School-Wide Restorative Practices: Step by Step

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The Denver School-Based Restorative Practices Partnership is a coalition that includes Advancement Project, Denver Classroom Teachers Association, Denver Public Schools, National Education Association, and Padres & Jóvenes Unidos.

The content of this guide was written in working groups comprised of representatives of the partner organizations, allies in the community, and the knowledgeable staff of North High School, Skinner Middle School, and Hallett Fundamental Academy in Denver, CO.

This implementation guide builds upon the first report issued by the Denver School-Based *Restorative Practices Partnership, Taking Restorative Practices School-Wide: Insights from three schools in Denver*, written by Yolanda Anyon, MSW, Ph.D., of the University of Denver's Graduate School of Social Work.

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It is the passionate students, families, and educators working to end the school-to-prison pipeline that will bring this guide to life.

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INTRODUCTION

Is this guide for me?

This guide is written for educators, families, and community members who understand that traditional, punitive discipline policies and practices are ineffective, do not support students, and have a disproportionate impact on students of color. This guide hopes to build the capacity of educators and community members to implement a positive approach to discipline in the form of restorative practices.

Restorative practices build community and promote healthy relationships among educators and students in order to teach the social-emotional and conflict-resolution skills necessary to reduce conflict. This guide provides support to any school building or district looking to reform their discipline system and reduce racial disparities. It answers the critical question: where do we start? This guide can also help schools or districts that have started along this path but are struggling with implementation.

Why should restorative practices be implemented?

In communities across the country, school discipline policies became increasingly more punitive in the 1980s in response to the call for "zero tolerance" of youth behavior. The use of exclusionary discipline policies, such as suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement, increased for even the most minor of offenses, like being late to school or talking in class. Rather than support students in their development, these school policies push students out of the classroom and hinder opportunities for quality education. For some students, "zero tolerance" means graduating high school with a police record. For many others, these discipline policies push them out of school long before graduation. Rarely do these harsh practices change student behavior; rather they actually worsen students' attitudes towards school by removing them from class and isolating them from their peers. By failing to address the adult behavior that often triggers or escalates student behavior, these practices can also damage the sense of community within a school.

These exclusionary and criminalizing discipline practices are a powerful aspect of the racial inequalities that pervade public schooling, from disparate dropout and graduation rates, to rates of referral to special education and gifted education, and differences in school funding and resourcing. Racial disparities are of particular concern when the disciplinary category is subjective and affected by cultural perception. For example, suspensions for "insubordination," "defiance," "disrespect," "refusal to obey school rules," and "disruption" have been shown to exhibit very high racial disparities, and have led some districts to ban them as a solution. In what has come to be known as the school-to-prison pipeline, students of color are far more likely than their white peers to be alienated from school through punishment, put into contact with law enforcement at school, and pushed towards a jail cell for the same behavior as their white peers.

> *"Restorative practices build community and promote healthy relationships among educators and students in order to teach the social-emotional and conflict-resolution skills necessary to reduce conflict."*

Using approaches such as dialogues, peace circles, conferencing, and peer-led mediation, restorative practices get to the root cause of student behavior, which often relates to adult behavior. A restorative culture seeks to address the missing piece of teaching social-emotional and conflict-resolution skills by turning behaviors into learning opportunities. Accepting responsibility for behaviors and making right what has been wronged is the goal of the learning opportunity. Using this model in the school community still allows each educator to have his/her own expectations and forms of accountability. As much as possible, students are responsible to their teachers for classroom expectations and behavior. When a student does not respond to the classroom accountability system, a student may be referred to a support staff member for a more intensive intervention aimed at helping the student make better behavioral choices. The ultimate goal in addressing all behaviors is to ensure a supportive and stable educational environment while encouraging growth towards self-discipline, accepting responsibility, and appreciating the rights of others. When fully implemented with a race-conscious lens, restorative practices improve school climate, increase academic achievement and reduce racial disparities in school discipline.

Who created this implementation guide?

The Denver School-Based Restorative Practices Partnership (Partnership) is a coalition of racial justice, education, labor and community groups working to ensure widespread and high-quality implementation of restorative practices in Denver Public Schools and beyond. Through this partnership, the youth and parent group, Padres & Jóvenes Unidos; the national racial justice organization, Advancement Project; the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), Denver Public Schools (DPS), and the National Education Association (NEA), with assistance from the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver (DU); have documented successful restorative practices in three Denver schools. Working together with school-based representatives, the Partnership is now sharing the model for success with districts across the country that are seeking to replicate, scale, and sustain these practices.

Denver Public Schools' story of adopting restorative practices is undoubtedly unique. The revolutionary reforms made in Denver—including an overhaul of the district's discipline policies, an agreement between the district and the police that specifies the role of officers in schools, and a statewide law that addresses the ineffectiveness of "zero tolerance" policies and required schools to implement "proportionate" discipline —were driven by a high-profile, racial justice community organizing campaign in response to schools' reliance on out-of-school suspensions to address discipline problems. In partnership with the community, DPS radically changed its discipline policies, moving away from exclusionary discipline policies and paving the way for positive approaches like restorative practices. Applying over $1 million in state grants, DPS piloted restorative practices in 2006 at one high school and three middle schools. The following year, the program expanded to four additional schools. The primary focus at these schools was a diversion program—a means to refer behavioral issues that often resulted in suspension, expulsion, or police referral to the Restorative Practices (RP) Coordinator for mediation. Instead of receiving tickets, students participated in victim-offender mediation practices facilitated by the RP Coordinator. Once the funding ended, a few of the schools continued the work by finding creative ways to maintain the program out of their own school budgets proving that, while outside funding is certainly helpful and can create incentives for schools to try new approaches, it is not necessary for implementation.

Denver is hardly alone in implementing restorative practices in schools to end punitive discipline and address racial disparities. Programs have emerged in San Francisco, Oakland, Minneapolis, and Chicago among other cities. Best practices have been adopted from these, and other models, some of which did not have access to funding as the pilot schools in Denver did. It is the "home grown" nature of restorative practices implementation in Denver, driven by community voices and individual school leaders, that the Partnership has captured in this guide.

The structure of the Partnership has ensured the perspectives of all major stakeholders are represented: the school district, the educators, and the students and their families. Created through work with both the partners and school-based representatives, this guide is a roadmap to school-wide restorative practices implementation.

The goals and strategies outlined in this report are aspirational and may not all be feasible due to limitations of funding, and/or district policies. Every school building is unique and schools need to prioritize what truly reflects their realities. However, readers should be encouraged that the approaches outlined in this guide have been implemented in schools throughout the country, in many cases without new funding or district reforms.

Navigating the implementation Guide

In the restorative practices community, it is generally accepted that it takes three to five years to implement RP in schools, to shift the mindset from punitive to restorative. As it has been proven successful in Denver, implementation can be done in stages. A school or a district can start with one practice and incorporate others as the school culture shifts. This guide has been structured accordingly—outlining the critical steps to be taken in the first year of implementation, how to grow in the second year, and elements to support sustainability of implementation. The guide includes a wide range of resources, from suggested literature on restorative practices to sample forms a principal might send home to parents explaining the philosophy, that the Partnership hopes will support implementation at all schools regardless of previous experience in restorative practices.

In February of 2016, the Partnership released the report *Taking Restorative Practices School-wide: Insights from Three Schools in Denver.* Through interviews and focus groups with school leaders and staff members from a high school, middle school, and elementary school in Denver, four essential strategies for implementing restorative practices school-wide were identified: strong principal vision and commitment to RP; explicit efforts to generate staff buy-in to this conflict-resolution approach; continuous and intensive professional development opportunities; and, the allocation of school funds for a full-time coordinator of RP at the site. This guide supports the development of these four strategies and others that we have identified for long-term sustainability.

Determining Readiness for Implementation

The first year of implementation is arguably the most critical. The first year sets the tone for the culture shift by proving to educators and students that restorative practices work and that this approach is ultimately best for the school community. For that reason, school leadership should assess readiness for implementation before embarking on this work.

Through interviews and focus groups with staff members at three Denver schools that have successfully implemented restorative practices, four criteria that contributed to success in taking this approach school-wide were identified. School leadership should ensure a readiness or a willingness to grow in these areas before beginning implementation:

- **Principal Vision and Commitment:** It is critical that school leaders believe in the strategy and communicate to staff the expectation that "restorative practices is what we do here." The principal must be clear in the purpose of implementing restorative practices and unafraid to speak to racial disparities in discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline. The principal must believe that students' time in class is a key factor in determining their educational success. The principal must believe that teaching social-emotional and conflict-resolution skills will positively affect behavior and improve performance in the building.
- **Staff Buy-In:** In order to be successful with restorative practices, most educators in the building should actively support and engage in this approach. It may be hard to gauge staff buy-in before implementation has begun; however, school leadership can involve educators early in the development stages to assess the willingness to transform school culture. A level of trust between educators and administrators is certainly helpful as restorative practices often require educators to be vulnerable, especially in taking accountability for how their actions and biases often escalate student behavior, in a way that exclusionary discipline practices do not.
- **Professional Development:** Ongoing and intensive professional development, that includes role-playing of restorative dialogues, should be provided for all educators in the building. This professional development needs to happen throughout the year and should be paired with frequent observation and coaching sessions. Professional development should be responsive to school needs--what strategies are educators struggling to implement, which students are being referred most often and why--and should include role-playing of scenarios occurring in the building. School leadership must be prepared to allocate a significant amount of time to restorative practice trainings and trainings in philosophies that support RP.
- **Full Time RP Coordinator:** Rather than add restorative practices to the workload of an existing administrator or other staff member, the time intensive nature of this approach requires a full-time coordinator for school-wide implementation. Schools short on funding may choose to train a family or community volunteer, reassign an existing staff member to this role, or have multiple staff members share the responsibilities outlined in this guide; however, it is important that, at all times, someone in the building is serving as the RP Coordinator, building relationships among the school community. Rather than holding past experience in restorative practices, it is far more important that this person is passionate about the vision, and confident that they can build community and repair trust between educators and students.

