teacher)

Pam stated that she strives to identify barriers and views her job, or role, as reducing or eliminating those barriers (though, she did not say what those barriers are). In some cases, she is limited in her ability to reduce or eliminate barriers and can only help students navigate those barriers. This suggests a differentiation in the kinds of supports Pam notices is required by different students, and that she can ostensibly provide for her students. She also acknowledges that she has implicit biases when it comes to her grade 9 mandatory courses compared with her option grade eleven courses. Though she does not elaborate on what this bias entails, her willingness to acknowledge that a bias exists points to the need for further examination of the differences in well-being opportunity, experience, and outcomes for students in different streams and from different backgrounds.

Welfare Needs. Mental health was the most frequently cited concern under the parent node of welfare needs in this study with six out of nine participants raising this as a concern. Cal (Core teacher) shared that he learned through “school surveys that kids are like super anxious and super depressed.” Participants also spoke about becoming aware of mental health problems either from students directly sharing with them, or from observing behaviours of students. Tom describes how one of his students sits under a table when they come to school. More generally, he worries about how his students struggling with mental health will function when they are out of school: “I have a girl who is not coming to school at all and how is she going to function in society? How are we going to ease her in so that she can function, right?”

Four participants spoke about navigating mental health crisis in their classrooms. The nature of these crisis included students sharing that they are self-harming, including cutting themselves, have suicidal ideation, or have attempted suicide. Ben shared that at his time at the MET school he has “had multiple cases of self-harm and multiple attempts at suicide.” Ann raised the important point that as a classroom teacher, she doesn’t

have any background in talking to someone who's going through, you know, their mom leaving them in the middle the night. All these crazy situations the kids that I deal with are going through all the stuff they tell me and I just never know how to respond. (Ann, Core teacher)

Ann raises an important point. Many teachers, myself included, encounter situations where they do not have the training to address it to their satisfaction. While this again might point to a resources or distribution problem, it may also point to the school division, or provincial school system, failing to build educator capacity to be able to address mental health concerns. In terms

of possible ways to address mental health concerns, Mei suggested that the place to start is in elementary school,

It turns out that a lot of the stuff that we see in high school where that mental health piece is a concern, it really stems from things that happened in elementary school or middle school. A lot of bullying or you know this student said she was teased and so she had a lot of anxiety around Phys Ed and then the teasing spread into the classroom and that's why she wasn't going to class because she would think people are looking at me, people are judging the people are you know mean. And her anxiety just got progressively worse and so when you look at things like that it's like how can we expect a kid that's going through this like I think of it like that like they're literally shaking and we're saying "Oh no you need to sit down and do math or you need to sit down and read this book with us" like it's just not possible. They just want to crawl up into a ball or become invisible. (Mei, MET program teacher)

Anxiety (n=17) and stress (n=5) were frequently cited mental health concerns at the high school level. Testimony by participants in this study suggests that more teacher education in the areas of stress, anxiety and mental health crisis is needed and at earlier levels prior to high school.

Other welfare concerns included sleep (n= 10), negative impacts of cell phones (n= 6), sense of safety (n= 5), poverty (n= 4), nutrition (n= 4), and the need to be seen (n= 3). Concerns about sleep ranged from students not getting enough sleep or not enough quality sleep, to students needing to sleep in class (associated with either chronic stress and anxiety or making choices to stay up too late). Cell phone usage was associated at times with sleep and other concerns from participants. Ann, Ben, and Zoe each expressed concerns about the negative impact that cell phone usage has on their students' sleep. Mei and Cal expressed concerns regarding cell phones related to cyber bullying and other negative impacts from social media. Mei (MET school teacher) believes "the kids who are always on their phones often struggle with social anxiety. They're looking for approval on social media." This sentiment was echoed in comments from Ann about her students' need to be seen. She described how some of her

students live with many siblings, several cousins, or extended family and in some cases has the impression that they do not get a lot of attention at home. Ann also expressed that when she makes a deliberate point to connect with students and get to know them, they tend to become more invested in attending and engaging in the classroom.

Nutrition programs were identified by two participants as one of the welfare needs that are considered in their school. Jen and Pam each expressed the importance of breakfast and lunch programs in their schools. Pam shared that her school feeds “100 kids per day” and that she has “quite a few kids in grade 9” in her room “that attend lunch club almost every day.”

Lastly, safety plays a large role in meeting student’s welfare needs.

So the first like most essential need is a safe space. I know in like Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, physical needs are below that, but I found just having a safe space was the biggest. So, you know not being put down they can be themselves they can just not talk to anybody if that's what they need. They can sit there hood up hoodie up and then just be there and feel safe. (Ann, Core teacher)

The construct of a physically and psychologically safe space, for Ann, appeared to include students’ freedom to make and act on their own decisions and be themselves at school.

According to participants in this study, these welfare needs are, in many cases, interconnected and have implications for students’ academic opportunities for success.

Other emergent codes. The remaining emergent parent codes that were shared as an educational good for well-being (or related) in this study are learning strategies (n= 41), teachers’ mental health (n= 20), diversity (n= 11), literacy skills (n= 9), communication skills (n= 6), and assessment and evaluation (n= 5). Learning strategies could arguably fit under the educational good for economic productivity and so I leave it up to the reader to determine

whether a separate classification is called for. The child codes for learning strategies that had at least 3 codes are engagement (n= 7), learning theory (n= 5), self-regulation skills (n= 3), need for routine (n= 3), and attendance (n = 3). Participants spoke about how they implement different pedagogical approaches in order to meet students' interests, values, and readiness to learn. They implement their knowledge and understanding of learning theories (e.g., Vygotsky's zone of proximal development) to engage their students and help move their learning forward. Jen made the connection between changing the way she approaches her assignments with her students and how this can reduce student stress,

You know so often what that would look like was taking their assignments and help them break them down into little manageable chunks for the students, breaking down the vocabulary, making tasks manageable and by doing that for other people and by doing that for myself because I was also teaching EAL, I think a big part of that has filtered into how I set up my assignments for my students who aren't English language learners, now they're French language learners, similar issues sometimes. But even just findings ways to make the same assignment less stressful. And I think I've become a person who has learned to pick her battles with what's really really worth getting worked up about. (Jen, French Immersion teacher)

Jen implemented her knowledge of learning theory to scaffold assignments for her students which, by her account, reduced the academic-related stress her students may have otherwise experienced. Participants also spoke about the importance of formative assessment and meaningful feedback throughout the learning process. Learning strategies also included helping students manage and break down tasks for themselves, keep organized, take effective notes, study effectively, and learn about how their brain works. There appeared to be a connection between students' understanding of how they learn and how they approach learning to their learner confidence, motivation, and risk taking. Pam (Core teacher) stated that her experience has led her to think that "by the time they get to grade 11, the kids who have been more

marginalized their life is so heavy that even finding the drive to try something hard is, like they, just can't." A statement that raises a potential relationship between a student's positioning, their mental health, their experience of learning new things, their ability to take risks or try new things, and their self-image. An area to explore further when conducting research directly with students.

