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Nuts and Bolts of Restorative Practices

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Rising Up!

Taking Charters to New Heights

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Restorative Justice Practices



“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.
If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we...
...teach? ...punish?”

Why can’t we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?”

Exclusionary discipline has negative long-term consequences

- Just one suspension in 9th grade doubles the chance of a student dropping out (from 16% to 32%). Each successive suspension increases the odds by 20%.
- Students in criminal justice systems are more likely to have been suspended.
- Pushed out of class → less engagement → lowered grades, attendance, and learning → less prepared for postsecondary training, education, or career.
- Higher suspension rates do NOT create safer schools.
- A student is twice as likely to dropout after one out-of-school suspension.



The problem: exclusionary discipline is disproportionate

- **8.6%** of APS students were suspended in 2015
 - More than ½ were out-of-school
 - More than ½ were for middle school students
 - **Boys** were suspended/expelled at more than twice the rate of girls
- Most often for **non-violent infractions** (e.g. disruptive behaviors)
- Students who were **African American, Hispanic**, and enrolled in **special education** were more likely to be suspended for infractions

Why Restorative Practices?

- Problem behavior is the single most common reason why students are removed from regular classrooms.
- Harsh punishment and zero tolerance policies have not been effective at either improving behavioral climate in schools, or preventing students with problem behaviors from entering the juvenile justice system.
- Three years after being excluded from school, almost 70% of these youth have been arrested.



Why Restorative Practices?

Stop the School to Prison Pipeline

- Suspension and expulsion are linked to:
 - Antisocial behavior and arrest (Ceullar & Markowitz, 2015)
 - Substance use (McCrystal et al., 2007)
 - Decreased academic achievement and dropout (Noltemeyer et al., 2015)
- Suspension and expulsion unduly impacts **students of color, low socio-economic status, and disabilities** (Mizel et al., 2016)



Table Talk

When you hear the term “restorative practices” what do you think that mean for your school?



Restorative Practices

- **An approach**, not a program, which has a set of guiding principles for the school communities, that places relationships central to learning.
- **A paradigm shift** from traditional rule-based, punitive to a positive approach to discipline.
- **Focuses on** building, maintaining, and when necessary, repairing relationships among all members of a school community.



Goals of Restorative Practices

- Relationship Building
- Prevent and Reduce Harmful Behavior
- Relationship Repairing
- Resolve Conflict
- Address Needs of Community



Three Priorities of Restorative Justice

1. Repairing harm done to individuals and school communities
2. Providing student accountability by assuming responsibility and taking action to repair the harm they caused.
3. It aims to keep students in school and to create a safe environment where learning can flourish.



Five Core Values of Restorative Practices

1. Respect
2. Relationship
3. Responsibility
4. Repair
5. Reintegration



Principals of Restorative Practices

- Focuses on harms and needs, not the rules
- Balances accountability with support, focuses on responsibilities
- Focuses on the repair, not the punishment
- Decisions should be made by those most affected and most involved
- Broaden ownership for peacemaking in the community



Principals of Restorative Practices are NOT


- Public shaming
 - Adults deciding consequences
 - Forced apologies
 - Lecturing responsible parties / offenders
 - Rigid process or system
 - Fixing
 - Sympathizing
 - Over focused on offenders, losing focus on victims / community
 - Community undervalued, underutilized
- 

Table Talk

What are some things you are already doing at your school that you feel can be called “restorative practices”?



Progressive Discipline

- Progressive discipline includes more restrictive or more serious consequences for repeated misbehavior or behaviors displaying more serious risk to self or others.
- Progressive discipline may include restorative practices as part of the continuum of consequences.



The essence of restorative practices are disarmingly simple: that human beings are happier, more productive and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things *with* them, rather than *to* them or *for* them.