A school is ready to commence implementation when school leadership is prepared to hire a full time RP Coordinator, dedicate professional learning time to RP and strategies that support it, convince staff to transform school culture, and adhere to this new philosophy despite resistance and obstacles.

Year One
Implementation Benchmarks

At the end of the first year of implementation of restorative practices, a school should meet the following benchmarks, which were generated by representatives from Denver schools with strong restorative cultures and experts in the field. In future years of implementation, the benchmarks will continue to serve as both a measure of a school's success and a tool to identify areas of needed improvement.

Benchmark 1: There is a common understanding of why restorative practices are being implemented.

The principal's purpose behind the change to restorative practices can clearly be expressed by educators, students, and families. Educators express an understanding of the purpose of restorative practices implementation. Educators are well-versed in the negative implications of exclusionary discipline practices, particularly the harmful impact they have on students of color and at-risk youth. There are early signs of a shift in mindset from punitive to restorative.

Benchmark 2: Foundational structures to support RP implementation are in place.

A team of educators, each of whom have a clearly defined role, is in place to lead implementation and sustain restorative practices in the building. This behavior team meets consistently and has streamlined communication with the entire staff. The team is responsible for structuring professional development and utilize staff input to increase buy-in (See Year One: Establishing Roles). In addition, a clear referral system is established for both educators and students to refer individuals to the restorative process.

Benchmark 3: A method of collecting and analyzing data is developed.

In addition to determining key indicators to track and goals to achieve, educators know what data will be collected and how. Likewise, there are protocols for analysis. The data is used to inform changes to the discipline system and future goals, as well as prove to staff and community members the effectiveness of restorative practices in creating a positive school climate and reducing exclusionary disciplinary practices and the disparities that accompany them.

Benchmark 4: Educators, both new and returning, are trained in restorative practices.

This training is both intensive and ongoing. Educators are provided with resources to assist with implementation and provided frequent feedback, most likely from the RP Coordinator, on restorative practices used in their individual classrooms and throughout the school building.

Benchmark 5: Restorative language and culture have been established.

Restorative questions are used, not only in formal mediations, but in the hallways, classrooms, and staff meetings to address conflict. Signage in the building encourages the use of restorative language in all settings. School leadership uses restorative language, not just with students, but with staff and families. As part of this new culture, educators should be able to have productive conversations around the role race and adult behavior plays in adult-student interactions.

Benchmark 6: Families and students are well-informed of the shift to restorative practices.

Students and families have been introduced to the new philosophy of restorative versus punitive discipline. Ongoing training is made available to students and family members to promote understanding of the vision and use of common language. Student and family voice is valued in the school decision-making process.

Benchmark 7: Preventative measures, not just reactive measures, are being taken to improve school climate.

By the end of the first year, the behavior team is not only reacting to incidents and conflicts, but able to focus on preventative work. Educators and the RP Coordinator work to proactively build relationships with all students. This change of focus is proof that restorative practices are reducing the use of exclusionary disciplinary practices as well as buy-in from the school community.

The following portion of the Implementation Guide includes a timeline of the necessary steps to reach these Year 1 benchmarks. Also included is a description of how existing staff in your building or new restorative staff will work to support implementation of restorative practices in the first year and years to come.

Establishing Roles

When establishing the structures necessary to support the implementation of restorative practices, it is critical to clearly define the roles of staff members in the process. Below is a description of roles and responsibilities of the principal, the Behavior Team, the RP Coordinator, and the whole staff in implementing restorative practices.

In this document, the word *educator* will be used to describe any adult in the building that interacts with students, from cafeteria workers to paraprofessionals to teachers. The word teacher will be used when speaking to certified staff working in classrooms with students. The word *administrator* will be used when speaking specifically to building leadership.

Principal

As with any school initiative, school-wide RP implementation cannot succeed unless the principal shares in the core values of restorative practices: relationships, respect, responsibility, repair, and reintegration. Principals should have, or be willing to work towards a strong belief in restorative practices, a vision to implement RP with integrity, and a readiness to hold others accountable to that vision. The principal is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this new approach becomes the expectation. While the principal may choose not to be a part of the Behavior Team meetings, it is important to have a protocol for communication between the principal and those responsible for implementation.

The principal's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring staff understanding of restorative practices and why it is being implemented
- Honoring programs and frameworks that are currently in place and explaining how they support restorative practices
- Maintaining the expectation that all staff - from the classroom to the discipline office - use restorative practices to build relationships and respond to discipline incidents
- Communicating with students, families, and the community about restorative practices
- Including the Behavior Team or RP Coordinator in weekly communication
- Evaluating the RP Coordinator

"As with any school initiative, school-wide RP implementation cannot succeed unless the principal shares in the core values of restorative practices: relationships, respect, responsibility, repair, and reintegration. .

Behavior Team

In many non-restorative schools, discipline staff and educators respond to student discipline concerns in isolation from one another. Sometimes in the same building, some educators will be trying to punish and push a student out, while other educators are trying to support the student to stay. In schools that implement RP, a Behavior Team brings together the various supports students might need and streamlines communication between educators and administrators.

An ideal Behavior Team could include:

- RP Coordinator
- An administrator
- Social-emotional representative—social worker, school psychologist, etc.
- Special education representative—case manager, expert in student disabilities and the requirements of IDEA, paraprofessional
- Deans
- Security
- Teacher
- Nurse
- Any other building staff who hold strong, influential relationships with students, particularly at-risk youth (will depend on the building but could include after-school program provider, cafeteria worker, etc.)

If a school is unable to coordinate meetings that include the above representatives, it is essential to establish an avenue for communication with all staff. For example, rather than have a teacher on the Behavior Team, the RP Coordinator might update staff at weekly meetings.

The Behavior Team should meet weekly to review punitive and restorative discipline data and address concerning trends, such as:

- Which students, addressing both individuals and larger demographics, are being referred most often? What are the root causes? What supports can we offer?
- Which students, addressing both individuals and larger demographics, are being referred that were not before? What are the root causes of this change in behavior? What supports can we offer?
- What are the rising behaviors seen throughout the school? What are the root causes? What is our plan to address this rising behavior?

The Behavior Team should work collaboratively to review data and problem solve. They should develop individualized behavior plans for students of concern that reflect evidence-based practices (e.g. functional behavioral assessments) and address contextual influences (e.g. peers, rituals, and routines) on behavior. As part of this process, lines of communication with families should be opened, with the understanding that caregivers are experts in their children's lives and may have useful insights or suggestions about how to address their behavior at school.

RP Coordinator

Through focus groups and interviews with representatives from schools that practice restorative discipline, the Partnership concluded that at least one full-time coordinator of restorative practices was necessary to take this approach school-wide. This reflects how time-intensive restorative practices can be in comparison to exclusionary discipline actions that push students out of school and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Schools that have struggled with funding have often reassigned a staff member to this role who has proven strong in relationship-building.

The RP Coordinator's responsibilities can best be divided into three categories: reactive restorative practices, proactive/preventative restorative practices, and RP training.

In response to behavior concerns, the RP Coordinator should:

- Support students and teachers inside the classroom through observation, coaching, modeling restorative language, and debriefing with both teachers and individual students
- Monitor individual student behavior by checking in with students throughout the school day
  - Facilitate mediations in response to conflict
  - Among students
  - Between educators and students
  - Among educators
  - Between family members and educators
  - Among groups of students, educators, or family members
- Follow through after mediations to ensure the harm was repaired
- Develop creative interventions for students as part of the restorative resolution
- Inform families, educators, and administrators about incidents in school as needed, with the assistance of the Behavior Team
- Organize data to inform the Behavior Team of any negative trends in school climate

In order to improve school climate and prevent future behavior issues, the RP Coordinator should:

- Spend time in classrooms to build relationships with students and teachers
- Organize school data to inform staff of any positive trends in school climate
- Gather testimonials of RP success stories to improve staff and community buy-in
- Circulate throughout the building to build and foster relationships with students and educators
- Use peace circles to build a sense of community
- Cultivate advocates for RP among educators, students, families, and community members
- Advocate for educators and students, especially in Behavior Team meetings
- Communicate with the community about the restorative work being done within the building
- Establish an avenue for educators and students to express concerns about the process

To further the understanding of restorative practices in the school community, the RP Coordinator should:

- Provide ongoing restorative practices professional development to staff
- Observe staff and provide frequent, non-evaluative feedback
- Offer trainings to families in restorative practices so a common language is being used at home
- Teach students techniques for resolving conflict
- Coach students and educators on how to participate in meaningful restorative conversations

The role of the RP Coordinator is not limited to what has been outlined. Whether participating in a school tradition or supporting a new initiative, the coordinator should constantly be asking, "How can I add a restorative lens to this?"

Whole Staff

It is imperative to school-wide implementation that individual staff members commit to being restorative in and out of the classroom. As this approach is relationship-intensive, it is perhaps most important that staff maintain a willingness to be vulnerable to others and open to learning new strategies.

Throughout implementation, all staff members should:

- Stay informed of the content of Behavior Team meetings
- Engage in mediations with students, other staff members, and families
- Participate in restorative practices professional development
- Use restorative dialogue throughout the school building and expect students to do the same
- Maintain a growth mindset that emphasizes improvement over accomplishment and views students' and staff members' behavior as amenable to change
- Work to build relationships through the use of restorative practices like affective statements or circles

Timeline for Year One Implementation

This portion of the guide includes steps to be taken during the first year of implementation in order to reach the Year One Benchmarks. Additional resources are provided in the Appendix to support these steps.

Summer and planning weeks

Before the first day of school, members of the school community need to establish the systems that will be used for implementation, create or revise school materials to support restorative practices, and train staff and set the vision for this new approach. While some of this work can be done during the planning weeks before students are present, a significant amount of time during the summer months should be dedicated to preparation. If funding summer work proves difficult, most can be accomplished during the previous spring.

