**Supplemental material (Appendix)**

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| **Table S1: Scales for assessing teachers’ intention and willingness** |
| **Items used to assess teachers’ intention to teach about cancer as a mandatory behaviour** | **Items used to assess teachers’ willingness to teach about cancer if they had free choice** |
| *INT1: I am going to teach about cancer.* | *WIL1: I am willing to teach about cancer.* |
| *INT2: I plan to teach about cancer.* | *WIL2: I have had the intention to teach about cancer for a long time.* |
| *INT3: I intend to teach about cancer.* | *WIL3: Teaching cancer has always been attractive to me.* |
| *INT4: I will teach about cancer.* | *WIL4: I would like to teach about cancer.* |
|  | *WIL5: I feel ready to teach about cancer.* |
|  | *WIL6: It is my desire to teach about cancer.* |

INT = Teachers’ intention to teach about cancer as a mandatory behaviour; WIL = Teachers’ willingness to teach about cancer if they had free choice

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| **Table S2: Scales for assessing teachers’ attitudes** |
| **Item number** | **Item** |
|
| Attitude towards the perceived burden of teaching about cancer (ATT-B) |
| ATT-B1 | I find teaching about cancer stressful/doable. |
| ATT-B2 | I find teaching about cancer difficult/easy. |
| ATT-B3 | I find teaching about cancer unfamiliar/familiar. |
| ATT-B4 | I find teaching about cancer burdensome/unburdened. |
| Attitude towards the perceived necessity to teach about cancer (ATT-N) |
| ATT-N1 | I find teaching about cancer irrelevant/important. |
| ATT-N2 | I find teaching about cancer boring/interesting. |
| ATT-N3 | I find teaching about cancer redundant/necessary. |

ATT-B = Attitudes towards the perceived burden of teaching about cancer; ATT-N = Attitudes towards the perceived necessity to teach about cancer

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| **Table S3: Scales for assessing teachers’ perceived social pressure** |
| **Item number** | **Item** |
|
| SN1 | The people in my social environment think it is important that I teach about cancer. |
| SN2 | The people in my social environment would be disappointed if I did not teach about cancer.\* |
| SN3 | The people in my social environment expect me to teach about cancer. |

SN = Social pressure to teach about cancer; \* = item reverse coded

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| **Table S4: Scales for assessing teachers’ perceived behavioural control** |
| **Item number** | **Item** |
|
| Perceived autonomy to teach about cancer (PBC-A) |
| PBC-A1 | It is my own decision whether or not I teach about cancer. |
| PBC-A2 | Even if I encounter resistance, I alone can decide to teach or not teach about cancer. |
| PBC-A3 | Influences from external factors that could impede my decision to teach cancer are under my control. |
| PBC-C4 | Altogether, I have the free choice whether or not I teach about cancer. |
| Perceived self-efficacy to teach about cancer (PBC-SE) |
| PBC-SE1 | I am confident that I will be able to teach about cancer. |
| PBC-SE2 | I feel well prepared to teach about cancer. |
| PBC-SE3 | I am unable to cope with teaching about cancer.\* |

PBC-A = Perceived autonomy to teach about cancer; PBC-SE = Perceived self-efficacy to teach about cancer; \* = item reverse coded

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| **Table S5: Items for assessing teachers’ behavioural beliefs** |
| **Item number** | **Aspect of belief content** | **Item** |
|
| BB1 | students’ interest | By teaching about cancer, most students’ interest in biology will increase. |
| BB2 | teachers’ knowledge | By teaching about cancer, I will gain knowledge about cancer. |
| BB3 | students challenging media reports | By teaching about cancer, most students will be capable of challenging media reports on cancer. |
| BB4 | cancer risk factors | Most of my students will become aware of carcinogenic risk factors. |
| BB5 | students’ questions | When teaching about cancer, there will be some questions about cancer that do not have a clear scientific answer. |
| BB6 | cancer education as a burden | By teaching about cancer, most students’ uncertainty about how to address cancer will be removed. |
| BB7 | emotional reactions | Most students will be emotionally affected while teaching about cancer. |
| BB8 | scientific research | When teaching about cancer, career options in scientific research will be discussed. |
| BB9 | students’ questions | When teaching about cancer, some students will ask medical questions about cancer. |
| BB10 | connections between real life and school | By teaching about cancer, students will realize how the teaching content is connected to their lives. |
| BB11 | emotional reactions | Some students will react emotionally while teaching about cancer. |
| BB12 | students’ motivation | By teaching about cancer, some students’ motivation to learn will increase. |

BB = behavioural beliefs

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| **Table S6: Items for assessing teachers’ normative beliefs** |
| **Item number** | **Aspect of belief content** | **Item** |
|
| NBI1 | students | Students in my biology class will expect me to teach about cancer.  |
| NBI3 | other biology teachers | My colleagues will expect me to teach about cancer. |
| NBI4 | people with cancer | People who have cancer will expect me to teach about cancer. |
| NBI2 | physicians | Physicians expect me to teach about cancer.  |
| NBI5 | health insurance companies | Health insurance companies expect me to teach about cancer. |
| NBI6 | cancer researchers | Cancer researchers expect me to teach about cancer. |
| NBD1 | other biology teachers | Other biology teachers will also teach about cancer. |
| NBD2 | male biology teachers | Male biology teachers will also teach about cancer. |
| NBD3 | female biology teachers | Female biology teachers will also teach about cancer. |
| NBD4 | younger biology teachers | Younger biology teachers will also teach about cancer. |
| NBD5 | older biology teachers | Older biology teachers will also teach about cancer. |
| NBD6 | relation to students | Teachers who have a trusting relationship with their students will also teach about cancer. |