Adapted from Watchel 2004

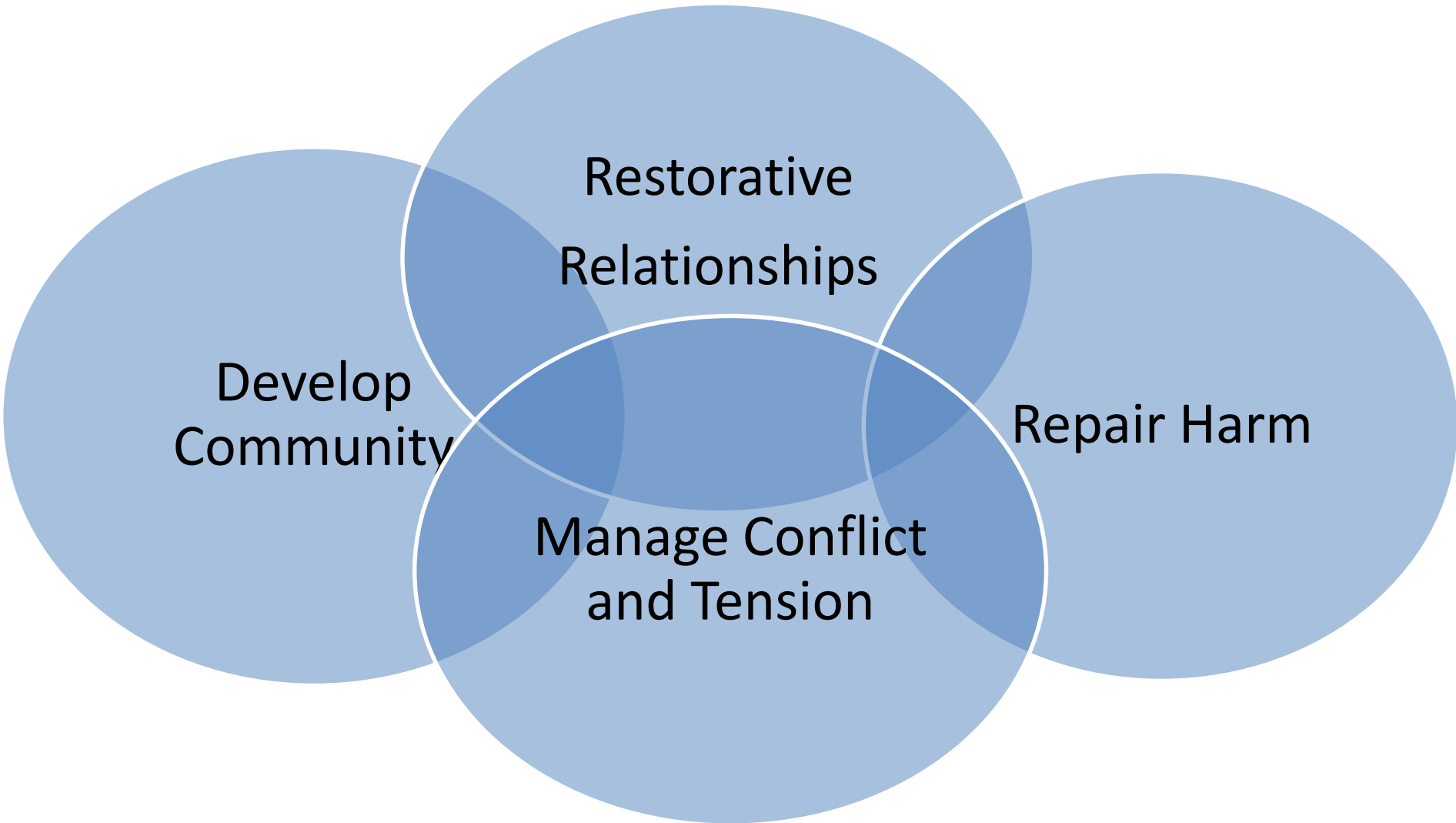


Restorative Practices: what are they?

- Restorative Practices emphasize the importance of positive relationships as central to building community and provide opportunities to restore relationships when harm has occurred.
- Restorative Practices require that students focus on the harm their misbehavior caused others, and what they can do to repair that harm and strengthen relationships.
- Can be used in place of nearly any type of discipline that removes child from the educational process (exclusionary discipline).



Objectives of Restorative Practices



Golden rules.....

- Relationship Building
- Prevent and Reduce Harmful Behavior
- Relationship Repairing
- Resolve Conflict
- Address Needs of Community



Goals of Restorative Practices

- Contact parents early and ask for their support, i.e. what do they want for their child.
- Remember kids' brains are a work in progress.
- Don't assume all children come to school with the ability to decode value systems.
- Never make home wrong or to blame.