Benchmark 1: Identify the purpose of restorative practices:

- The principal must be able to clearly speak to the purpose for implementing restorative practices at the school
- Access and review disaggregated data that shows exclusionary school disciplinary practices - suspensions, expulsions, referrals to law enforcement - are not effective and/or are racially disproportionate in their use to show why a culture shift is necessary

Benchmark 2: Establish foundational structures for implementation:

- Hire a full time RP Coordinator or reassign a person in the building to this position
- Establish who will serve on the Behavior Team and begin building knowledge of RP and strengthening relationships amongst team members:
  - Provide summer readings and professional development for those who will serve on the Behavior Team
  - Host a retreat for the members of the Behavior Team to establish the vision - an outside facilitator might prove helpful
  - Schedule Behavior Team meetings and establish a protocol for those meetings
  - Create the avenues of communication between the Behavior Team and staff
  - Establish a common language to be used among staff and students that can appear on posters, referral forms, quick reference tools, etc.
- Create a referral system, including necessary forms to be completed and tracking systems, for:
  - Educators to refer students to the RP Coordinator if the student must leave the classroom
  - Educators, students, or families to refer a conflict for restorative mediation
- Develop avenues for feedback that allow educators, families, and students to share experiences with the restorative process, such as:
  - Weekly meetings
  - Focus groups
  - One-on-one check ins

Benchmark 3: Utilize a process to collect and analyze data:

- Select which data will be reviewed in the first year
- Utilize a system, including any necessary tools, for sharing the data with educators and the school community
- Examine the previous school year's data, paying particular attention to root cause, disproportionality, and frequency of discipline, to determine goals for the first year of implementation

Benchmark 4: Train new and returning educators:

- Coordinate a strategy to communicate the transition to restorative practices to staff, emphasizing the vision of the principal and the harmful effects of exclusionary discipline practices
- Create a staff manual to provide educators with as many resources as possible from the beginning of the year, including:
  - data to show the need for the shift
  - articles on the benefits of RP
  - outlines of new procedures
- Use feedback from members of the Behavior Team, following their summer retreat, to improve restorative practices professional development offerings
- Invite educators to optional summer trainings - a great opportunity to create allies for restorative practices
- Once educators return from the summer, train all staff in restorative practices to be used in their classrooms. Use role-playing in trainings on:
  - Restorative questions
  - Affective statements
  - Peace circles

Benchmark 5: Begin to establish restorative culture and language in the building:

- Schedule time during the planning weeks to build relationships among the staff, RP Coordinator, and Behavior Team
- Revise the school's behavior handbook to ensure that restorative practices are included in the discipline protocol or decision-making tree in response to different offenses
  - Eliminate suspensions and expulsions as a consequence for minor infractions
  - Define minor versus major infractions
- Apply a restorative lens to the handbook—perhaps even adding restorative questions to student planners
- Ensure the environment of the school is restorative by creating posters and signage to hang in the hallways to support a restorative conversation
- Model productive conversations around race by demonstrating the importance of asking questions, admitting mistakes, and contributing to the analysis and development of solutions around disparities in school discipline data
- Model conversations around adult behavior for all educators, emphasizing the role adult behavior often plays in escalating student behavior

Benchmark 6: Inform families and students of the shift to restorative practices:

- Develop a strategy to communicate the transition to restorative practices to families through various mediums
  Letters and calls home to families
  - Informational meetings for families the school year or summer prior to implementation to explain restorative practices and why school leadership has chosen this path
  - Announcements on social media outlets/school website
  - Data sharing to explain why restorative practices is necessary
- Prepare students for the shift to a restorative school climate
  - Hold class meetings during the previous school year to explain restorative practices and the reasoning behind the shift
  - Use time in advisory/homeroom or designate time within the school day to explain how this change in school culture will impact students
  - Onboard restorative practices with students in the building over the summer months in order to begin establishing relationships with students and build student advocates for restorative practices

Benchmark 7: Take preventative measures to improve school climate:

- Identify students of concern as a team, particularly those that might struggle with the transition, so that the RP Coordinator can prioritize building positive relationships with these students and their families.

First Month of School

In the first month of the school year, the focus of implementation will be establishing a new school climate through community building and trainings for families, educators, and students. It is critical during this time to analyze data, build belief in the approach, and identify any necessary early interventions.

Benchmark 1: Stand by the purpose of restorative practices:

- Continue to communicate the vision to staff, students, and families at school assemblies, parent-teacher association meetings, and staff meetings
- Host time to talk to educators, students, and families as they participate in the process for the first time to ensure restorative practices are being implemented with fidelity

Benchmark 2: Strengthen foundational structures for implementation:

- Schedule time to talk with educators, both in groups and individuals, about the progress of implementation and the use of foundational structures including:
  - The referral process
  - Communication from the Behavior Team
  - Avenues for feedback

Benchmark 3: Collect and analyze data to inform next steps:

- Synthesize early data to target areas of concern with implementation
- Refine data collection and analysis at the weekly Behavior Team meetings
- Identify success stories to be used to build community buy-in
- Survey educators, students, and families for feedback on adjusting to the new school climate

Benchmark 4: Continue to train all educators:

- Provide ongoing professional development, including role-playing scenarios educators are experiencing
- Continue to model RP conversations for staff
- Conduct coaching for educators to inform necessary supports and early interventions
  - The RP Coordinator or another non-evaluative member of the Behavior Team is best suited for these observations
  - General data from these observation should be shared at future trainings. For example, "18 out of 25 teachers have been observed using RP in their classrooms this week"
  - If individual coaching conversations and role-playing do not help struggling educators, administrators should be called in to provide additional support

Benchmark 5: Build restorative culture and language in the building:

- The RP Coordinator goes into classrooms to build relationships with and to support both students and teachers
- The RP Coordinator hosts time to talk with educators, both in groups and individuals, about the progress of implementation
- The Behavior Team facilitates discussion with staff around often difficult topics such as adult behavior and its impact on student behavior in an effort to normalize these conversations

Benchmark 6: Involve families and students in the shift to restorative practices:

- Ensure all students attend a restorative practices orientation to introduce them to restorative questions, peace circles, and language
- Offer trainings for students and families, including at parent-teacher association and community meetings
- Model RP conversations for students and families and encourage use of restorative language at home

Benchmark 7: Take preventative measures to improve school climate:

- Reach out to students to establish relationships on positive terms
- Find allies of restorative practices outside the building, including experts and community organizations that could partner with the school community in order to build restorative culture

Throughout The School Year

After the first month, the same three foci remain—training, relationship building, and data collection and analysis. During this time, it is critical to make sure that the implementation of restorative practices does not lose its momentum, as the responsibilities of the school year accumulate.

Benchmark 1: Stand by the purpose of restorative practices:

- Assess the school's alignment with the purpose of restorative practices by soliciting feedback from students, educators, and families
- Use this feedback to inform changes to foundational structures or additional professional development

Benchmark 2: Strengthen foundational structures for implementation:

- Evaluate implementation with the Behavior Team at a midpoint meeting. Survey educators, families, and students to understand:
  - What areas of implementation are working well?
  - What areas of implementation need more support or need to be restructured?
  - Are we still aligned with our vision?
  - Do we need to change our vision?

Benchmark 3: Collect and analyze data to inform next steps:

- Review data from week to week in Behavior Team meetings and establish next steps
- Conduct a midyear school climate survey to assess progress towards goals
- Analyze discipline data to identify areas of concern

Benchmark 4: Continue to train all educators:

- Continue to offer professional development for educators, both optional and required
- Facilitate reflection on and evaluation of professional development

Benchmark 5: Build restorative culture and language in the building:

- Have a member of the Behavior Team always present at the door to greet students as they arrive, during lunch, and in the hallways to strengthen relationships and to identify rising concerns
- Work with staff and students to develop creative ways to promote restorative practices, like showcasing creative interventions and sharing a success story of the week
- Use a restorative lens for all meetings, perhaps beginning with peace circles or affective statements
- Share success stories about students and educators that have benefited from adopting this approach and changing their practices to keep energy around restorative practices alive
- Continue to discuss the impact of race and adult behavior impact on students

Benchmark 6: Involve families and students in the shift to restorative practices:

- Provide ongoing trainings with students during advisory, class meetings, or after school
- Regularly survey families and students for feedback
- Gather feedback through less formal avenues such as one-on-ones with students after they have participated in the restorative process or temperature checks with students that have been involved in conflict
- Regularly share qualitative and quantitative data with families and students

Benchmark 7: Take preventative measures to improve school climate:

- Support the RP Coordinator holding peace circles in classrooms in order to build relationships
- Ensure the RP Coordinator is building relationships with all students, not just those referred to the office
- Encourage teachers who have received training, to run their own peace circles in the classroom to establish a positive classroom environment

End of the School Year

It is important both to reflect on the first year of implementation and to look forward to how restorative practices can be strengthened the following year.

Benchmark 1: Revisit the purpose of restorative practices:

- Revisit the vision, revising if necessary, and assess adherence to the vision throughout the school year
- Provide an avenue for educators, students, and families to share successes and challenges

Benchmark 2: Evaluate the foundational structures for implementation:

- Reflect as a Behavior Team on the protocol of weekly meetings
- Revise any materials created—teacher manuals, behavior policies, referral forms
- Hire new staff based on the school's vision to create a restorative culture

Benchmark 3: Collect and analyze data to reflect and inform next steps:

- Administer a final round of surveys to educators, students, and families
- Evaluate the progress made in reaching Year One data goals
- Set the goals for Year Two implementation
- Capture previously identified success stories to be used for the role play scenarios during professional development for the upcoming school year

Benchmark 4: Review effectiveness of restorative practices trainings:

- Document real stories of RP for the following year's role-playing during training
- Modify trainings based on educator feedback for the following year
- Create manuals to support the staff training

Benchmark 5: Celebrate restorative culture and language in the building:

- Identify students, educators, and families that could serve as leaders and champions of restorative practices
- Create new signage for the school, particularly around specific RP success stories
- Celebrate students, educators, and families that truly embodied the restorative culture
- Recognize educators that were especially successful in acknowledging their own behavior's impact on student behavior

Benchmark 6: Have families and students evaluate the shift to restorative practices:

- Administer a final round of surveys to students and families
- Review survey results with students and families and incorporate suggestions into school planning

Benchmark 7: Take preventative measures to ensure a s uccessful second year of implementation:

- Identify students that will need early outreach the following school year
- Use the data from the current year to inform the development of preventative programming for subsequent school years

Year Two Implementation

During the second year of implementation, as well as subsequent years, the foci should be:

1) Identifying which benchmarks from Year One have not been met and troubleshooting those areas.
2) Strengthening those benchmarks that were met or exceeded by the end of the first year.