NBI = injunctive normative beliefs; NBD = descriptive normative beliefs

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| **Table S7: Items for assessing teachers’ control beliefs** |
| **Item number** | **Aspect of belief content** | **Item** |
|
| CBSIT1 | availability of teaching materials. | When teaching about cancer, appropriate teaching materials will be available. |
| CBSIT2 | curriculum guidelines | Cancer will be a compulsory topic in the curriculum. |
| CBSIT7 | factual complexity of cancer | There will be a great amount of possible content for lessons about cancer. |
| CBSIT3 | student knowledge | Most students will hold misconceptions about the biology of cancer. |
| CBSIT4 | student affectedness | Most students will be faced with cancer in their social environment (friends or families). |
| CBSIT5 | student affectedness | Students who are personally affected by cancer will prefer to not discuss cancer in the classroom. |
| CBSIT6 | student affectedness | Students might have experienced the death of someone from their social environment (friends or families) due to cancer. |
| CBSIT8 | cancer connecting genetics and cell biology | When teaching about cancer, “cell biology” and “genetics” can be linked. |
| CBSIT9 | lack of time | Preparing lessons about cancer will be time consuming. |
| CBSIT10 | tightly packed curricula | Overall, the curricular guidelines for senior biology classes will be lengthy. |
| CBSIT11 | availability of teaching materials | The textbooks used at my school will extensively cover the issue of cancer. |
| CBSIT12 | emotional complexity of cancer | Time to address the emotional aspects of cancer may be lacking when teaching about cancer in secondary biology classes. |
| CBSIT13 | overwhelmed students  | Some students will be overwhelmed by the complexity of cancer. |
| CBSIT14 | student motivation | Most students will be interested in the topic of cancer. |
| CBSIT15 | opportunities for teacher trainings | There will be specific teacher trainings related to cancer. |
| CBSIT16 | emotional and factual complexity of cancer | When teaching about cancer, the factual and emotional aspects of cancer will be indivisible. |
| CBSIT17 | emotional complexity of cancer | When teaching about cancer, aspects, such as “death” and “dying”, will emerge in the classroom. |
| CBPER1 | addressing emotionally laden situations | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to address the psychosocial and emotional aspects of cancer. |
| CBPER2 | diversity of potential contexts | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to teach about the diversity of cancer types. |
| CBPER3 | teachers’ content knowledge | Prior to my lessons on cancer, I will first have to become acquainted with the biology of cancer. |
| CBPER4 | knowledge about students’ personal background | When teaching about cancer, I will know which students have a family member suffering from cancer.  |
| CBPER5 | answering biological questions | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to answer students’ biological questions about cancer. |
| CBPER6 | discussing the topic with colleagues | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to discuss teaching about cancer with my colleagues. |
| CBPER7 | answering medical questions | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to answer students’ medical questions about cancer. |
| CBPER8 | diversity of carcinogenic risk factors | When teaching about cancer, I will be able to teach about a variety of carcinogenic risk factors. |

CBSIT = situational control beliefs; CBPER = personal control beliefs

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| **Table S8: Structural mean analysis across teachers with and without personal experiences with cancer**  |
| **Latent factors** | **Teachers without personal experiences** |  | **Teachers with personal experiences** |
|  | **Unst.** | **SE** |  |  | **Unst.** | **SE** | **p** |
| Attitude burden (AB-B) | 0 |  |  |  | -.058 | .13 | .651 ns |
| Attitude necessity (AB-N) | 0 |  |  |  | .130 | .11 | .251 ns |
| Social pressure (SN) | 0 |  |  |  | .095 | .14 | .507 ns |
| Autonomy (PBC-A) | 0 |  |  |  | .075 | .13 | .567 ns |
| Self-efficacy (PBC-SE) | 0 |  |  |  | .142 | .17 | .398 ns |
| Willingness (WIL) | 0 |  |  |  | -.165 | .14 | .243 ns |
| Intention (INT) | 0 |  |  |  | -.269 | .15 | .081 ns |
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*Unst.=Unstandardized parameter estimation; SE=standard error; p=p-value; \*latent mean differences significant at the p≤0.05, \*\*p≤0.01, and \*\*\*p≤0.001 levels; ns latent mean differences not significant at the p>0.05 level; INT = Teachers’ intention to teach about cancer as a mandatory behaviour; WIL = Teachers’ willingness to teach about cancer if they had free choice; ATT-B = Attitude toward the perceived burden of teaching about cancer, ATT-N = Attitude toward the perceived necessity to teach about cancer; SN = Social norms to teach about cancer; PBC-A = Perceived behavioural control –autonomy to teach about cancer; PBC-SE = Perceived behavioural control – self-efficacy to teach about cancer*