The importance of teachers' own mental health surfaced as an area of concern for all nine participants. Jen noted that she experienced teacher burnout early in her career but that having a strong sense of team can help with teacher well-being.

Jen: So, ya, teaching is kind of weird because you work in teams but we are sort of islands. But we're lucky in our department, we have a pretty strong sense of team and I think that helps to contribute to our well-being.

Interviewer: Which is very important... teacher burnout is a real thing

Jen: Ya. I had one! It's really quite amazing when you realize that it happens and I was really young for it to happen. Although, at the same time I see some of our younger teachers and I can see that they're sort of on that trajectory of, you're going to burn out. (Jen, French Immersion teacher)

Tom, who has taught for over ten years, relayed that over time he has developed strategies to handle the workload and competing demands.

The needs are still there. I'm better at, and I have more tools now. But like for another teacher in my school who is 26 and it's her second year teaching and she is constantly overwhelmed because it's such an incredible learning curve... (Tom, MET program teacher)

Tom identified that the new teacher at his school is constantly overwhelmed, but Tom expressed some hope that with experience, teachers may be able to navigate their job successfully and without feeling overwhelmed. Lee, who has taught for 18 years, has developed some strategies that address her well-being,

I started painting with watercolors, when they forced me back to school (during the covid-19 pandemic) I decided to ride my bike every day to work. I talk about the things that I do with my students, so that they can see that this is something that is legitimate and achievable and real and part of just being a person. So, I do try to help them think of whether the things that you know rejuvenate and recharge them and, like what would you do if you had a whole day and you could choose what to do, and they haven't even really thought of the things that way. (Lee, IB program teacher)

Lee values modelling strategies for well-being for her students and gives consideration to what it is that she needs to rejuvenate and recharge. She also takes it upon herself to explicitly teach about well-being strategies, which she finds is something her students do not seem to have much experience with. Perhaps other teachers may find success in taking a similar approach as Lee does in her classroom.

Participants in this study spoke about their responsivity to cultural diversity and neurodiversity in their classrooms. Tom talked about the ways that he notices and responds to students with sensory processing challenges in his classroom and balances that with other needs in his classroom.

I'm just thinking about a handful of kids, but there are issues with sensory processing. Loud noises and bright lights are tough for them. And then you have the kids who are really high functioning and they need to have really challenging work and projects and they need to be social and they need to be active and participate. And you have to balance them with the kids who can barely leave the classroom. (Tom, MET program teacher)

Cal also tried to offer balance in his math curriculum to be culturally reflective and responsive to his students.

I can mention did you know that the number zero was discovered by an Indian mathematician and then my East Indian students are like "wow that's so cool I thought zero was from the Europeans" and I'm like "Europeans could not figure out zero for the life of them and had to borrow it from Indians who had it all along" and so that's empowering for them. I don't have the same anecdotes to empower my Indigenous students from a historical perspective yet, so I'm trying to figure that out. Cal, Core teacher)

Both Tom and Cal recognized the diversity in their classes and make deliberate efforts to respond to the diversity of students in their classes.

Literacy skills and communication skills were also noted by six participants as important as goods for student well-being. Depending on the participant, literacy skills seem to be related to several of Brighthouse et al.'s (2018) educational goods for well-being, such as personal autonomy, democratic competence, healthy personal relationships, economic productivity and personal fulfillment. However, because they did not squarely fit into one good, I've listed them as additional emergent themes. One of the specific types of literacy skills that was cited, were financial literacy skills, which placed emphasis on preparing students for living independently and responsibly as adults (personal autonomy and personal fulfillment). Several participants identified literacy as an important skill across all subject areas and in all areas of life. For instance:

I think the very first thing is literacy and I think it's a buzz word, but I honestly think it's one of the most important skills because they need to know what information they're being given, they need to know why, they need to know how to navigate it, they need to know how to express themselves, they need to know how to interpret things, so, I think all of that falls under literacy. (Pam, Core teacher)

Taking a broad interpretation of literacy, Pam connects literacy to information processing, critical thinking, problem solving, and expression (democratic competence and personal autonomy). Zoe (IB program teacher) linked literacy with building empathy when she states, "we need a literate population. I mean we need a population that is able to, want to read, read widely, and most importantly develop empathy from that reading right" (treating others as equals). Literacy and communication have the potential to span across all domains of educational goods as defined by Brighthouse et al. (2018), depending on how they are interpreted by each teacher.

The final emergent theme discussed here is assessment and evaluation as it relates to student well-being. Two participants expressed an interest in changing the reporting process to make it more conducive to student needs and well-being. One participant claimed that they would like to do away with test taking entirely. Another participant expressed an interest in collecting more data on student well-being and shifting assessment to find out more about what students are struggling with. The relationship between student well-being and assessment and evaluation processes is an area for further investigation and one that cannot be sufficiently addressed in this study. However, it may be useful to look to the field of Positive Education within Positive Psychology to consider the ways in which student assessments of well-being might feasibly support the data collection process.