In order to support these goals, this portion of the guide includes an "anti-model," which will help identify areas of concern, and suggestions for expansion for each benchmark that has already been met or exceeded.

The Anti-Model

Often times, although steps toward a restorative cultural shift have been taken, the old, punitive culture is not entirely eliminated. Conflicting philosophies hinder the implementation of restorative practices and undermine its progress. Old habits - teachers requesting suspensions, students expecting punishments, distrust between educators and students - are not only frustrating, but serve as critical signs of problem areas in implementation.

This anti-model breaks down the signs that restorative practices have not been fully implemented by each benchmark. Use this tool to identify benchmarks that require troubleshooting. Once the area of concern has been identified, revisit the *Year One Timeline for Implementation* for guidance. Additional resources are available in the *Elements of Sustainability: Common Challenges* portion of the guide.

Benchmark 1: There is no common understanding of why restorative practices are being implemented.

- Educators cannot explain what restorative practices are
- Educators cannot explain why the school has chosen to implement RP, particularly the harmful impact of exclusionary practices on all students, but especially students of color and at-risk youth
- Educators are resistant to the core values of restorative practices: relationship, respect, responsibility, repair, and reintegration

Benchmark 2: Foundational structures are missing or not being used in a way that supports restorative practices implementation.

- Minor behaviors, such as speaking out of turn in class, using a cell phone in class, or using profane language, are regularly being referred to the restorative process rather than being addressed in the classroom
- The school as a whole or individual classrooms are continuing to rely on a rigid consequence ladder that leads to students being sent out of the classroom and suspended for behaviors that can be addressed in a restorative manner
- Behavior Team meetings are not being held weekly, not being consistently attended by Behavior Team members, or are not happening at all
- Behavior Team meetings have developed into a time to complain, rather than a time to create action plans
- The RP Coordinator is given responsibilities for which they are not qualified
- The RP Coordinator is given responsibilities that are unrelated to building a restorative culture

Benchmark 3: The data being collected and analyzed does not show improvement.

- Expulsions, referrals to law enforcement, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions have not declined
- Racial disparities in these exclusionary discipline policies have not declined
- There is no system to support the consistent collection of data

Benchmark 4: The training provided to educators is ineffective.

- Training is lecture-based. There is no role-playing, story-telling, or real-time observation/coaching
- Teachers are not walking out of a training with strategies that can be put into place immediately in their classrooms
- The training does not appeal to teachers' experience by acknowledging that many teachers may already be practicing this type of relational work in their classrooms
- Educators do not leave the training knowing who in the building, district, or community will be there to support them in this work when there are challenges
- In subsequent years of implementation, training is not differentiated by experience level or by type of learner
- The training is an event that happens in isolation, rather than on ongoing curriculum that builds on itself throughout the year

Benchmark 5: The culture and language of the school remains punitive and reflects a fixed mindset.

- Educators are not in the hallways to greet students during transitions
- Throughout the day, educators are not in the hallways having restorative conversations with students
- Students are called out for their behaviors in front of classmates
- The tone and voice levels used by educators reflect a punitive and shaming environment
- When educators discuss students, they use deficit language versus asset language
- Educators are unable to discuss the impact race has on decision making. They struggle specifically with acknowledging mistakes made around race, and committing to being a part of eradicating racial disparities in the building
- Student reputations from educators or other students are dictating how the student is treated in school
- Building titles and labels still reflect a punitive mindset. For example, students are sent to a "detention room" or "suspension room" instead of a "peace room" or "restorative office" when being referred to the restorative process
- The climate of the room to which students are sent from class is punitive rather than restorative. The person supervising the room, the activities they are allowed to do while in there, or the reason they have been sent do not support RP
- Students do not actively participate in restorative conversations, but rather wait for the inevitable punishment to be administered

Benchmark 6: Families and students are unaware of the shift to restorative practices.

- Families or students do not perceive a shift in the discipline policies as reflected in surveys and conversations
- Families or students are reluctant to participate in the restorative process when asked or are confused about its purpose after engaging in a restorative conversation

Benchmark 7: Preventative measures are not being taken to improve school climate.

- The Behavior Team never moves past reactionary work to developing preventative measures
- The RP Coordinator spends the majority of the time in the office rather than building relationships with students
- The RP Coordinator is given responsibilities that inhibit their ability to build relationships with educators and students. The RP Coordinator no longer has time to do preventative work
- Data from previous years is not being used to inform preventative work

Opportunities for Expansion

As benchmarks are met and exceeded, restorative practices can still be amplified. Expanding the areas in which a school is successful can generate excitement around restorative practices. Below are suggestions for expanding restorative practices in your school.

Benchmark 1: There is a common understanding of why restorative practices are being implemented.

Better Marketing of RP: In the initial year of implementation, it is most important to onboard educators to the new vision of a restorative building. In subsequent years however, more effort should be made to ensure that students, families, and visitors to the school understand the "why" behind restorative practices. Ideas to market restorative practices are:

- A sign in a prominent location, that all visitors might see, that announces "We Are Restorative"
- A section in the student handbook dedicated to restorative practices, explaining its purpose and providing students with useful tools like sentence stems
- A page on the school website that highlights restorative practices success stories
- A pamphlet available in the main office to explain restorative practices and the unique story of your school's implementation

Benchmark 2: Foundational structures to support RP implementation are in place.

Two-tiered Behavior Team: Once foundational structures are in place and roles have been established, it may be possible for members of the administration to step away from Behavior Team meetings. It is, however, still incredibly important that the administration stay in constant communication with the Behavior Team. Some schools have had success with a two-tiered system in which:

- The Behavior Team continues to meet weekly to address concerns and develop next steps.
- The principal is only brought in for a quick debrief of the week and to address high-level concerns.

Continual assessment - Are people "staying in their lanes" (RP versus punitive discipline)? Is time being used effectively? How can things run more smoothly? Is the structure of the behavior team meetings being revisited - even though the structures are sound, regular reflection is necessary?

Benchmark 3: A method of collecting and analyzing data is developed.

Collection of More In-Depth Restorative Data: In the beginning years of implementation, data collection and analysis is often focused on exclusionary discipline practices, ensuring that the use of these practices are decreasing for all students and that disparities are decreasing for students of color and at-risk students. As data collection is streamlined, a Behavior Team can work to develop a more in-depth plan for documenting the restorative work that happens in the school.

You can find more information on this in the *Elements of Sustainability: Data Collection and Analysis* portion of this guide.

Benchmark 4: Educators, both new and returning, are trained in restorative practices.

Training of All Educators: All educators, meaning any adult in the building that interacts with students, can be trained in restorative practices. This could include cafeteria staff, athletic coaches, administrative support staff, maintenance staff, and transportation providers. Training sessions can be made available for community partners and anyone who may enter the building so that the language and culture of the school remains consistent for students. These trainings should continue to include role-playing, story-telling, and clear strategies that can be used by adults immediately in their interactions with students and other educators.

Training in Strategies that Support Restorative Practices: As educators return to the building each year, they will have a stronger understanding of the purpose of restorative practices. In order to keep returning educators engaged in training and to encourage the strengthening of school climate, train educators in strategies and philosophies that are supportive of restorative culture. See Appendix: Types of Professional Development for suggested areas in which to train educators.

Benchmark 5: Restorative language and culture have been established.

Boosting Excitement around RP Culture: Once the restorative culture and language have been established, this culture should be celebrated so the excitement remains around restorative practices. Some creative ways to boost excitement around RP are:

- **Restorative Challenges:** Each month, challenge students to spread the restorative culture. In the first month of school, challenge students to high five people they do not know in the building. Encourage students to complete a certain number of random acts of kindness.
- **Caught in the Act:** Rather than "catching" students for behavior deemed inappropriate, acknowledge students who promote the school's restorative culture. For example, if a student is seen using conflict-resolution skills independently, take note of the behavior and award the student a certificate or call home to share this positive behavior with their family.
- **Cultural Assemblies:** Coordinate a school-wide celebration of the diversity in the building, encouraging students to share traditions from their culture with students, educators, families, and members of the community.
- **National campaigns:** Participate in national campaigns, like Anti-bullying Month, Dignity In Schools Campaign National Week of Action, or National LGBTQ Pride Month, developing school-wide projects.

Benchmark 6: Families and students are well-informed of the shift to restorative practices.

Family & Community Volunteers: Invite family and community members to volunteer to support the restorative process. After being fully trained in RP, these volunteers could help with preventative initiatives or help lead peace circles and mediations in the building.

Student Advocates: Students who have shown to engage in the restorative process can serve as ambassadors to the rest of the student body, embodying the restorative mindset and advocating for the use of restorative practices.

Peer Mediation: Educators can nominate students to be peer mediators. Students can be trained in one of many existing peer mediation programs to address conflicts amongst peers.

Benchmark 7: Preventative measures, not just reactive measures, are being taken to improve school climate.

Staff Community Building: While funding for annual staff retreats might be hard to acquire, community building amongst all educators should happen throughout the school year. Staff potluck lunches are a great way to encourage educators to build relationships with one another. Be sure to always include non-teaching staff as a sign of the school's inclusive culture. Many restorative schools take advantage of summer months by planning optional staff team-building outings including hikes, bowling, and gatherings in local parks.

Social Emotional Learning is the personal and social competence to recognize one's own and other people's emotions, and to use that information to guide thinking and behavior. It affects how one manages behavior, navigates social complexities, and makes personal decisions that achieve positive results. It provides a flexible set of skills that can be acquired and improved with practice. It is essential in the restorative practices environment that educators and students engage in this work together to ensure meaningful adult-student relationships that are not dependent on academic performance. A plethora of these programs already exist and can be modified to be its own course that meets during the school day or in an after school program.

