



5. Implementing Restorative Practices

Competency

Educator implements a restorative practice plan.

Key Method

The educator implements a restorative practice plan that includes using intentional language and student data to create a supportive culture and climate with the students and stakeholders.

Method Components

Restorative Justice

Inspired by indigenous practices, Restorative Justice (RJ) is a philosophy and theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by conflict and wrongdoing. It provides an opportunity for everyone impacted by an incident to come together in a safe space to address their feelings and needs, and reach a resolution that repairs the harm and restores relationships.

Restorative Justice is based on the idea that “because crime hurts, justice should heal” (Braithwaite). The harm should not be matched by further harm but by restorative efforts.

Restorative Justice was introduced as part of the criminal justice system over 35 years ago, and was later adopted into the school system as an alternative to exclusionary disciplinary actions. The mission of Restorative Justice is to:

Repair: crime causes harm and justice requires repairing that harm

Encounter: the best way to determine how to do that is to have the parties decide together



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Transform: this can cause fundamental changes in people, relationships and communities

(See more information in the Research section)

Guiding Principles

Restorative Justice is guided by these 7 principles. Restorative Justice:

1. Acknowledges that relationships are central to the building community
2. Builds systems that address misbehavior and harm in ways that strengthens relationships
3. Focuses on the harm done rather than only rule-breaking
4. Gives voice to the person harmed
5. Engages in collaborative problem solving
6. Empowers change and growth
7. Enhances responsibility

With the adverse impact of zero-tolerance discipline policy and the development of the school-to-prison pipeline, school districts across the country have looked for different ways to improve school climate and alternative ways for addressing misbehavior.

Restorative Justice in Schools (often referred to as Restorative Practice) is a set of practices and values that holistically prevents and repairs harm, builds community, and relationships resulting in a positive supportive school climate.

Repairing Harm

Repairing harm is foundational to restorative practices. According to the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) Restorative practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities. Repairing harm is the first step in strengthening relationships that have been compromised by intentional or unintentional actions or words.

School Wide Implementation

The following beliefs are foundational to successful implementation of Restorative Practices:

- Aim first to build classroom communities that are supported by clear agreements, authentic communication, and specific tools to bring issues and conflicts forward in a helpful way.
- Provide specific pathways to repair harm by bringing together those affected by misbehavior in a dialogue to address concerns, achieve understanding, and to come to agreement about setting things right.

Restorative Justice (practices) school implementations also needs to focus on:



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- Building healthy relationships between students and school staff, as well as among adults within the school community
- Support student's healthy social and emotional development
- Create safe spaces for difficult conversations, deep emotions, and healing
- Shift the focus from intervention to prevention of disciplinary infractions
- Shift the paradigm from punitive to restorative disciplinary practices that repair harm and reduce suspensions, expulsions and arrests.

School culture and climate is the leading factor in deciding if a student is restored or punished. The entire school community (i.e., students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members) needs to participate in the following best practices:

- Define common expectations for student behavior
- Teach and model Restorative Practices
- Allow a space for the learners' choice and voice
- Model and allow learners to resolve conflict

Intentional Language

Educators should model and continually use language that builds and sustains relationships by:

- Using intentional, positive language
- Avoiding sarcasm
- Noticing the students
- Expressing authentic empathy

Restorative Circles

Process

The circle process fosters a space that lifts barriers between people, allowing the possibility for connection, collaboration, and mutual understanding. The process works by bringing students and adults together in a way that allows them to see each other as human beings and talk about what matters. Allow time for the process to gain student buy-in. Practice holding circles one day a week for a month or at least once a month for several months for best results.

Components

Establishing Circle Values and Principals (group consensus)

Explaining the use of the talking piece

Introductions

Trust Building activities

Issues

Solutions



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Steps

1. Opening
2. Check-In Round
3. Topic Round
4. Closing

Proactive Circles

- Proactive circles provide students opportunities to engage with their peers and make positive connections by participating in community building activities.

Responsive Circles

- Responsive circles address challenging stimuli and probes the students to think on a deeper level.

Formal Conferencing

Formal conferencing involves planning and preparation. This is used in cases where responsibility has been accepted and harm acknowledged. This is a structured process that includes the following components:

Affective Language

In restorative practices, the way in which a school community interacts and communicates with one another becomes even more important. Using affective language refers to the way an educator expresses feelings and talks to students. It is a way of pointing out behavior issues in a manner that creates more connection between student and educator. Affective statements do not place blame, but instead shape conversations in which stakeholders take responsibility for their own actions. Below you find some examples of typical response verse affective statement:

Typical Response

- “Don’t talk to me in that tone of voice!”
- “You shouldn’t do that.”
- “Sit down and be quiet.”
- “Turn your assignment in on time or you’ll get a lower grade!”