Stratification: Findings Concerning Research Question 2

This study included nine participants from four different school programs: MET program (n= 3), Core programs (n= 3), International Baccalaureate program (n= 2), and French Immersion program (n= 1). Table 4 shows the averages for each of the six educational goods organized by school program. Averages were calculated by taking the total responses coded for the educational good divided by number of respondents in that school program. For example, under democratic competence, there were a total of twelve coded statements, which were then divided by 3 (number of participants working in MET programs) to yield an average score of 4. These averages give a very rough and preliminary sense for how different teachers in different school programs might prioritize different educational goods for well-being over others. Notably,

there was only one participant working in a French Immersion program and so that number is not an average but rather a total number (since the total responses would be divided by 1).

Table 4

Educational goods average response rates by school program

	MET	Core	IB	Fr. Imm.
Democratic Competence	4	6.7	4.5	2
Economic Productivity	1.7	5.3	1.5	3
Healthy Personal Relationships	7.7	5.7	10.5	5
Personal Autonomy	6.3	5.7	3.5	2
Personal Fulfilment	6.7	3.7	10.5	2
Treating Others as Equals	0.7	0.3	3.5	0

Though this qualitative study is not designed or validated to yield statistically significant results associated with quantitative mechanisms, there are some interesting findings in Table 4 that point toward areas worth further inquiry in a subsequent study. For instance, democratic competence appears to be cited roughly the same amount by MET and IB program teachers, while core teachers cited this educational good slightly above and the French Immersion teacher slightly below. The domain of economic productivity has an even more stark difference between Core program teachers and MET/IB program teachers. In this study, core program teachers typically described their students as having high needs and coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, therefore, it is worth investigating further whether teachers who work with kids from low SES tend to focus more on preparation for the future and the capacity to work. For healthy personal relationships, there notably were lower scores for the core and French immersion participants than the MET school participants (50% higher scores) and IB participants (100% higher scores). This raises another question about why healthy personal relationships

might be emphasized in IB programs and MET programs more than in more traditional classroom programs. Personal autonomy showed a different distribution from the previous three educational goods with French Immersion and IB programs showing significantly lower scores than the core and MET school programs. Personal fulfilment appeared to be very important for IB teachers, somewhat important for MET program teachers, and of little importance for core and French immersion teachers. Finally, treating others as equals was more important for IB teachers than for MET, core, and French immersion participants in this study.

Based on Table 4, it seems possible that educational goods for well-being may be differently stratified based on school program, which in turn, are stratified based on SES as well as other factors. As a next step, it would seem wise to investigate further and on a larger scale, the merits and mechanisms behind of these initial findings.

The same calculation was undertaken for the emergent codes of welfare needs and mental health and presented in Table 5 below. These codes were chosen in particular because of the literature that suggests these educational goods might look different depending on school program and social status. For instance, I might expect to see less responses for a nutrition program from teachers working in an IB program than I would participants working in a Core program.

Table 5

Prevalent emergent code averages by school program

	MET	Core	IB	Fr. Imm.
Welfare needs	1.3	1.7	1.5	2
Cell phones	0.7	1	0.5	0
Criminal behaviour	0.3	0	0	0
Maslow's hierarchy	0.3	0.3	0	0

Mental health	5	0.7	3	2
Anxiety	1.7	1	1.5	6
Guidance department	0.3	0	0.5	1
Stress	0	0	2.5	0
Mental health crisis	1.7	0.3	0	0
Need to be seen	0	1	0	0
Nutrition program	0	0.7	0	2
Poverty	1	0	0	1
Self-care	0	0	1	0
Exercise or meditation	0	0	0.5	0
Self-harm	1.3	0	0	1
Sense of safety	0.3	1.3	0	0
Sleep	1.3	1	1.5	0

Overall, Table 5 shows less variation between school programs with some exceptions. Mental health came up nearly twice as often for MET program teachers as it did for IB program teachers, and 7 times as often as for core program teachers. Stress was more associated with the IB program participants, which could be accounted for by the academic expectations of the program. Students experiencing mental health crises, including self-harming, was cited more with MET program participants than the others. The need to be seen was cited more by core program participants. Sleep, overall welfare needs, anxiety, and concerns about cell phones spanned nearly the same across all four program participants on average, suggesting there may be common areas for concern amongst all programs and students. Further inquiry is needed into each of these areas, but the emergent codes listed in this study are a starting point to some of the educational goods that are provided in schools and across different high school programs outside of the six educational goods listed by Brighouse and his colleagues. Further reflections on the theoretical framework and an analysis of key findings from this study are presented in the following discussion section.

Discussion

Teachers' Understandings of Student Educational Goods for Well-being

The first research question for this study was: what are teachers' understandings of student educational goods for well-being? Through interviews with nine high school teachers, this work explored teachers' understanding of the well-being needs of their students and the well-being goods that teachers look to confer to their students. An analysis of interview data using Brighthouse et al.'s (2018) framework to formulate structural codes, found that the participants in this study most frequently cited healthy personal relationships (n= 66) when asked about the goods for well-being that concern them. Attending to their students' personal fulfilment (n= 54), personal autonomy (n= 45), and democratic competence (n= 43) were all prevalent themes in this collection of interviews. Educational goods that appeared significantly less frequently in these interviews about educational goods for well-being were economic productivity (n= 27) and treating others as equals (n= 10). Based on the findings in this study, participants understand relationships between students and teachers as well as the capacities to form and keep healthy relationships to be of primary among all other goods for well-being listed. Teachers in this study also showed a deep concern for students' individual sense of personal fulfilment and autonomy particularly when it comes to finding a sense of identity, developing problem solving skills, and finding their voice. In these ways, student well-being is also connected to democratic competence, which included the ability to participate in society and think critically. Findings were consistent with Raghavan and Alexandrova's (2015) claims that the notion of child well-being has moved away from just child protection toward a more holistic and aspirational view. A concern

for healthy personal relationships, personal fulfillment, and autonomy is also consistent with the approach suggested by Ben-Arieh (2008; 2014) that child well-being should include and promote the intrapersonal, interpersonal and social components of a student's experience.

Emergent themes were also identified in this study when teachers were asked about how they understand educational goods for well-being. Significant trade-offs that teachers saw themselves having to make came about frequently (n= 228) throughout all nine interviews. Concerns about resources, time, and expertise to address the well-being and in particular the mental health of students was clearly articulated. Students' welfare needs (n= 113) and overall mental health (n= 56) was a concern for participants in this study. Items such as stress (n= 5), anxiety (n= 17), sleep (n= 10), sense of safety (n= 5) and the need to be seen (n= 3) emerged under the parent code of welfare needs. Arguably, welfare needs could be categorized in the domain of personal fulfillment, since it is likely true that students cannot experience personal fulfillment if they do not have their welfare needs met.