Overcoming Common Challenges to Implementation

There are many challenges that a school may encounter when implementing restorative practices initially and when trying to sustain a restorative culture years after implementation.

Many of these common challenges can be avoided by prioritizing:

- Articulating a clear vision to staff, students, and families; and emphasizing the purpose behind implementation and a commitment to the values of restorative practices;
- Hiring and honoring the role of a full-time Restorative Practices Coordinator who can build the relationships necessary for sustaining this culture shift and provide insight into the feelings of staff, students, and families towards implementation;
- Providing ongoing training for staff, students, and families in the values of restorative practices and essential strategies; observing staff to ensure trainings are effective; and revisiting these trainings both periodically and when uncertainties arise; and
- Debriefing frequently with staff, students, and families to reflect both on the outcomes of restorative practices implementation and on the processes used in the building.

This portion of the guide includes common challenges that may arise and methods that school leaders, RP Coordinators, and experts in the field have used to overcome them, including:

- Myths about restorative practices
- Loss of funding
- Changes in leadership
- Loss of belief
- Pushback from families
- Restorative practices become too mechanical
- Staff training is not implemented with fidelity
- Incomplete repair after conflict
- Restorative practices are too time-consuming
- Student-only focus
- Discipline disparities do not change

Keep the excitement alive around restorative practices. Any combination of the below challenges might lead to the school culture flat-lining. When the energy is lost, reboot restorative practices by bringing in outside resources and revisiting the original steps to implementation.

Challenge: Myths about Restorative Practices

What It Might Look Like:

Members of the school community believe the following myths can ultimately undermine any progress made by RP in changing school climate.

MYTH	REALITY
RP will eliminate "misbehavior" throughout the school.	RP, if implemented properly, will reduce discipline issues in the building.
RP will be successful with every student.	RP should be attempted with every student, but some students may require additional social-emotional or mental health supports. Victim-offender mediation is not recommended for bullying or sexual harassment.
RP will work immediately and every time.	RP are social skill building strategies that take time and practice.
RP are only used to address student "misbehavior" and conflict.	RP should be used to address any conflict among students and educators in the building.
RP are too soft. There are no consequences, and no one is held accountable.	There are consequences, but those consequences are unique to each conflict and may not always be publicly known. In a restorative mediation, both parties are held accountable for their actions. This accountability however, is not defined by a punishment, but rather by taking responsibility for actions and working together to repair the harm.
RP are just the RP Coordinator's responsibility.	Creating and sustaining a restorative culture requires active participation from all educators in the building.

How to Address It:

- Be clear about the expectations of RP from the beginning - do not promise a fix to all school problems, but instead explain the purpose and realities of restorative practices.
- Ensure a space for educators to voice concerns to an expert in RP who can be part of the process to dispel myths by countering with realities.
- Provide training "booster sessions" periodically, but especially when the goals of RP become unclear.
- Be transparent about the ladder of interventions used for students when they are referred to a restorative process. At the conclusion of a mediation, be sure any involved parties are aware of the repair pieces being completed.

Challenge: Loss of Funding

What It Might Look Like:

A loss of funding that impacts the implementation of restorative practices might be specific to RP - losing the funding for the RP Coordinator or budget cuts that impact school climate - larger class sizes, cutback on mental health supports, etc. In either case, there is a loss of capacity to build relationships within the school community.

How to Address It:

- Having a strong philosophical commitment to restorative practices might avoid the need to cut the RP Coordinator's position.
- Be transparent in the discussions of the budget with staff members, valuing suggestions on where cuts might be made that would lessen the impact on school climate.
- Be open to people taking pay cuts in order to keep support staff.
- In the case of the loss of funding for a RP Coordinator, many schools have had success reassigning a person within the building to that role. However, it is imperative that the school commits to this person being a full-time RP Coordinator, taking on the responsibilities outlined in the Year 1 Implementation portion of this guide. These responsibilities might also be divided among two school representatives, as long as someone is always available to mediate a conflict.
- Take advantage of teacher leaders or train volunteers from the community to be able to take on this role.
- Allocate social-emotional funds to hiring the RP Coordinator.
- Pursue grants to fund the RP Coordinator. Title I funds can be used for restorative practices. Additionally, many grants exist within the justice community that can be used to fund restorative practices in schools.

Challenge: Changes in Leadership

What It Might Look Like:

Changes in leadership at the district level (school board, superintendent) or at the school level (principal, administration) can be a challenge, particularly if the new leaders are not restorative-minded.

How to Address It:

- If one individual leaving halts the program, this is most likely a sign that a larger shift in school climate never occurred. Be sure to be taking time throughout implementation to listen to and address concerns from students, staff, and the community.
- Identify plans for succession early on, building capacity amongst teacher leaders.
- Have easily accessible data analysis on hand to show short-term (year to year) and long-term (since implementation) improvements to prove RP's effectiveness.
- When families, educators, and students are highly trained, they can serve as advocates of RP should there be a change in leadership. Identify and empower these leaders early on in the implementation process.
- Find and sustain allies throughout all levels of the school district. Involve school board members and district employees early on to build advocates at the district level.
- Identify and partner with other supportive organizations like teachers' unions or community organizations that will advocate for restorative practices should they be threatened.

Challenge: Loss of Belief

What It Might Look Like:

While a loss of belief in the restorative process can take many forms, the sentiment among educators is typically the same: "We tried and it doesn't work." When effective educators are no longer fully engaging in these processes, it is imperative to identify what derailed their support of the philosophy. Some possibilities are:

- Effective educators have concerns about a specific conflict that was mediated using restorative practices or in regards to implementation of restorative practices as a whole. With no place to voice concerns to the Behavior Team, this sentiment spreads amongst other educators.
- The person assigned as the RP Coordinator has failed to build trusting relationships with both staff and students.
- A short term increase in suspension or expulsion numbers, or even an individual incident, leads to a loss of belief among the school community.

How to Address It:

- Remember that you may not always be able to secure 100% buy-in for restorative practices, particularly from staff. Rather than focus on changing the minds of every staff member, prioritize building the leadership of the most committed staff, winning over support in the ""middle," and convincing those that are against RP to stop actively resisting it. Then, continue to build a staff that supports RP by interviewing with a relational and restorative mindset.
- Do not give staff the license to say, "I don't believe in RP." Use data to show its effectiveness within your school. Use national, state, district, or building level data to show the ineffectiveness of exclusionary discipline policies and the racial disproportionality in their use. Point to the larger impact of the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Ensure teachers have multiple avenues to voice concerns, but counter by using the classrooms of teachers who have fully committed to being restorative as models. Encourage peer observations and ask teachers to reflect on whether those restorative-minded staff members are experiencing the same difficulties.
- Include students in the discussion as this work must be driven by them. Students carry the torch for RP in a building because it gives them a voice they have often been denied.

Challenge: Pushback from Families

What It Might Look Like:

Families call for more punishments because:

- They believe being punitive is more effective for their own student; or
- Their student was a "victim" and they are looking for justice.

How to Address It:

- Ensure family members have multiple avenues to express concerns to experts in restorative practices.
- Provide trainings for families, emphasizing the following:
  - There *are* consequences for student actions, but they are different to every situation and are generally not exclusionary.
  - Your child will be safe at school.
  - Exclusionary discipline will not help your student or any other student learn the skills to cope with conflict.
- Include families in the RP mediation process so they can see that people can still be held accountable for their actions without traditional punishment.
- Train family members who can explain the benefits of RP to other family members as peers.

Challenge: Restorative Practices Become Too Mechanical

What It Might Look Like:

When restorative practices become too programmed in the building, it is sometimes reflective of poor training or a school that did not fully commit to becoming restorative. This problem may manifest itself in the following ways:

- Students, and even staff, begin to see an RP mediation as a punishment. This is especially likely if RP mediations are often grouped together with a suspension.
- Students and staff use the language and go through the motions, but restorative mindset is not reflected in the school climate.
- Students and staff just apologize after an incident, with no repair piece or restoration to the community.

How to Address It:

- Revisit the vision with the school community.
- Ensure a balance between proactive and reactive restorative practices, making sure that relationship building is still a priority.
- Make clear to students and staff that they will always be held accountable.
- If an educator is reaching the same solution at the conclusion of every RP conversation, restorative practices are not being used effectively. The flexibility of the consequence, that it can be unique to every student and every conflict, is the essence of restorative practices.
- Ensure that the RP Coordinator is someone passionate about the restorative process so that the conversations they have and the relationships they build are clearly authentic.

Challenge: Staff Training is Not Implemented with Fidelity

What It Might Look Like:

In the years following initial implementation of restorative practices, it is critical to review staff trainings to be sure they are being implemented with fidelity. Some common problems that may arise are:

- After years of implementation, staff is assumed to be trained in RP. Trainings become less frequent and less intensive.
- RP training is not a priority when onboarding new staff.
- Other initiatives are not in line with the restorative mindset, leading to staff being trained in conflicting philosophies.
- Staff does not actively participate. Role-playing is not a part of the training or not taken seriously.
- The Behavior Team feels powerless in addressing concerns with implementation.

How to Address It:

- RP training needs to be a priority for new and returning staff each year. Capitalize on the expertise of returning staff, but do not dismiss them from the training.
- The Behavior Team should use a restorative lens when considering any new initiative to be implemented in the building. While many initiatives might support restorative work, some may undermine it entirely.
- Call on an expert. If your current school district cannot provide an expert, there are districts and organizations throughout the country that can provide training to realign the school community with the values and essential strategies of restorative practices.
- Collect real stories from students and educators each year to use in future trainings for role playing and as testimonials of the impact of different strategies.
- Check-in regularly with the Behavior Team to make sure they feel confident and safe addressing concerns with other educators in the building around the use of restorative practices. Be clear with all educators that this is a school-wide expectation and that the Behavior Team will be there to support them.