Affective Statement

- “It makes me frustrated when you use that tone with me.”
- “I feel sad when you say something like that to Raquan.”
- “I get angry when you talk and joke during my lecture.”
- “It means a lot to me when papers are turned in on time.”

Restorative Conference and Agreement

Restorative intervention plans can help to successfully reintegrate the student into



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the classroom. The process for completing a Restorative Intervention Plan is:

- Pre-Work: ensure all participants are made aware of the conference process, agree to participate, are provided the questions to be asked, and respond to any questions they may have.
- Conduct the meeting and allow all stakeholders to contribute to the conflict resolution process.
- During the meeting, develop an intervention plan that provides strategies to be used to prevent further harm from occurring.
- The last step of the meeting is to develop an agreement in the form of a contract and have all stakeholders sign it.

Developing a Restorative Practice Plan

1. **Gather Data and Determine Needs**

Data is gathered from two categories: punitive discipline data and restorative practices data.

- Punitive discipline, 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.
- Restorative practices data, such as who is referring students and for what behavior, can show how restorative practices are being used within the classroom and building.

More specifically, this data will determine what effect restorative practices has on the culture and climate of the stakeholders in the classroom, as well as school-wide. This data will also determine the program's potential for building relationships.

The data will:

- Track the residualism of students who have had direct restorative opportunities.
- Access and disaggregate discipline data monthly
- Use data to determine the impact on school-wide discipline, attendance, and climate

2. **Data Analysis**

- Conduct an analysis of discipline data from three previous years. Use charts/graphs and words to present this data in a visually appealing way.
- Note the type of referrals that were most frequent **AND** where most of the infractions took place.

3. **Challenges and Hypothesis**



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Use your data analysis to identify two to three problems that you will address in your action plan. After you identify the problem, create a hypothesis as to why you think this may be happening and what some possible solutions could be.

4. Goals

Write two to three SMART goals to address the challenges you identified above.

- Specific
- Measureable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-Bound

5. Plan

Write an explanation or create a chart or matrix of how Restorative Practice methods can be used in your classroom to address challenges identified in your data analysis above. Your plan needs to include:

- What steps have you taken to create a restorative culture in your classroom?
- What specific action steps will you take to implement the new strategies, improve relationships, and create a restorative classroom culture?
- How will you embed professional development into your restorative practices and build up your skills and knowledge?

Supporting Rationale and Research

Fronius, T.; Persson, H.; Guckenbug, Sara; Hurley, Nancy & Petrosino, A. (2016). Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: A Research Review. West Ed and Prevention Research Center.

https://jprc.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/RJ_Literature-Review_20160217.pdf

Morrison, B; Blood, P. & Thorsborne, M. (2005). Practice Restorative Justice in School Communities: The Challenge of Culture Change. *Public Organization Review: A Global Journal*, 5: 335-357, #2006.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5153816_Practicing_Restorative_Justice_in_School_Communities_Addressing_the_Challenge_of_Culture_Change

Zvi D. Gabbay, Justifying Restorative Justice: A Theoretical Justification for the Use of Restorative Justice Practices, 2005 J. Disp. Resol. (2005)

<https://scholarship.law.missouri.edu/jdr/vol2005/iss2/4/>



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Resources

[Teachers teaching teachers about restorative practice.](#)

[Restorative practices to resolve conflict and build relationships](#) (video)

[Tips for schools wanting to implement restorative justice](#)

[Using restorative questions in the classroom](#)

[What are restorative practices?](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must answer the questions with a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and receive a proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(300-400 word limit)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

- Describe the learners in your class.
- What is the current climate and culture in your classroom and school?
- What issues have been identified as important to consider implementing Restorative Practices in your class/school?
- What are your current needs and desired outcomes for restorative practices?

Passing: Educator completely addresses the questions using personal examples and includes a learning goal that describes what they hope to gain from implementing restorative practices.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **three artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

Artifact 1: Action Plan



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Create a 3-5 page action plan for your classroom. (see method components section of this micro-credential) Your plan should include:

- 1-2 page Data Analysis
- 2-3 Challenges and Hypothesis
- 2-3 Smart Goals
- 300-500 word Plan **or** a 1-2 page chart/matrix that illustrates your plan

Artifact 2: Stakeholder Engagement

Choose an audience from one of your stakeholder groups (students, families, peers) and present your action plan.

Your presentation should include the following:

- Agenda
- Sign-in sheet
- PowerPoint presentation (10-20 slides)
- Feedback survey given to stakeholder group
- Results of feedback survey

Combine all artifacts into one document or PDF to submit.