Observations about the theoretical framework

The findings from this study present several considerations for modifications of the educational goods framework by Brighouse and his colleagues. One consideration that arose was how each domain might require a different distributive principle, or perhaps an operational definition, based on student backgrounds. For instance, Ann, who works with students who she identifies as coming from low SES backgrounds spoke about their need to be seen. In terms of healthy personal relationships and the capacity to treat others as equals then, for students who do not have access to healthy personal relationships in their life or whose family are not treated

as equals in society, requires different understandings and educational tools in these domains than students who occupy a different position and status in society. Though Brighouse et al. (2018) acknowledge distribution considerations, they appear to have developed this framework in a way that centres the experiences of students who have access to certain privileges since treating others as equals may be an educational good primarily aimed at students who, for instance, live in financially stable nuclear families than students who are precariously housed in foster care. It seems to me there is less need to promote treating others as equals to the latter group than the former, since the former group likely already enjoys the benefits of being treated well by others (by virtue of their class status and the cultural capitals valued in schools).

A second consideration – which is not exclusive to this particular framework – is whether the operational definition for each educational good for well-being as defined by Brighouse et al. (2018), squares with the coding process in this study. For instance, the educational good for personal fulfilment is characterized as finding pleasure or delight in something, such as art. However, I chose to include self-esteem and self-worth under the educational good of personal fulfilment. There will invariably be disagreements about how to optimally structure parent and child nodes to be consistent with the chosen theoretical framework. However, in cases like the example of self-esteem and self-worth, it may also be the case that the framework does not adequately account for certain child codes that came about in this study. The same principles may be applied to the emergent codes in this study. Welfare needs, for instance, may have arguably been better suited under the parent code of personal fulfilment, since it is difficult to experience fulfilment if basic welfare needs are not met. Yet, as with all of the emergent codes,

it may be the case that the framework developed by Brighouse et al. (2018) did not adequately consider certain teacher concerns that surfaced through the interviews in this study.

Stratified access to Educational Goods for Well-being

As Davies and Guppy (2010) argue, social stratification is a society's categorization of its people into rankings of socioeconomic tiers based on factors like wealth, income, race, education, and power. In light of these stratifications, the second research question inquired into how well-being goods are differently conferred and prioritized based on student community and school program. Based on participant accounts in this study as well as the data presented in Table 4, there are reasons to conclude that school programs contribute to perpetuating social stratification. Interviews with participants suggested that school program expectations and access to resources greatly affect the ways in which teachers can respond to the needs of their students or provide educational goods for well-being in schools. Programs such as the IB program may also perpetuate a hidden curriculum of honing the capacity for personal fulfilment over those educational goods that are seen to promote economic productivity (Table 4), while core programs in economically disadvantaged schools may emphasize the educational good of economic productivity over personal fulfilment (Table 4). These findings are consistent with Tilly's (1998) claims that agents in education setting incorporate paired and unequal categories at crucial organizational boundaries that result in exploitation and opportunity hoarding. While opportunity hoarding that correlates with academic and economic outcomes is well-documented, this study points to a need for tracking in schools stratified well-being

opportunities, experiences, and outcomes such as personal fulfilment, healthy personal relationships, personal autonomy, and treating others as equals.

The findings also reveal some differences between participants of different school programs. Though these differences are not statistically analyzed using quantitative significance scales (e.g., p-values or t-test) generalized averages may gesture us toward areas for further exploration. One of the largest contrasts between school program appeared in the domain of economic productivity with core programs identifying this as a more important educational good ($n= 5.3$) than IB program participants ($n= 1.5$) and MET school program participants ($n= 1.7$). This stratification by program is consistent with Anyon's (1981) work on the kinds of work that students are being prepared for according to social class background. The participants in this study who work in core programs identified their students as mostly newcomers, low SES, and many living in foster homes. Perhaps students' background not only plays a role in which program they find themselves in but also the degree to which skills for future employment are seen by their teachers as an educational good for their well-being. Another significant contrast between school program appeared in the domain of personal fulfilment, with IB program participants identifying this emergent theme as important ($n= 10.5$) while core program participants identified this as far less important ($n= 3.7$) as well as the French immersion program participant ($n= 2$). As Laureau (2003) finds in her work, perhaps it is the case that concerted cultivation in competitive programs such as the IB program is driven by the value and importance of students' personal fulfillment while teachers in core programs less often prioritize the educational good of personal fulfillment, possibly for the sake of focussing on other goods for well-being such as preparation for economic productivity. Finally, mental health appeared more

frequently in interviews with MET school program participants (n= 5) than it did in IB program participants (n= 3), the French immersion program participant (n= 2), or core program participants (n= 0.7). One possible explanation for this finding is that MET school program is structured to be responsive to students with a diversity of learning competencies and students who desire alternative learning opportunities, i.e., through project-based and inquiry learning. Smaller class sizes, teacher advisors who travel with students for all four years of high school, and flexible classroom schedules facilitate these programming objectives while also having the benefit of allowing students to form close relationships with their teachers. Perhaps then, MET school program participants are afforded the time and opportunities to get to know their students' mental health challenges that core and IB program teachers do not have.

Limitations of the Study

A methodological consideration for this qualitative study is its limited generalizability. With a sample size of nine participants, findings in this study are quite context- and person-specific. The findings presented in this study may conceivably be transferable across the province of Manitoba and beyond considering the common experiences, contexts, and examples offered by teacher participants in this study. Another important consideration raised by Bentz and Shapiro (1998) is that over the past several decades it has been repeatedly demonstrated that researchers often find what they expect to find. As well, the very process of measurement elicits responses from people who intervene in the objects they measure (Shahjahan, 2011). Therefore, it is with this understanding that I present my data and findings as ones that may be influenced by my role in this study as well as interpreted through a lens that has biases and

motivations. These subjective influencers will be mitigated through a detailed recordkeeping throughout the systematic process of data collection, interpretation, and analysis.