Challenge: Incomplete Repair

What It Might Look Like:

In order for the restorative process to work effectively and for those involved to be held accountable for their actions, it is imperative that the harm done is repaired. When this piece is left incomplete, not only might those directly impacted by the harm feel failed by the restorative process, but it also can contribute to the myth that restorative practices do not hold students accountable for their actions.

Most often, repair is left incomplete because there is no follow-up to make sure that the relationship was restored. However, sometimes someone who was harmed may feel that their voice was not heard during the mediation and the repair "wasn't enough."

How to Address It:

- End RP mediations by scheduling a time, preferably within one day, to check in about the completion of the repair piece.
- Create a tracker so that others can support with check-ins, being sure to determine both if the repair was completed and the relationship restored.
- Continue less formal temperature checks with those involved in particularly heated situations for an extended period of time.

Challenge: Restorative Practices are too Time-Consuming

What It Might Look Like:

Restorative practices are more time-consuming than exclusionary methods of discipline. While a suspension may call for paperwork or a phone call home, these exclusionary practices are still not as time-consuming as teaching students conflict-resolution and social-emotional skills. Frequently, educators feel as though they do not have enough time to dedicate to restorative practices. Some examples might be:

- At the classroom level, teachers are not dedicating time to have necessary one-on-one restorative conversations for reasons such as pacing of a lesson, pressure from administration and evaluators, or pushes to increase test scores.
- Educators do not give students the time they need to master the new conflict-resolution skills that restorative practices teach. They do not dedicate time to teaching the skill and are discouraged when results are not immediate.

How to Address It:

At the classroom level, there are numerous strategies teachers can use so that they can address student behavior in a restorative way without disrupting a lesson:

- Avoid addressing the behavior of the student in a way that draws the attention of other students; this can escalate the situation quickly for many students.
- Quietly address the behavior with the student if it requires immediate attention or use a nonverbal redirect.
- Wait until students are doing independent, partner, or group work to be able to have the restorative conversation with the student.
- Have the restorative conversation with the student after class.

These changes in classroom and school climate will ultimately lead to more academic time in each class. If building positive relationships with students and teaching those relational skills is prioritized on the front end, classroom time will not be monopolized by correcting behavior.

The skills taught through restorative practices should be treated like math skills in that students need to be taught the steps, have space to practices, and be assessed on their readiness. Some students will master these skills faster than others; some will need to be retaught the steps multiple times before mastery. Remind educators that they will get the time spent teaching these skills back and more as the school climate improves.

Challenge: Student-Only Focus

What It Might Look Like:
Sometimes, RP becomes limited to student behavior and associated only with situations where students have made a mistake.

Once restorative practices have been implemented, the expectation should be that all conflicts that are appropriate for the restorative process are handled that way, no matter who from the school community is involved. It is important to make sure that educators and students are both held equally accountable for their actions, and each is given equal voice.

In response to student/educator conflicts, it is imperative that there is recognition of adult responsibility for or escalation of student behavior. Without this acknowledgement of shared responsibility, restorative practices will be viewed as another form of punishment. Students will not be willing to recognize their own accountability if adults involved cannot do the same. Ultimately, students might become disillusioned towards restorative practices and possibly lose respect for both the educators and the process.

Conflicts among staff can also be addressed using restorative practices. Not only will this serve as a reminder to adults that this process is not just for students, but will also promote the understanding that staff relationships can and do impact students and school climate as a whole. This does not always need to be in response to a specific incident, but also can be used to address behavior, perception, or misperception among adults in the building.

How to Address It:
The use of restorative practices should begin before students enter the building for the school year. Set the restorative tone and the expectation for adult participation by using peace circles during staff development. Administrators and members of the Behavior Team should model affective statements and the restorative questions with adults both during planning weeks and throughout the academic year. Administrators should also be sure to request the restorative process for conflicts that involve them to reinforce this expectation.

Beginning the first day of implementation and continuing at all future trainings and meetings around restorative practices, be clear that all conflicts, including those with adults, will be addressed restoratively and that harm can be caused by any party.

Challenge: Disparities in Discipline Do Not Change

What It Might Look Like:
Despite overall decreases in suspensions and expulsions, students of color, LGBTQ and gender nonconforming students, or students enrolled in special education are still more likely than their peers to be disciplined using exclusionary practices.

How to Address It:
First and foremost, educators must be able to talk about disparities in discipline data. If educators are unable to name the problem or have conversations about race, racism, and other prejudices, the disparities in data will persist. In order to create an environment in which these difficult conversations can happen, administrators or members of the Behavior Team should:

- Create a safe environment in which both educators and students feel comfortable sharing.
- Provide training in implicit and explicit bias for all educators in the building.
- Survey students and families - specifically asking for experiences revolving around race, gender, sexuality, or disability – and share that information with educators and administrators in the building.
- Identify resources that are available within your district or from community organizations to assist in facilitating these conversations.

Having conversations around cultural competency can be one of the first of many steps in addressing disparities in discipline data and will help determine next steps for the building.

Importance of Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

When implementing restorative practices on a large scale, whether that means in one school or throughout a school district, involving multiple stakeholders can amplify the success of such an undertaking. There are numerous forces impacting the culture and climate of the nation's schools, and having allies within each of the forces can prove imperative to sustaining a restorative mindset.

Collaboration with stakeholders and community starts with an invitation. Initially, securing allies in external organizations is important. While a deeper partnership will certainly take time to build, the goal is genuine collaboration, in which partners meet consistently to expand the restorative work, participate in the process, and reflect on what is being done within schools and the larger community.

The School District.

How to Connect: There are numerous people within a district with whom a partnership would be beneficial. Ultimately, more allies within the school district can translate to more people advocating for funding and support for restorative practices implementation in individual schools and the school district as a whole. Some key people to reach out to are:
The superintendent;

- Members of the school board;

District employees or partners responsible for professional development;

- Students services departments or wherever mental health and social-emotional supports are centralized; and
- Offices responsible for discipline, particularly suspensions, expulsions, and transfers.

Maintain an active presence at school district events, including school board meetings and district professional development opportunities, to ensure support for restorative practices. Invite school district leadership to trainings and events that highlight the building's restorative culture.

Value of this Partnership: Allying with the school district is not only powerful in the support it can provide to individual schools, but it has the potential to spread restorative practices throughout the district. By developing relationships with the superintendent and school board, an administrator could secure funding for restorative practices in addition to creating an advocate within the district to defend this work. By finding allies in the student services department, a school might be able to identify additional mental health and social-emotional supports that can assist students that have needs that cannot be addressed through restorative practices alone. Partnering with the office responsible for professional development could lead to district support in training. Denver Public Schools, for example, employs a RP Coordinator at the district level responsible for training and supporting district employees at any school within the school district. School districts may offer other trainings and professional development that could support RP implementation.

The ultimate goal in a partnership with the district is a change in the district's discipline policy to reflect a restorative mindset. In Denver, for example, Denver Public Schools changed its discipline policy to include restorative practices after a successful pilot program.

Students and Families.

How to Connect: Present restorative practices, including offering in-depth trainings, to already existing parent and family organizations like parent teacher organizations. Invite trained family members to volunteer in classrooms and in the restorative office/peace room. Host data review nights with families to show progress and field questions and comments.

Include student organizations, especially those tied to populations most affected by disparities and the school-to-prison pipeline [organizations that serve students of color, Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), etc.]. Connect with previously established student leadership groups like student government, and include a diverse group of representatives from the student body in discussions around school culture and discipline. Introduce students to restorative practices and train students to facilitate restorative circles.

Value of this Partnership: Restorative culture is inclusive of all members of the school community. By not only involving students and families, but also providing them with the opportunity to play a strong role in implementation, a school can strengthen its restorative culture. Additionally, a well-informed community of students and families can hold educators accountable for sticking with restorative practices, especially in the event of leadership and staff turnover. Having their voices heard, often for the first time, students can be the driving force of restorative work and should be included in discussions around data, school climate, and next steps as they are the group most impacted.

Educator Unions.

How to Connect: Reach out to local representation for support in this initiative. Building representatives can be very influential in onboarding educators. Union employees responsible for organizing within individual schools can communicate the vision of restorative practices with union leadership and its network of educators.

Value of this Partnership: Staff buy-in is imperative to successful implementation of restorative practices. Involving teachers' unions can be a key strategy to onboard educators. The building representative for example, might be able to encourage educators to engage in the process by using a restorative approach to address grievances. As evident by our partnership in Denver, the teachers' union has the power to identify key teacher leaders who can advocate for a restorative mindset.

In Denver, the Denver Classroom Teachers Association provides training in classroom management strategies that support restorative practices. Additionally, they conduct school climate and discipline surveys in schools experiencing problems, even specifically surveying faculty on racial disparities.

> *"By finding allies in the student services department, a school might be able to identify additional mental health and social-emotional supports that can assist students that have needs that cannot be addressed through restorative practices alone.*

Community Advocacy Organizations.

How to Connect: Find allies in community organizations, particularly those with whom families and students of the school are involved. Identify grassroots organizations that advocate for equality and racial justice in education and build the voice of the community. Connect with organizations that advocate for, intervene with, and support youth such as mental health centers, special education advocacy groups, Boys and Girls Clubs, and human services allies. Organizations that work with students and families under court-mandate can also serve as important allies.

Value of this Partnership: Restorative practices are, at their core, based on respect and relationships. However, families and members of the community served by schools are often excluded from conversations. By organizing, educating, and empowering students and families, community organizations strengthen their voices so that their opinions and needs can be respected and heard. This partnership is particularly beneficial to sustainability, as a well-informed and trained community can provide support when the inevitable pushback occurs. A community organization can also help hold educators and district officials accountable to being restorative as staff and leadership within a school or district change. These organizations can also be key bridge builders and problem solvers. Students and families might be more likely to trust these organizations, so community organizations can be particularly useful in assessing school culture, proposing solutions, and supporting implementation.

Law Enforcement and the Courts.

How to Connect: An alliance with the criminal justice system at every level is beneficial in the effort to stop the school-to-prison pipeline. Key allies could include:

- School police officer(s)
- Municipal police departments
- Local prosecutors
- Public Defender's Offices, or a similar offices representing juveniles
- Local judges

Even just one ally in each of these categories could provide critical insight into the work of restorative practices.

