**Supplementary Appendix S1**

**Teacher Burnout Study: Focus Group Guide**

**Initial Interview with Administrators and Teachers**

**A. Introduction**

1. Welcome participants and introduce facilitator
2. Explain the general purpose of the discussion and why the participants were chosen
3. Discuss the purpose and process of focus groups
4. Explain the presence and purpose of recording equipment and introduce observers
5. Address the issue of confidentiality and state participants' names will not be used in analyses
6. Outline general ground rules (e.g., ***the importance of everyone speaking up, talking one at a time, and being prepared for the moderator to interrupt if needed***).
7. **Consent Script:**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for coming today. This is Dr. \_\_\_\_\_\_ (or Dr. \_\_\_\_\_\_). She is one of the primary investigators of this study and will be leading the focus group today. You are one of about 40 school professionals being asked to participate in focus groups around the topic of special education teacher burnout. You have been selected because of your important role as an administrator, classroom teacher, or human resource staff person. Your participation is voluntary. Once the session starts, we hope that you stay the full 90 minutes to fully participate in the focus group discussion.

Our discussion will be audio-recorded today in order to ensure we capture all of your comments and suggestions accurately. I **(and *\*name any observers*)** will be present to take notes to help us later when we transcribe the audio recordings. Your names will be deleted from the transcript, but they will help us get to know each other while we are here. To protect your confidentiality, all data will be stored in password protected files to which only authorized researchers have access. Risks to participation in the focus group are minimal and the primary benefit is the opportunity to provide essential feedback on special education teacher burnout. Your names will be removed from any and all data. Your data will be combined for reports based on your primary role as an administrator, classroom teacher, or human resource staff person. You should have two copies of the informed consent. Please sign and date both and keep the extra one for your records. **(\*Answer any questions)**

This study is funded through a grant from the Institute for Educational Sciences. We appreciate your participation and time today. The goals for this particular focus group are to identify your perspectives regarding:

1. Burnout in special education teachers

2. Factors contributing to increased burnout

3. Impact of teacher burnout on education

4. Ways to help reduce teacher burnout

5. How to make a burnout intervention effective for special education teachers

We have about 9 general questions with some follow-up probes. We only have a few questions because we want to have a full discussion of your ideas. There are also a few general ground rules. It is important for everyone to speak up and talk one at a time. This will make it easier for us later to record what was said accurately. Please be prepared for Lisa (or Michelle) to interrupt as needed. Also, keep in mind that there are no right answers; consensus is not the purpose here. In fact, the range of experiences and differences in responses are encouraged. Are there any questions?

**\*Facilitator:** Let’s do a quick introduction, can you share your first name, what school you’re from, and one image or word that comes to mind when you think about teacher burnout.

**B. Discussion Questions (to be followed with nondirective probes)**

1. How do you define teacher burnout
2. What are your experiences with teacher burnout?
3. How can you tell when a teacher is burned out?
   * **Probe**: Does burnout occur or increase during a specific time in the year?
4. What are the factors that contribute to increased burnout?
   * **Probe:** teacher factors, organizational factors
   * **Probe:** Do these vary by grade level?
   * **Probe:** Do these vary by general ed. or special ed. teachers?
5. What impact does teacher burnout have on education
   * **Probe:** impact on the teacher, impact on students, impact on other staff and teachers, impact on administrators, impact on the school, impact on parents?
6. What do you think would help reduce teacher burnout?
   * **Probe:** What things about the teacher might we be able to change to reduce burnout?
   * **Probe:** What things about the school or school system might we need to change to reduce burnout?
   * **Probe:** What is already being done at your school to prevent burnout? How is it working?
7. We have an intervention we have used with other professionals and would like to make sure it fits the needs of teachers with burnout. Right now it’s set up as a workshop where people learn about burnout including how to identify their own early warning signs, and then they learn and practice strategies they can use to reduce burnout (like mindfulness, time management, social support). How helpful do you think something like that would be for teachers?
8. What things might get in the way of effectively doing a burnout intervention like that?
   * **Probe:** (Barriers) What challenges might staff face in attending/benefiting from this type of intervention?
   * **Probe:** What are some ways to deliver an intervention that would be the most helpful or preferred (in person, online, via an app on your phone, etc.)?
   * **Probe:** Would it be better to deliver the intervention across multiple sessions or a single session?
9. What ideas do you have to address these barriers or challenges?
   * **Probe:** When is the best time to do the intervention (summer, start of school, fall, etc.) for feasibility and most impact?
   * **Probe:** What other types of intervention might be helpful?
   * **Probe:** What resources might a school need to implement or attend an intervention like this?
10. What other things do you think we should know to better help teachers?

**C. Closing**

* Closing remarks
* Thank the participants