Areas for Future Research and Future Practice

In addition to the areas previously identified as areas for further research, there are several others suggested by the findings of this study. Several overlapping codes and therefore possible connections between educational goods for well-being were identified in the findings. For example, there appeared to be a connection between anxiety, academic competition, and academic goals. These connections appeared in interviews primarily with IB program participants, suggesting that certain student groups experience these phenomena more than others. Another concept that arose was whether there may be gender or other differences between the kinds of invisible labour that teachers experience when it comes to supporting students' mental health. Some teachers identified healthy personal relationships, treating others as equals, and welfare needs as something they take on as a caring individual, while others view that as part of their role as a classroom teacher. It seems important then to extend our understandings of how teachers, administrators, and policy view the limits and expectations for teachers to attend to these educational goods. When describing the importance of positive teacher-student relationships, some participants seemed to think that these relationships have direct impacts on positive mental health as well as academic outcomes. Intuitively, this sounds right to me, but further work seems to be called for in this area.

There are few recommendations for practice out of this study because of the preliminary nature of this study design. However, there are some potential cues we can pick up from the

interviews in this study. For instance, one participant mentioned how important it is to see and treat every student as unique. Core and IB program participants mentioned how difficult it was to get to know each student and therefore know how to “push them” and so what seems to be called for is broadening teachers’ applications of Vygotsky’s learning theory to include educational goods for well-being more broadly. Beyond solely academic assessments therefore, teachers could conduct diagnostic assessment for well-being with their students so that they are meeting various needs in large classes. Not only would assessments for students be useful, but so too would assessment for teachers. On the one hand, teachers could systematically report the educational goods for well-being that they attend to (and which they wish they could but don’t have the resources to attend to) and on the other hand, teachers could identify the goods for well-being that they would like further opportunities and support to develop, since both student and teacher well-being are important aspects of schools that educate for well-being.

Conclusion

The first research question in this study was: What are teachers’ understandings of student educational goods for well-being? Using a theoretical framework developed by Brighouse et al. (2018) to interpret interview data from nine participants, this study revealed that healthy personal relationships are thought to be the most important educational good and capability for well-being from the six educational goods listed in the framework. The next most important educational goods were personal fulfilment, personal autonomy, and democratic competence in that order. Other key educational goods and capacities for well-being that participants from this study identified were welfare needs and mental health challenges. Invisible labour for teachers and the need to make decisions and trade-offs between educational goods

for well-being in order for their students to experience optimal success in an under resourced context were also raised in this study.

The second research question in this study was: how are well-being goods differently conferred and prioritized based on student community and school program? From interviews with nine participants in four different high school communities and programs, stratifications of access to educational goods between groups of students and student programs were exposed. While unequal access to academic opportunities and outcomes is well-documented, this study confirms the need for tracking stratified well-being opportunities based on school community. The data in this study suggest that students have stratified access to experiences and outcomes for personal fulfilment, healthy personal relationships, personal autonomy, and treating others as equals.

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Final Thoughts: Contributions and Connections

This dissertation is a series of three independent papers which are entitled:

- IV. Three Foundational Questions for Policymakers and Practitioners Concerned with Student Well-Being
- V. Reimagining Paternalism for a Well-being Mandate in K-12 School Education
- VI. Social Class and Access to Well-being Goods in K-12 Schools

Each of these papers center around the theme of educational goods for well-being in schools.

The subthemes and foci in each paper, however, differ. The first paper argues that policymakers and practitioners will more effectively promote well-being in school if they ask three questions.

The aim of this paper is to support the process of integrating a concern for well-being at the policy level and in schools. The second paper argues for shifting toward greater autonomy-support through soft paternalism for children in schools. By taking children's interests more seriously, this paper argues that the traditional views for education have been shaped far too heavily by the basic view of childhood. I state here that children can determine and pursue more of their own well-being interests than education policymakers and practitioners have typically endorsed. These two papers make an appeal to the adults who are responsible for making important decisions about the way that students spend their time in schools. While the first paper is concerned with helping educators to clarify their understandings of well-being and how they might promote well-being, the second paper makes a particular recommendation to adopt a soft paternalist approach in schools. This argument is in part, my answer to the second question posed in the first paper. I believe that an educational good that ought to be prioritized is personal autonomy. The second paper also serves to push against some the assumption that adults should be the only decision makers about children's well-being in schools. Children's

preferences are largely absent in the first paper, and so the second paper offers another way to address children's well-being – namely, to also give children the authority to make decisions about their aims for education. The third paper explores the educational goods for well-being prioritized by high school classroom teachers working in schools of different settings. This study also explores the question of whether educational goods vary across settings. Prior to carrying out this work I hypothesized that each teacher (and teachers across settings) would convey different understandings about the educational goods for well-being that can or should be prioritized. Findings from the study confirmed this hypothesis and further indicate that differences may reflect the stratified needs of students from different backgrounds, cultures, socio-economic labels, and more. The role of the family/home in this work is considered only in relation to students' backgrounds. This is a departure from the first paper, which acknowledges the impact and role – particularly the historical role – of parental interests in the aims of education. The second paper argues for a shift away from parental interests and to broaden the level of student-driven decision making in classrooms (through a soft paternal approach).

One commonality between the second and third papers is that they take up the capabilities approach through their reference to educational goods. This approach to well-being is not uncontested, particularly because it emphasizes the well-being of children qua future adult. In other words, the educational goods approach to well-being focuses of a person's abilities to choose and access certain functionings, such as economic productivity and democratic competence. The soft paternalism approach in the second paper holds that children, to a larger degree than we currently promote in classrooms, can evaluate ends and activities for themselves and decide how to conduct their learning and which functionings to pursue or

realize. In this way, the position taken up in the second paper will ideally promote an important counter narrative to the status quo, thereby promoting children's well-being qua child in schools. This paper argues that children themselves ought to be given more opportunities to determine their own means and ends.