Artifact 3: Implementation Results

Implement your action plan. Keep track of what parts you have implemented and take notes along the way. After an appropriate amount of time (2-4 weeks), revisit your SMART Goals and action steps and respond to the following prompts:

- Did you meet your goals? Why? Why not?
- What parts of your plan were you able to implement? What were the results?
- What parts of your plan were you not able to implement? What were the roadblocks and possible solutions? Or why did you decide they are no longer important?
- What are your new and/or revised SMART goals?



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Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Action Plan	<p><u>Discipline Data Analysis</u> -Includes three previous years of discipline data.</p> <p>-Charts and/or graphs help to clarify the data and are visually appealing.</p> <p>AND -Written analysis that summarizes the results objectively without interjecting opinions or conjectures about why the results are what they are.</p> <p>AND -Types of referrals that were most frequent are identified.</p> <p>AND -Places where most of the infractions took place are identified.</p> <p><u>Challenges and Hypothesis</u> 2-3 problems were identified</p>	<p><u>Discipline Data Analysis</u> -Includes less than three previous years of discipline data.</p> <p>AND/OR -Charts and/or graphs do not help to clarify the data and are not visually appealing.</p> <p>AND/OR -Written analysis does not summarize the results objectively and may include opinions or conjectures about why the results are what they are.</p> <p>AND/OR -May not include Types of referrals that were most frequent.</p> <p>AND/OR -May not include places where most of the infractions took place.</p> <p>AND/OR <u>Challenges and Hypothesis</u> Only 1 problem was identified.</p>	<p><u>Discipline Data Analysis</u> -Data is incomplete and/or inconclusive.</p> <p>AND/OR <u>Challenges and Hypothesis</u> -Challenges are not identified.</p> <p>AND/OR -Hypothesis is missing.</p> <p>AND/OR <u>Goals</u> -Goals are missing or unrelated.</p> <p>AND/OR <u>Plan</u> Plan is incomplete, unrelated to the data or unrealistic.</p>



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	<p>AND Each problem includes a hypothesis that identifies possible reasons.</p> <p>AND Each problem includes some possible solutions.</p> <p><u>Goals</u> 2-3 SMART goals relate to the challenges you identified above.</p> <p>AND Goals are: Specific Measurable Results focuses Actionable Time bound</p> <p><u>Plan</u> Includes: -Steps you have taken to create a restorative culture in your classroom.</p> <p>AND -Specific action steps that you will take to meet your goals.</p> <p>AND</p>	<p>AND/OR All problems don't include a hypothesis that identifies possible reasons.</p> <p>AND/OR Each problem includes some possible solutions.</p> <p><u>Goals</u> 1 or more SMART goals may not directly relate to the challenges you identified above.</p> <p>AND/OR Goals are not: Specific Measurable Results focuses Actionable Time bound</p> <p><u>Plan</u> May not includes: -Steps you have taken to create a restorative culture in your classroom.</p> <p>AND/OR -Specific action steps that you will take to meet your goals.</p> <p>AND/OR</p>	
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	-Specific and new strategies you will use to improve relationships, and create a restorative classroom culture.	-Specific and new strategies you will use to improve relationships, and create a restorative classroom culture?	
Artifact 2: Stakeholder Engagement	Stakeholder Group is identified. AND Includes the following: -Agenda -Sign-in sheet -PowerPoint presentation -Feedback survey -Results of feedback survey	Stakeholder Group not identified. AND/OR Is missing some of the following artifacts: -Agenda -Sign-in sheet -PowerPoint presentation -Feedback survey -Results of feedback survey	No stakeholder group identified. AND/OR Is missing most or all of the following artifacts: -Agenda -Sign-in sheet -PowerPoint presentation -Feedback survey -Results of feedback survey
Artifact 3: Implementation Results	Results of implementation are analyzed thoughtfully and all prompts are addressed. AND Examples from classroom implementation are cited to provide evidence of analysis. AND New SMART Goals are created or the current ones are revised.	Results of implementation are reported but analysis may be lacking detail and thoughtfulness. AND /OR Not all prompts are addressed. AND /OR General statements are given and Real-life examples are not cited. AND /OR SMART goals not revised or updated.	Results are not related to the Goals and Action steps outlined in the plan. AND /OR Prompts are not addressed. AND /OR SMART goals not mentioned at all.



Part 3 Reflection

(400-500 word limit)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

- How has the implementation of Restorative Practice within your classroom supported the relationship between you and your students? What did you learn about them? Was there an increase in productivity in the classroom?
- In what ways did the students show competence and engagement of restorative practices? Please provide specific examples from your observations.
- Does your data reflect expected improvements? Why or why not?
- What are your new professional learning goals for improving restorative practices in your classroom or school?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.



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