Restorative Discipline: A Whole School Approach
Ed White Middle School and The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue

Our Current System of Discipline (Texas Statewide Discipline Data from 2012-2013)

- African-American students are on average 1.9 times more likely to receive one of the below discipline consequences/placements.

- African-American & Hispanic students make up on average 76% of the students who receive the below discipline consequences/placements.

- Male students are on average 1.5 times more likely to receive one of the below discipline consequences/placements.

- The expulsion gap between genders is 66%.

- Special Education students are on average 1.8 times more likely to receive one of the below discipline consequences/placements.

- Economically Disadvantaged students are on average 1.5 times more likely to receive one of the below discipline consequences/placements.

**The Process of Exclusion**

- The vast majority of consequences are based on exclusion:
  - Problems with exclusionary practices:
    - Who are we excluding?
    - Data shows that exclusion isn’t working.

**What is Restorative Discipline**

- Restorative Discipline is a relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior that fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment.
- We are training students to make better behavioral choices through the use of restorative practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Discipline Practices</th>
<th>Restorative Discipline Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on the breaking of rules</td>
<td>Focuses on the needs of the victims, the community, and student(s) responsible for the harm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Considers wrongdoing to be an offense against the campus or district</td>
<td>Considers wrongdoing to be an action against an individual or the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assigns punishment to a student who commits the offense</td>
<td>The student responsible is held accountable and makes amends for the harm done to the victim or community</td>
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<th>Traditional Discipline Asks</th>
<th>Restorative Discipline Asks</th>
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<tr>
<td>What rule was broken?</td>
<td>What happened?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who broke it?</td>
<td>Who was affected?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should be the punishment?</td>
<td>What needs to be done to make it right?</td>
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Goals of Restorative Discipline

3 Goals of Restorative Discipline:

1. **Accountability** - Students have an opportunity to be accountable for the harm caused as well as the opportunity to repair the harm.

2. **Community Safety** - Students are empowered to help resolve conflict and maintain an environment where the work of the school can happen.

3. **Skill Development** - Restorative Discipline works to address underlying factors that lead people to cause harm and gives students tools for creating and maintaining community.

Paradigm Shift

- Violation of Rules to Violation of Relationships
- Troubled Students to Whole School Approach
- Punishment to Accountability
- Teaching Appropriate Behavior to Expecting Appropriate Behavior

Restorative Discipline at Ed White

- We have to change our goal
  - From: how to more efficiently **process** student misbehavior.
  - To: how do we **change** student behavior.

- Developed a Three-Year implementation plan:
  - 6th Grade (2012-2013)
  - 6th & 7th Grade (2013-2014)
  - 6th, 7th, & 8th (2014-2015)
- Voluntary for students
- Formed a Restorative Discipline Leadership Team
- Developed Partnerships with UT & UTSA for Program Evaluation, Training, and Consultant Services
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Three Applications of Restorative Practices at Ed White:

1. Restorative Circles / Restorative Chat
2. Victim / Offender Mediations
3. Family Group Conference

**Successes and Challenges**

- **Successes:**
  - Buy in from the students & parents
  - Change in student behavior
  - Improved relationships

- **Challenges:**
  - Time
  - Shifting from Reactive to Proactive approaches
  - Adult Mindset

**Establishing a Foundation**

**Suggestions for Successful Implementation:**

1. Develop a readiness for change.
2. Have an implementation plan.
3. Find individuals with a restorative mindset.
4. Build a team.
5. Establish a support system. (*Consultant or On-Site Coordinator*)
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Recommended Reading List


Important Websites

www.irjrd.org (RD in Schools—Assessing Your Readiness)

http://www.saferanserschools.org

http://www.dignityinschools.org


http://www.healthiersf.org/RestorativePractices/

http://sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/restorative_practices_in_schools