All three papers emphasize that schooling is a value-laden processes that involves human choices about what to prioritize for students. In each paper, I highlight that there are trade-offs associated with the decisions in schools that impact children's well-being qua child and qua future adult. My hope is that by reading this work, education policy makers and practitioners will reflect on their curricular considerations and priorities, resource allocation decisions, and data collection or reporting processes in ways that consider these trade-offs. This collection of work is meant to contribute to the field by laying out many of the theoretical and practical considerations for promoting well-being in schools. Though there are stated goals and priorities to address student well-being at provincial or board levels, the empirical study presented here suggests that the conceptualization and implementation processes to address student well-being in schools are not coherent or consistent. The three foundational questions presented in the first paper are meant to help tighten up the organizational process for establishing well-being policies. A more transparent process and clear mandate will ideally support classroom teachers who make the decisions on behalf of children. I also point out that the structure, and infrastructure, of public school education is not child-led, child-centered, or child-focused. The second paper argues that the structure of public schooling ought to change based on a rejection of the basic view of children. Though I focus my discussion at the classroom level, I believe the principles of a soft paternalism should be reflected in the policies at all levels from Ministry of

Education mission and vision statements to divisional or school-based priorities and professional development. In a way, the empirical work here is a peek into where we are as a school system (at least, in Winnipeg) while the other two papers offer ideas about where we might go from here.

Two key examples from the empirical study findings might best illustrate the significance of, connections between, and areas for future research from these three papers. First, recall when Pam acknowledges in her interview that she holds different well-being priorities for the students in her grade nine mandatory math course versus her optional grade 11 course. As I mention above, the findings from this study suggest that educational goods are not equally prioritized across school programs. Pam's comment about her bias between classes is an empirical example of something that was raised in paper #1; schooling processes can act as a sorting mechanism by which groups of students are divided and given unequal access to cultural capitals and opportunities for well-being (qua child and qua future adult). This example not only calls for further studies on the differences in well-being opportunity, experience, and outcomes for students in different streams and from different backgrounds, but it also points to the need for educators to gain greater clarity and consciousness of their own biases and assumptions about what makes students' lives go well. The nature of paternalism becomes important in this case, because it appears as though Pam paternalizes students in different streams differently when all students ought to have equal access to personal autonomy (with some capacity-related exceptions). A second example helps to demonstrate the significance of this body of work. Recall when Ann raises the idea that she feels she does not have the required training to address student concerns related to their well-being. As I have stated throughout this work, I believe

teacher's to be well intentioned and doing their best to fulfill their role as educators. Therefore, when Ann feels underprepared to support students' well-being or certain educational goods, this is a reflection on how aims for education have been defined and embodied in schools. If Ann does not receive training to support student well-being, then her students will not have access to those supports or opportunities. If, on the other hand, education policy makers take the advice outlined in paper #1, then likely the training in both teacher education programs and school boards will reflect these clearly stated goals for well-being. Similarly, if the argument in paper #2 is taken seriously by policy makers and practitioners, then Ann's students will have greater control over the educational goods that they pursue and see themselves as possessing autonomy to take care of their well-being in ways that they choose (perhaps reducing the causes and/or the experiences of ill-being).

As I conclude this work feels more like a beginning than an end. The three papers offered here break open new questions about the compatibility of different well-being theories in schools, about the trade-offs between well-being goods and well-being qua child/qua future adult, and the role that autonomy ought to play in schools (just to name a few). If anyone who reads this is left inspired to consider the context of school education in new and unfamiliar ways, then I think I have met my personal criteria for this work. I end here on an optimistic note. This is just the beginning, and I look forward in my new role in continuing, refining, advocating, and supporting the work in the field of student well-being.

APPENDIX A: Informed consent form

<U of M LOGO HERE>

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Informed Consent Form

Study Title: Social class and access to well-being goods and capabilities in K-12 schools

Principal Investigator Heather Krepski, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
204-***-****; k*****@myumanitoba.ca

Degree: PhD, Faculty of Education

Supervisor: Dr. Thomas Falkenberg, Associate Dean Faculty of Education,
Professor; Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca

Hello, my name is Heather Krepski, and I am a Doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. I am interested in exploring the perspectives of eight to twelve high school teachers on the topic of student well-being and well-becoming in the province of Manitoba. The purpose of this qualitative research is to explore and identify the student well-being goods and well-being capabilities that high school classroom teachers attend to. Further, this research will compare the identified goods and capabilities for student well-being between schools of different social classes. Said differently, this research study aims to explore and uncover some of the ways in which teachers identify, prioritize, and respond to the perceived well-being needs (both now and into the future) of their students according to different social classes. The findings of this study will highlight the ways in which well-being goods and capabilities that teachers are concerned by may be differently stratified by the social class groups of students.

The first twelve teachers to respond will be accepted as participants in the project and will be contacted through email to arrange a meeting time, date and location. Interviews may take place either within or outside of school hours. All participants will receive a \$10 honorarium gift card as a token of appreciation for their time, even if they wish to withdraw from the study.

This consent form, a copy of which I will leave with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully.

Project Description:

The objectives for this study are:

1. To explore teachers' understanding of the well-being needs of their students;
2. To explore and uncover the well-being goods that teachers are focused on conferring to their students;
3. To explore and uncover the well-being capabilities that teachers are focused on conferring to their students.
4. To compare the student well-being goods and capabilities that teachers identify by social class.

The research questions that this study looks to answer are:

1. In what ways are teachers' understandings of student well-being needs different based on the social class backgrounds of their students?
2. In what ways do the well-being goods that teachers aim to confer to their students different based on the social class background of their students?
3. In what ways are the well-being capabilities that teachers focus on different based on the social class backgrounds of their students?

The aim of this project is to explore the views of high school teachers on the well-being goods and capabilities that they are concerned by in their classroom and school. This research project is carried out for the purposes of completing the PhD dissertation requirements for the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba.

Location and Time Requirement:

Participation will require approximately one hour of your time and would take place at your work site or another location at your request. I will request that you permit me to digitally record our conversations using MYNotes on my personal iPad that is password protected. If you object to being recorded, I will transcribe it by hand. Beyond the one-hour interview, participants will be invited through e-mail to review the transcribed document over a two-week period, in order to make any changes or additions to the transcribed interview which should take up to 30 minutes to review. Once these member checks are complete, participants will no longer have the option to withdraw from the study, since all of the data will be anonymized, coded and analyzed (expected June 2020).