Value of this Partnership: Having connections and advocating within the legal system can reduce the amount of students funneled into the school-to-prison pipeline. Agreements between law enforcement and administration that schools, not police, are responsible for school discipline could reduce school based arrests. Should students be forced into the courts, a relationship with judges might lead to more meaningful intervention and positive case outcomes.

In Denver, Denver Public Schools and the Denver Police Department, at the encouragement of the community organization Padres & Jovenes Unidos, signed an Intergovernmental Agreement in 2013 limiting the power of school resource officers and outlining best practices for training of police that will be working with youth.

Local Universities.

How to connect: There are numerous ways to forge a partnership with higher education. For example individual professor allies can make your school's transformation story a part of a course curriculum, guaranteeing an opportunity to present to a group of students each time it is offered. Some disciplines in which to seek out allies are:

- Law
- Social Work
- Education
- Criminal Psychology/Justice
- Ethnic Studies

Additionally, look to partner with student activist groups on campus that may be interested in volunteering, conducting research, analyzing data, or documenting the work at your school.

Value of this Partnership: Generally speaking, working in universities is a way to identify allies in this work. Depending on their field of study, the contributions of students and professors will vary. Working with professors in the education department, for example, can encourage the teaching of restorative practices and classroom management strategies that support RP to future educators. Partnering with a communications class could lead to the development of videos and materials that highlight your school's work. Reaching out to a student activist group could empower students at your own school. Keep in mind that students in any course may be looking for a field in which to intern or conduct research, often times at no cost to you.

"By organizing, educating, and empowering students and families, community organizations strengthen their voices so that their opinions and needs can be respected and heard."

Data Collection and Analysis

The Value of Data Collection

While educators can be fearful of data, particularly the extremely specific discipline data that informs restorative practices, it is important to remember how powerful and illuminating this data can be. During the implementation process, it is critical for the Behavior Team to be clear on the purpose of collecting this data: it is not the enemy but rather a support for this difficult work.

A strong system of data collection has the potential to expand the impact restorative practices can have on a building. Data can identify areas of concern and inform necessary targeted trainings for educators, students, and families. It can be used to partner educators that are excelling with those that are experiencing difficulties with implementation. By identifying when discipline is being used disproportionately towards marginalized students, data has the power to be an instrument for racial and social justice and a tool for ending the school-to-prison pipeline. In order to sustain change, data analysis can be used to show that district funds are being used effectively and to fundraise outside of the district.

Perhaps most important is using the data to set informed goals for the school community. Baseline data, for example, can inform goals. Once goals have been established, data can then inform progress. Consistently sharing data with educators and being transparent around its role in improving school culture will serve as motivation for educators to enter accurate and complete data.

Framework for Data Collection

There are two categories of data that must be established when implementing restorative practices: punitive discipline data and restorative practices data.

- Punitive discipline data, such as the rates of in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement, is necessary to show a reduction in exclusionary discipline practices and racial disparities.
- Restorative practices data, such as who is referring students and for what behavior, can show how restorative practices is being used within the building.

Both types of data are critical to troubleshooting areas of concern, celebrating successes, and securing funding.

Problem-Solving and Goal Setting

While the data of an individual building will drive much more in-depth conversation, the Behavior Team should be sure to address the following questions when analyzing the data:

PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE DATA ANALYSIS	RESTORATIVE PRACTICES DATA ANALYSIS
Who is being suspended, expelled, and/or referred to law enforcement?	Who is being referred to the restorative process?
Why are these students being suspended, expelled, and/or referred to law enforcement?	Why are these students being referred to the restorative process?
Who is not being suspended, expelled or referred to law enforcement? Why?	Who is not being referred to the restorative process? Why?

After thorough data analysis, Behavior Team meetings should serve as strategy sessions, speaking to the following questions:

- What is working? Whose interests are being served? Whose needs are being met?
- What is not working? Whose interests are being ignored? Whose needs are not being met?
- Where should we focus our attention in the immediate future in order to affect the most change? How do we ensure more groups' interests are served and needs are met?

These reflective and critical conversations should focus just as much on adult behavior as they do on student behavior considering that adult interactions with students can often escalate student behavior.

Once an area of focus, whether short term or long term, has been established, the Behavior Team should craft measurable goals and share with staff. These goals should be both informed and measured by the data.

Punitive Discipline Data to be Collected:

Perhaps the most important data to look at will be the numbers of suspensions (in and out of school), expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement as this data can both prove the success of restorative practices in reducing exclusionary discipline practices and identifying areas for improvement. While the data you are able to collect may depend on your school's data collection system, a school would ideally have disaggregated data that breaks down suspensions, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement in the following ways:

- By race
- By gender
- By educator who refers the student
- By offense
- By special education status
- By ELL status
- By grade level
- By location
- By time of day
- By date

While collecting and analyzing data broken down at this level certainly takes time, it could lead to meaningful discussion and action around disproportionality and root causes. If all of this data is not available, particularly when setting baselines, work with the data that is available while working to increase your access. Reach out to the school district, other schools in the area, or technical support from any data collection systems the school uses in order to expand data collection abilities.

As the Behavior Team reviews data, they should be identifying patterns in the data that could be used to inform necessary interventions. For example, a school might learn that they are suspending African-American males at a much higher rate than their white counterparts. The Behavior Team could then look to the offenses for which these students are most likely to be suspended. If the offense is "insubordination" for example, the Behavior Team could develop trainings on cultural competency and equity to raise staff awareness and correct this issue.

DATA COLLECTED	PURPOSE
Total number of in-school suspensions (ISS), out-of-school suspensions (OSS), expulsions (EXP), and referrals to law enforcement (RTL)	To track reductions in the use of exclusionary discipline practices after implementation of RP To identify areas of concern as RP are implemented (for example, as OSS decreases, are ISS increasing?)
Length of ISS or OSS	To determine if the length of ISS and OSS are being reduced as culture becomes more restorative
ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL disaggregated by • Race • Gender • Special education status • ELL status	To track disparities for marginalized students in school discipline as RP is implemented To inform necessary trainings in cultural competence, diversity, and implicit/explicit bias
ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL disaggregated by grade level	To determine which grade levels need additional supports/proactive skill-building To identify which grade levels are having more success and work to determine why that might be: Stronger teacher buy-in for that age group? Less exposure to the previous punitive culture?
ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL disaggregated by educator who assigned it	To identify which educators need additional supports in RP implementation and which are succeeding in keeping students in the classroom
ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL disaggregated by offense	To identify root cause of behavior To identify behaviors that could be addressed restoratively that are not To identify areas where additional training is needed for educators
Location of ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL	To determine which teachers and educators are referring students in order to support those struggling with restorative practices To determine what areas of the building could benefit from additional educator presence To determine in which environments students and educators are most struggling to use the conflict-resolution and social-emotional skills they are learning in order to inform proactive lessons in skill-building
Time of day of ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL	To determine when students and educators are experiencing conflict in order to inform schedule changes and proactive lessons in skill-building
Date of ISS, OSS, EXP, and RTL	To determine times of the school year in which students and educators are more likely to experience conflict in order to inform timing/frequency of trainings and additional supports
Percentage of students impacted by ISS, OSS, EXP and RTL	To determine what percentage of students are being impacted by ISS, OSS, expulsions, and referrals to law enforcement to determine where interventions are needed to reduce the impact of exclusionary discipline practices Can be further disaggregated to determine the percentage of ELL students, special education students, students of color, etc. who are being impacted

Restorative Practices Data to be Collected

When collecting data on restorative practices, it is important to survey students, families, and educators on school climate and the effectiveness of the restorative processes in order to gauge the success of implementation and to identify areas of concern. In addition to the items listed in the following chart, demographic breakdowns (by race, gender, ELL status, SPED status) of students referred to the restorative process can continue to be beneficial in identifying a need for cultural competency and implicit bias trainings and areas where additional supports are needed.

While many schools may already have data collection systems in place to collect punitive data, a system to collect restorative data will most likely need to be created. Try reaching out to technology supports to see if "restorative practices" can be added to the list of interventions in the data collection system of your school or district. If this is not an option, a simple referral form can be used to track this data.

As the school culture shifts, it may seem difficult to collect data around restorative practices. Affective statements and restorative conversations for example, will become second nature and will not always be documented formally. While there certainly are difficulties in data collection as the restorative work becomes engrained in school culture, the Behavior Team should still work towards collecting the data listed in the chart on page 35.

When building this system of collecting data, there are often resources available for support. Take advantage of and build upon surveys already administered by the district or union, selecting survey items that speak to school culture and cultural competency. Look into national resources, resources from local, and partner with local universities, particularly with students that may be able to assist with developing a research model.

Challenges Around Data Collection

Even schools that have demonstrated a strong commitment to restorative practices experience issues around the time required for entering and gathering data. Often times, the time it takes to enter data is time that could be spent engaging with students, families, and other educators. While this is a challenge that will persist even years into implementation, it is important to remember that neither data collection nor building relationships should be compromised. Work with staff to develop a data collection system that helps educators balance doing the work with documenting the work.

DATA COLLECTED	PURPOSE
Survey educators on school climate at regular intervals (at least three times per year)	To determine if and in what ways school climate has improved for educators To identify areas in which more support or training is necessary To identify how many educators are consistently using restorative practices To understand what might be contributing to educator turnover and retention
Survey families on school climate at regular intervals (at least three times per year)	To determine if and in what ways school climate has improved for families To identify areas in which more support, communication, or training is necessary To understand what can improve family engagement To understand ways to improve student/family retention
Survey students on school climate at regular intervals (at least three times per year)	To determine if and in what ways school climate has improved for students To identify areas in which more support or training is necessary To understand ways to improve student engagement To understand ways to improve student retention
Total percentage of students being referred to the restorative process	To determine what percentage of students are given additional supports in developing conflict-resolution and social-emotional skills in order to determine where additional proactive skill-building might be needed
Total percentage of educators participating in the restorative process	To determine what percentage of educators are providing and provided with additional supports in developing conflict-resolution and social-emotional skills in order to determine where additional proactive skill-building might be needed
Behavior for which students and educators are referred to restorative process	To ensure the behaviors being referred to the RP Coordinator are not behaviors that could be resolved within the classroom To identify proactive measures that can be taken to reduce the number of referrals to the restorative process
Source of referral to restorative process: 1) Self 2) Educator 3) Parent 4) Peer For both students and educators	To measure student and educator understanding of the purpose of restorative practices in order to inform future trainings for students and staff Self and peer referrals can be a strong indicator of successful understanding of the vision
Feedback survey for those who participate in restorative process	To determine if participants are satisfied with the results of the restorative process To inform adjustments to be made to the restorative process

Types of Professional Development for All Staff

When implementing restorative practices, there are numerous ways to train educators in the philosophy and the strategies that support it. In addition to trainings specific to RP, train staff in philosophies and strategies that are supportive of a restorative culture.

