

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES UPDATE



San Lorenzo Unified School District

Winter 2014

When the Department of Education issued statements in early 2014 calling for districts to, “Proactively redesign discipline policies and practices to more effectively foster supportive and safe school climates,”¹ San Lorenzo Unified had already been doing just that. The work of developing and implementing Restorative Practices districtwide has been underway and growing traction for the last two years. Here is a snapshot of where we came from, where we are, and where we are headed:

In the last two years we:

- ✦ Began informal conversations regarding Restorative Practices with District leadership
- ✦ Established relationships with neighboring Districts implementing Restorative Practices
- ✦ Convened the Restorative Justice Task Force
- ✦ Created the Board approved Discipline Matrices which include Restorative alternatives to suspension
- ✦ Conducted districtwide stakeholder meetings
- ✦ Hired a full time TSA for Restorative Practices

This Fall we:

- ✦ Held meetings at every site and produced the foundational document creating a common language regarding Restorative Practices
- ✦ Began developing capacity of student support service personnel through professional development and training opportunities
- ✦ Invited all staff participation in the conversation through a series of online surveys

➤ Being Restorative is a mindset that requires a great deal of self-reflection. The major focus of the work this year continues to be deepening our collective understanding of the theory and strengthening adult-to-adult rapport, because Restorative Practices are not something we do to our students. They are a way of interacting and managing relationships.

➤ Many teachers and administrators have been inspired to explore more and are beginning to make Restorative Circles a regular part of their practice with positive results.

This Winter we:

- ✦ Engaged over **100** participants in a day day-long experiential Restorative Practices training
- ✦ Added a part time TSA for Restorative Practices at one elementary school
- ✦ Entered into partnership with Community Works West, a non-profit providing Restorative Conferences to Alameda County youth
- ✦ Began facilitating circles with students and staff
- ✦ Launched the District webpage for Restorative Practices
- ✦ Will include Restorative Practices language and funding in the District’s Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)
- ✦ Continue to support relationship building with staff

This Spring and beyond we will:

- ✦ Support sites in creating plans to create a Restorative school climate
- ✦ Continue to promote and support the shift to a model of non-punitive discipline
- ✦ Strengthen reciprocal relationship with REACH and other partnering agencies
- ✦ Refine and support implementation of the current discipline matrices
- ✦ Begin offering continuing education opportunities related to Restorative Practices
- ✦ Articulate specific goal areas for the work
- ✦ Reconvene the task force to discuss vision and support systems for the work

¹ U.S. Department of Education, *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*, Washington, D.C., 2014.

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