Participation in this project is completely voluntary and you may decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study without any negative consequences regarding the services you may be receiving from the government and social services agencies discussed in the interview. Participants can contact the PI by email at k*****@myumanitoba.ca to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

Confidentiality:

I will keep any information gathered in this research strictly confidential. Our conversation will be transcribed by the PI onto a password protected Macbook Air laptop computer (within two weeks of each interview) that is user password protected, in a further password protected document on Microsoft Word. Once the interviews are transcribed the audio files will be deleted from the PI's electronic device. Transcribed data will then be anonymized. The anonymized transcripts will be printed and locked in a personal filing cabinet at the PI's home with a physical lock, and saved on a password protected hard drive. Anonymized data will be interpreted and coded using the same home computer that is password protected. Data that has identifying information will be stored in a separate filing drawer from the anonymized data. You will not be named or identifiable in any reports of this study. If any statement you made during this interview is used in a research report it will be attributed to an anonymous source. Information containing personal identifiers (e.g., this consent form) will be destroyed as soon as the PI has successfully fulfilled the requirements for the doctoral dissertation, anticipated October 30, 2020. Identifying interview transcript files will be deleted and trash can emptied (if electronic) and destroyed (if hard copy) by shredding once the project reaches its conclusion. Anonymized data will be destroyed one-year after the dissertation has been successfully defended, anticipated by January 2021.

Dissemination:

Dissemination of the findings from this study will be used for the PhD dissertation defense and publication of the dissertation in MSpace (an online open access forum). It is also anticipated that a summary of the study findings will be written up for the purposes of submitting to a peer-reviewed journal for publication and/or conference presentations.

Risks and Benefits:

There are minimal physical, psychological and/or emotional risks for participants in this study. Participants may experience a certain level of discomfort discussing experiences relating to student well-being. The experience of sharing their perspective on well-being needs in their school however, may offer participants the benefit of reviewing and reflecting upon system goals, priorities and current practices. Participants will also receive a material benefit in the form of a \$10 coffee gift card as a token of appreciation for their time.

Consent:

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. If you choose to withdraw from the study you will still be entitled to receive the \$10 coffee card. Participants can contact the PI by email at k*****@myumanitoba.ca to withdraw from the study at any time. However, it must be noted that once the data has been anonymized and incorporated into the data analysis phase of this

research, participants will no longer be able to withdraw from the study. Should you choose to withdraw from the study before this time, all electronic and hard copy data collected will be promptly destroyed. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) at the University of Manitoba. The study has also been approved by your school division and the school administration but it is important to note that the researcher will not inform the school administration or divisional administration who participated in this study. *If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator, Room 208-194 Dafoe Road (CTC Building) or by email at humanethics@umanitoba.ca. If you have clarification questions, please contact myself at k*****@myumanitoba.ca, my advisor Dr. Thomas Falkenberg Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca.*

Participant's Signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date

Please check below if you wish to receive a summary of the results of this project.

_____ Yes, please send me a summary of the results electronically at:

____ Yes, please send me a summary of the results in hardcopy by mail to:

APPENDIX B: Invitation to teachers to participate

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Invitation to participate in an interview for the study: Social class and access to well-being goods and capabilities in K-12 schools

Principal Investigator Heather Krepski, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
204-***-****; k*****@myumanitoba.ca

Degree: PhD, Faculty of Education

Supervisor: Dr. Thomas Falkenberg, Associate Dean Faculty of Education,
Professor; Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca

Hello, my name is Heather Krepski, and I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba working under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Falkenberg. I am interested in exploring the perspectives and experiences of high school teachers with student well-being in their classrooms and schools.

In order to conduct this research, I am looking to recruit eight to twelve high school teachers to participate in a one-on-one interview on the topic of student well-being and well-becoming in schools. The first twelve to respond positively will be accepted as participants. If you agree to participate, I will contact you through email to arrange a meeting time, date and location that is convenient for you. Each interview will take approximately one hour and will be carried out at the participant's work site, or at a location that is convenient for the participant. An interview guide that contains the questions I am planning to ask will be sent to each participant electronically one week ahead of the scheduled interview. Before the interview, I will give you a consent form to read, consider, and sign. I will review the consent form with you in person before the interview begins. Beyond the one-hour interview, participants will be invited through e-mail to review the transcribed document from the interview, over a two-week period, in order to make any changes or additions to the transcript which should take up to 30 minutes to complete.

If you participate, I will ask you to discuss the types of concerns and priorities that you have for your student's well-being and well-becoming. These interviews will be recorded using the electronic application My Notes, using a personal iPad that is password protected. All interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator (myself) onto a Macbook Air laptop computer that is user password protected, in a further password protected document on Microsoft Word.

Transcribed data will then be anonymized. Original data will be printed and locked in a personal filing cabinet with a physical lock, and will be saved on a password protected hard drive. Any identifying information (i.e. division, names, schools, colleagues) will be anonymized. Any documents containing personal information (such as the consent form signed in the event you participate) both paper and electronic copies will be destroyed after I have completed the PhD dissertation requirements (anticipated October 30, 2020).

*If you choose to participate in the project, you may refuse to answer any questions, end the interview, or withdraw from the study completely at any time. Participants can contact the PI by email at k*****@myumanitoba.ca to withdraw from the study at any time. Should you choose to withdraw from the study all electronic and hard copy data collected will be promptly destroyed. In consideration for your involvement, you will be given a \$10 coffee card honorarium, even if you choose to withdraw from the study.*

*I do not anticipate more than minimal risks to you as a result of participating in this study. This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB). If participants have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator, Room 208-194 Dafoe Road (CTC Building) or by email at humanethics@umanitoba.ca. If participants have clarification questions, they should contact myself at k*****@myumanitoba.ca, or my advisor Dr. Thomas Falkenberg at Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca*

*I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely,
Heather Krepski*

If you would be interested in participating in this project, please email me at K**@umanitoba.ca by no later than <date>. I will respond to your email promptly to indicate whether you are one of the first six people to contact me, and are accepted as a study participant. If you are selected, I will contact you about possible meeting times within a few days of your response. Your participation is confidential. If you think of any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me .***

APPENDIX C: Letter to school administrators

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Request for permission to carry out the study: Social class and access to well-being goods and capabilities in K-12 schools

Principal Investigator Heather Krepski, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba
204-***-****; k*****@myumanitoba.ca

Degree: PhD, Faculty of Education

Supervisor: Dr. Thomas Falkenberg, Associate Dean Faculty of Education,
Professor; Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca

Hello, my name is Heather Krepski, and I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba working under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Falkenberg. I am interested in exploring the perspectives and experiences of high school teachers with student well-being in their classrooms and schools.