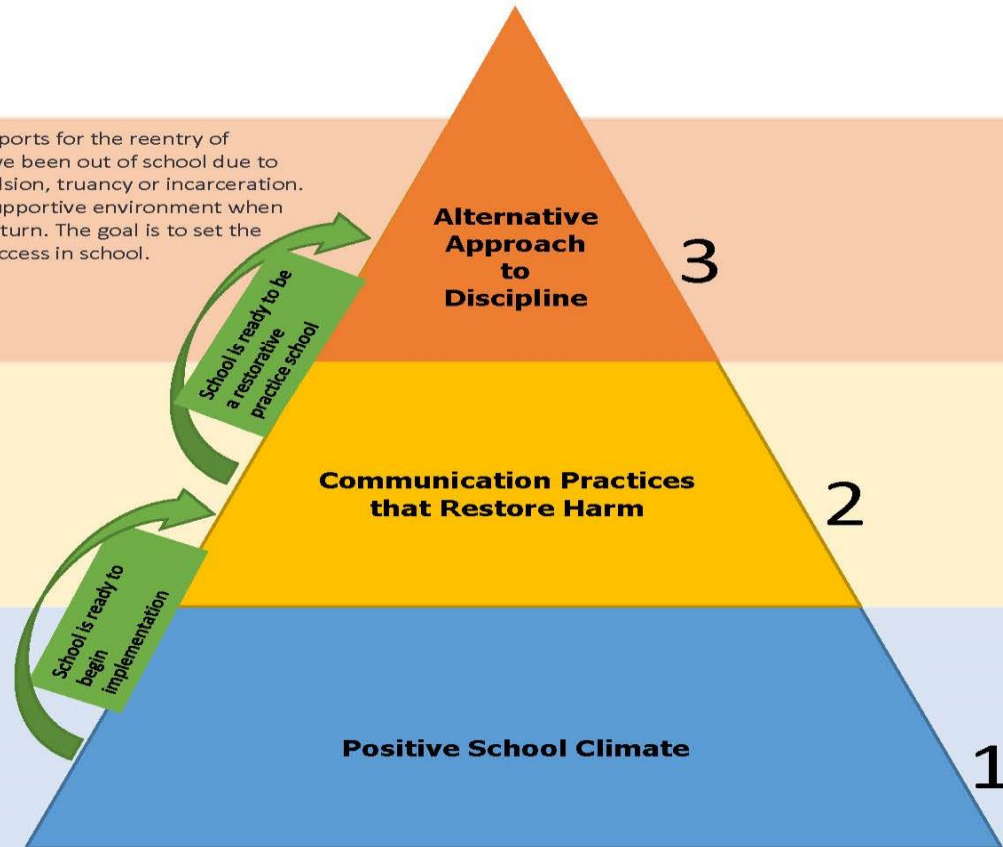
Tiered Approach



Albuquerque Public Schools Tiered Approach to Restorative Practices

Strategies

- Focus on repairing harm rather than punishment.
 - Processes that aims to keep kids in school and in class to create a safe environment where learning can flourish.
 - Work with the students (the victims and the accused) to come up with a solution rather than simply handing down punishment.
 - Use of non-judgmental, restorative questions like, "What happened? How did it happen?"
 - Also includes supports for the reentry of students who have been out of school due to suspension, expulsion, truancy or incarceration. "Wraparound" supportive environment when these students return. The goal is to set the student up for success in school.
- Fundamental change in how you respond to rule violations and misbehavior
 - Relationship-building and relationship-repairing.
 - Consequences that are fair and not punitive
- Move from punitive to positive
 - Improve relationships based on respect, responsibility, and a welcoming environment



Potential Outcomes

- Reduction in: detentions, in-and-out of school suspensions, expulsions, referrals to criminal justice, referrals to the office, truancy, bullying
- Increase in: grade point averages, school safety, teacher support systems

Table Talk

In which level of the tiered approach would you place your school and why?



Examples of Restorative Practices

- Connection circles
- Restorative conversations
- Problem solving circles
- Morning Meetings
- Community group conferences
- Restorative mediation/conflict resolution programs
- Written reflection/Apology
- Alternatives to Suspension
- Community service/service to school
- Mentoring
- Referral to community organizations/after school programs
- In-school suspension with problem solving and positive interventions

Where do you begin?

- Think about a quick win.
- Turn to your elbow partner and share your quick win.



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