



Restorative Principles

*The following principles reflect the values and concepts used to create and maintain restorative school cultures**

1. Acknowledge that relationships are central to building community.

- Restorative practices seek to strengthen relationships and build community to create the optimum conditions for learning.
- Schools are designed to communicate an “orchestrated system of care,” which meets our basic human needs.
- The school and individual classrooms are managed with a relational/authoritative style- a combination of high expectations for learning and standards for behavior, as well as high levels of support and nurturing.
- Every student, teacher, administrator, staff member, and parent/guardian is a valued member of the school community.
- Students are involved in a process of naming the values and principles to live by within their school community.

2. Build systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships.

- Schools establish policies to provide a safe place for learning; however, it is acknowledged that real safety comes from fostering and maintaining caring relationships.
- Policies reflect the values and principles agreed to by the school community.
- Policies address the root causes of discipline problems rather than only the symptoms. The causes of misbehavior and conflicts may be multiple and each should be addressed.

3. Focus on the harm done rather than only on rule-breaking.

- Misbehavior is viewed as an offense against people and relationships, not just rule-breaking.
- The solutions to the offense involves all of those impacted or harmed by the misbehavior.
- The person harmed is the center of the primary relationship that needs to be addressed. Secondary relationships that may have been impacted might include other students, teachers, parents, the administration, and the surrounding community.
- It is understood that much misbehavior arises out of attempts to address a perceived injustice. Those who have been harmed also feel they have been treated unjustly. Discipline processes must leave room for addressing all of these perceptions.

4. Provide all school members with opportunities for voice.

- The school community is enriched by the contribution of diverse viewpoints, values and cultures.
- Engage students in decision-making processes, encouraging the input of their opinions, ideas and perspectives.
- In cases of harm, the immediate safety concerns of the person harmed are primary.
- For a genuine resolution of harm, those harmed must be given an opportunity to have a voice in the process.

5. Engage in collaborative problem-solving.

- All of us act to satisfy our human needs; choosing behaviors to meet underlying needs in both healthy and unhealthy ways.
- Families, students, and communities are encouraged to help identify problems and solutions that meet needs.
- Misbehavior can become a teachable moment if everyone is involved. All parties, not just the offender, learn from the process.

6. Empower change and growth.

- In order for students to change and grow, we must help them to identify their needs and assist them in finding positive, life-giving ways of meeting those needs.
- Social and emotional competencies, communication skills and conflict management should be taught and practiced by all members of the school community.
- Interpersonal conflict is a part of living in relationship with others and should be viewed as an expected and normal process.
- Conflict presents the opportunity for change if the process includes careful listening, reflecting, shared problem-solving, trust, and accountability structures that support commitments to work at relationship building.

7. Enhance responsibility.

- Students should continually be invited to become responsible and cooperative.
- Real responsibility requires one to understand the impact of her or his actions on others, along with an attempt to acknowledge and put things right when that impact has been negative.
- Consequences should be evaluated based on whether they are reasonable, related to the offense, restorative, and respectful.
- Some students choose to resist participation in a process that will allow for change and may need adults to support and guide them in decision-making concerning their accountability.