In order to conduct this research, I am requesting your permission to carry out this study with teachers in your school. Should you give permission for me to conduct the study in your school, I would also request your support in the recruitment process. I am looking to recruit eight to twelve high school teachers to participate in a one-on-one interview (which will take approximately 1-hour at a location convenient to them) on the topic of student well-being and well-becoming in schools. Below you will find further details about the study if you wish to learn more.

Recruitment Letter:

*Attached you find a letter of invitation that I am asking you to forward **to all teachers in your school who have been teaching for 5 years or longer**. The first twelve to respond positively will be accepted as participants. This letter asks teachers to contact me through email if they are interested in participating in the study. Their participation in the study will be confidential.*

Study Details:

For all participants who agree to participate in the study, I will arrange through email a meeting time, date and location that is convenient. Each interview will take approximately one hour and

will be carried out at the participant's work site, or at a location that is convenient for the participant. An interview guide that contains the questions I am planning to ask will be sent to each participant electronically one week ahead of the scheduled interview. Before the interview, I will give participants a consent form to read, consider, and sign. I will review the consent form with you in person before the interview begins. Beyond the one-hour interview, participants will be invited through e-mail to review the transcribed document from the interview, over a two-week period, in order to make any changes or additions to the transcript which should take up to 30 minutes to complete.

During these interviews, I will ask participants to discuss the types of concerns and priorities that they have for their student's well-being and well-becoming. These interviews will be recorded using the electronic application My Notes, using a personal iPad that is password protected. All interviews will be transcribed by the principal investigator (myself) onto a Macbook Air laptop computer that is user password protected, in a further password protected document on Microsoft Word. Transcribed data will then be anonymized. Original data will be printed and locked in a personal filing cabinet with a physical lock, and will be saved on a password protected hard drive. Any identifying information (i.e. division, names, schools, colleagues) will be anonymized. Any documents containing personal information (such as the consent form signed in the event you participate) both paper and electronic copies will be destroyed after I have completed the PhD dissertation requirements (anticipated October 30, 2020).

*Participants in the project may refuse to answer any questions, end the interview, or withdraw from the study completely at any time. Participants can contact the PI by email at k*****@myumanitoba.ca to withdraw from the study at any time. Should they choose to withdraw from the study all electronic and hard copy data collected will be promptly destroyed. In consideration for their involvement, I will offer a \$10 coffee card honorarium, even if they choose to withdraw from the study.*

*I do not anticipate more than minimal risks as a result of participating in this study. This research has been approved by the Education and Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) as well as the superintendents office for your school division. If participants have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator, Room 208-194 Dafoe Road (CTC Building) or by email at humanethics@umanitoba.ca. If participants have clarification questions, they should contact me at k*****@myumanitoba.ca, or my advisor Dr. Thomas Falkenberg at Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca.*

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Heather Krepski

If you think of any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me .

APPENDIX D: Letter to superintendents

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Request for permission to carry out the study: Social class and access to well-being goods and capabilities in K-12 schools

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204-***-****; k*****@myumanitoba.ca

Degree: PhD, Faculty of Education

Supervisor: Dr. Thomas Falkenberg, Associate Dean Faculty of Education,
Professor; Thomas.Falkenberg@umanitoba.ca

Hello, my name is Heather Krepski, and I am a PhD student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba working under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Falkenberg. I am interested in exploring the perspectives and experiences of high school teachers with student well-being in their classrooms and schools in your school division.

In order to conduct this research, I am requesting your permission to carry out this study within your school division. Should you give permission for me to conduct the study in your division, I will go on to contact school administrators in the division to request their permission to carry out this study in their schools. I will also ask school administrators to assist in the recruitment process by forwarding a letter of invitation to teachers in their school with at least five years of teaching experience. Should you consent to this study, you will receive a summary of its findings by January 2021. Below, you will find more details about the study.

If you consent to this research being carried out in your division, please email me at:
k*****@myumanitoba.ca

Study Details:

For this study, I am looking to recruit eight to twelve high school teachers to participate in a one-on-one interview on the topic of student well-being and well-becoming in schools. The first twelve to respond positively will be accepted as participants. Each interview will take approximately one hour and will be carried out at the participant's work site, or at a location that is convenient for the participant. An interview guide that contains the questions I am planning to

ask will be sent to each participant electronically one week ahead of the scheduled interview. Before the interview, I will give participants a consent form to read, consider, and sign. I will review the consent form with you in person before the interview begins. Beyond the one-hour interview, participants will be invited through e-mail to review the transcribed document from the interview, over a two-week period, in order to make any changes or additions to the transcript which should take up to 30 minutes to complete.

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Heather Krepski

APPENDIX E: Interview protocol

Research Question #1: In what ways are teachers' understandings of student well-being needs different based on the social class backgrounds of their students?

- What would you identify as some of the well-being *needs* of the students you teach?
- How would you rank or prioritize their well-being needs?
- In what ways do you, or wish to, respond to their well-being needs?

Research Question #2: In what ways are the well-being goods that teachers aim to confer to their students different based on the social class background of their students?

- What are the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and attitudes do you identify as ones that you try to teach for in your classroom and at school?
- What other kinds of goods do you aim to confer to your students that you think will contribute to their own well-being and the well-being of others?
- Can you share some examples to illustrate your answer?

Research Question #3: In what ways are the well-being capabilities that teachers focus on different based on the social class backgrounds of their students?

- What are the capacities that will enable your students to procure well-being in the future that you identify as ones that you teach for in your classroom and school?
- How do your concerns for your students' well-being now vs. their well-being in the future compare? How do you weight these?
- Can you share some examples to illustrate your answer?