Professional Development Specific to Restorative Practices:

Launching Restorative Practices: When introducing restorative practices to staff, families, and students for the first time, be sure to allocate six to eight hours to the following:

- The history of restorative practices
- How exclusionary practices are harmful to the school community
- Why it is important to implement at this school, supported by both qualitative and quantitative data
- An overview of restorative strategies that can be used in the classroom
- Role-playing of the strategies

Modeling Key Strategies for Classroom RP: For educators that struggle to implement restorative practices in the classroom, visit the classroom and model the practice for them with their students. For example, if a teacher is facilitating peace circles but does not feel as though relationships have been strengthened, model a peace circle with the students they teach. Be sure to debrief afterwards to address any questions or concerns.

Observation and Coaching Cycles: The RP Coordinator or member of the Behavior Team can conduct non-evaluative observations of teachers and schedule one-on-one coaching sessions.

Targeted Professional Development: Use feedback from educators, students, and families or data from observations (e.g., 18 out of 33 teachers have been seen using affective statements) to inform upcoming professional development. Booster sessions differentiated by area of concern might be offered, with educators self-selecting or being assigned a session to attend.

Integrating RP and Curriculum: Facilitate sessions with teachers, possibly by content or grade-level, to brainstorm ways course curriculum might incorporate restorative practices. For example, an English teacher might use a peace circle to facilitate discussion around a selection of poetry.

"When implementing restorative practices, there are numerous ways to train educators in the philosophy and the strategies that support it."

Professional Development Supportive of Restorative Practices:

Cultural Competency, Implicit Bias, or Explicit Bias: Exclusionary discipline practices impact students of color and other marginalized groups far more than their peers. Training staff in cultural competency and implicit/explicit biases can help reduce disparities and encourage meaningful conversations around race. Without this training, there is a tendency for RP to benefit white students more than students of color.

De-Escalation Training: When conflicts do arise in the building, be sure educators are trained to deescalate the situation through both verbal communication and body language.

Trauma-Informed Education: Be sure educators are trained to recognize and respond to the effects of trauma on students.

Motivational Interviewing: By training educators in this dialogue, you empower them to teach their peers and students to be accountable for their actions and change their behavior without confronting or punishing them.

Relationship Building, Social-Emotional Skills: Train educators to incorporate social emotional skill-building into their curriculum. If flexibility allows, consider allocating part of the daily or weekly schedule to an advisement program, providing appropriate training to support educators in this endeavor.

Home-Visit Training: Train all educators to visit the homes of students and families, providing the necessary tools to facilitate conversations in the home and a standard protocol, so that families and school staff can build stronger relationships.

Tools for Implementation

Included in this portion of the guide are additional tools that can be used to support school-wide implementation of restorative practices. These tools should not be seen as restrictive, but rather as supports as your building develops a structure and procedure for the restorative process. Modify them according to the building's needs.

The tools included are:

1) Scenarios for Role-Playing
2) Interview Questions when Hiring for a Restorative Mindset
3) Punitive Versus Restorative Discipline
4) Refocus Form (online)
5) Agreement to Mediate (online)
6) Final Restorative Agreement (online)
7) Participant Questionnaire (online)
8) Formula for Calculating Disparities (online)

Sample Scenarios for Role-Playing

The following scenarios can be used to show educators, families, and students how to hold a restorative conversation. Encourage participants to use the restorative questions, or questions of a similar sentiment, to guide the conversation:

1) What's happening?
2) Who is this affecting and how?
3) What part can you take responsibility for?
4) What can you do to make things right?

Remember to save the stories of students and educators throughout the school year to create scenarios that are reflective of the behavior in your building.

Scenario 1: You have asked Emilio to get to work several times and he continues to not do anything. This is out of character for Emilio. You ask him to step in the hallway with you for a quick restorative dialogue. (Note: The teacher does not know that Emilio is under a lot of stress at home. He may or may not share this information during the conversation.)

Scenario 2: You are in the third week of school and, when entering grades, notice that Maria has not turned in any work since the beginning of the school year. She is engaged and positive in class and demonstrates she understands the material when answering questions in class.

Scenario 3: Jessica is supposed to be working on a project with a group of classmates. You find Jessica away from her group applying lip gloss and talking with her friends. You ask her to return to her group to contribute to the project. A few minutes later, Jessica is turned away from her group again.

You tell Jessica she needs to stay after class to discuss her behavior. She rolls her eyes, but agrees to stay.

She returns to her group. However, once more before class is over, you find her at a table away from her group talking to a friend.

Scenario 4: Joseph and Aaron are continuously disruptive during your delivery of instructions at the beginning of class. Despite multiple redirects, their conversation and laughter continue to interrupt the instruction. You ask the boys to stay after class so you can check in with them.

You continue with your instruction once again as laughter breaks out from Joseph, Aaron, and the students in their vicinity. You ask them to complete a Refocus form (form with the restorative questions) while you finish providing instruction.

After the rest of the class has started the assignment, you pull Joseph and Aaron in the hallway and review their Refocus forms. In response to the question around repairing the situation, both boys have written "I won't do it again."

Interview Questions when Hiring for a Restorative Mindset

As new staff members are on-boarded, it will be important to ensure that staff who believe in this model are selected for new or open positions. Ensuring this can begin in the interview process by asking about candidates' approaches to relationship-building, resolving conflicts, and addressing rule-breaking behavior. This can help you identify whether their beliefs and approaches align with restorative practices. You may also want to ask the candidate what they understand about restorative practices in the academic setting. If a candidate doesn't have an understanding of the approaches, the interviewing committee can spend some time explaining the philosophy and what will be expected with regard to restorative practices from a staff perspective.

1) The phone is ringing, a student has just entered the classroom upset and states that he needs you, and a teacher just emailed requesting your immediate help. What are your steps in ensuring everyone's needs are met?
2) Why is it important to build relationships with students, staff, and families?
3) What have you found to be the best way to build relationships with young people? Your colleagues?
4) If a student is out of dress code, how would you handle it? What is the student walks away from you?
5) What are the first three things you do if a student is being disruptive or noncompliant?
6) How would you handle a belligerent student, cursing at you or another staff member?
7) What happens if you are focused on a project or deadline and an urgent situation derails you?
8) What are ways you can support making connections between the school/classroom and the students' homes?
9) Role play: Give the candidate a scenario (ideally a common scenario experienced in your building) and ask them to facilitate a conversation between two of the interviewers.

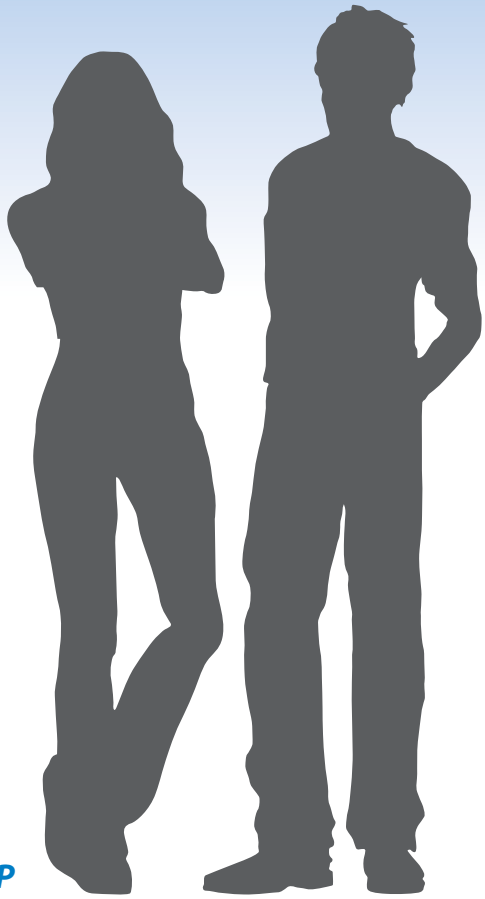
PUNITIVE VS. RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

PUNITIVE	RESTORATIVE
"Misbehavior" defined as breaking school rules or letting school down.	"Misbehavior" defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another.
Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt.	Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process. Includes an authority figure with power to decide on penalty, in conflict with wrongdoer.	Dialogue and negotiation with everyone involved in communication and cooperation with each other.
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent.	Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices.
Attention to rules and adherence to due process.	Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.
Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school.	Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning.
One social injury compounded by another.	Focus on repair of social injury/damage.
School community as spectators, represented by member of staff dealing with situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless.	School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.
Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment.	Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility for choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.

PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE ASKS…	RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ASKS…
What rule was broken?	Who was harmed?
Who broke it?	What are their needs?
How should they be punished?	Who will be held accountable for making things right?

PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE PRACTICES…*	RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES…*
Lecturing Students	Student-Student Mediations
Self-Directed Detentions	Staff-Student Mediations
In School Suspension	Peace Circles
Out of School Suspension	Reinstatement Conversations
Expulsion	Community Building Circles

*It should be noted that punitive and restorative discipline can, and will be, used in tandem. However, each discipline infraction will involve a Restorative Justice practice, but not necessarily a punitive discipline practice. For example, when a student is returning from suspension they will, at a minimum, also have to take part in a reinstatement conversation.



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