

# **Colorado Restorative Practices in Schools Guidelines**

## **Principles, Practices, Implementation and Training**

*The collaborative creation of this guiding document was initiated in February 2016 by the Colorado Coordinating Council on Restorative Justice (RJ Council). Over fifty Restorative Practices in Schools practitioners, trainers, consultants and researchers co-created the foundation for these guidelines. This is a living document, as is customary with the CO RJ Council guiding documents. It will be reviewed annually for updates and input from the Restorative Practices Community.*

### **Document Purpose:**

- To provide guidelines for Restorative Practices in Schools in Colorado identifying key principles and practices and
- To provide recommendations for best practices in implementation and training for restorative Practices in Schools.

### **Language:**

The terms Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice are somewhat interchangeable. Generally, Restorative Practices are applied when there is no clear victim &/or offender and no laws need to be addressed. Restorative Justice tends to refer more specifically to incidents where identifiable victim(s) and offender(s) will be involved. (For more information see [RJ Practices Definitions and Models](#) document) There are many crossover terms used in Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice as well as among programs and curricula in the field of restorative justice practices. There are also references around the globe to restorative justice as a movement. With respect for the diversity of perspectives, practices and practitioners, this document seeks to provide common language and guidance for use in CO.

The term Restorative Practices is more widely used to refer to the work in schools and will be used in this document to avoid confusion with justice system responses to crime and provide standard language for this work in schools.

### **Distinction between Restorative in Schools and Restorative in the Justice System**

Restorative Practices in Schools are designed to create an inclusive climate and culture in a contained community. Typically, the issues are lower level and are meant to prevent behaviors and conflict from rising to the level of law enforcement involvement. Rumors, teacher/student conflict, social media harm, classroom disruptions, verbal arguments, minor fights, etc. are frequent and sometimes daily events encountered by school administration and staff. Most often, restorative dialogue, informal conferencing, proactive and responsive circles, are the restorative tools used by schools. In many school situations, there is not a clearly defined victim and/or offender. Rather, most circumstances involve mutual responsibility for harm.

Restorative Justice in the criminal justice system and Restorative Practices in Schools are equally effective, yet the approach is generally more formal in the justice system. Formal restorative processes such as; conferences, reintegration circles and Circles of Support and Accountability involve identified offender(s) and victim(s). Advocates, family members, affected community, case workers, law enforcement, etc., may be asked to participate in a formal process. That varies significantly from the more informal tools used by schools most often. Formal restorative practices that involve significant preparation and multiple stakeholders are rare in the school setting due to time constraints on staff. Although, formal processes may be useful as an intervention when a higher-level incident occurs.

Schools that use the formal processes more frequently are encouraged to employ a restorative practices coordinator or partner with a Restorative Practices in Schools service provider with training and expertise in coordination and facilitation of formal restorative practices. (see [Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct and Standards of Training and Practice](#)) Some schools or districts may work in partnership with the juvenile justice system to provide diversionary options at the formal level. More information about Restorative Justice can be found at [www.rjcolorado.org](http://www.rjcolorado.org)

Restorative Practices in Schools data is compelling; fidelity to the guidelines outlined in this document can have a transformative effect on school climate and culture. (For data examples see Dr. Yolanda Anyon's report [Taking Restorative Practices School-Wide: Insights from Three Schools In Denver](#) and the International Institute for Restorative Practices report [Evidence from Schools Implementing Restorative Practices](#))

**The RJ Council** supports the use of this document in establishing a framework for Restorative Practices in Schools. What follows are basic guidelines for the principles, practices, implementation and training of Restorative Practices in Schools for Colorado based on the input and collaboration of school and restorative justice practices professionals in Colorado.

For more information please visit [www.rjcolorado.org](http://www.rjcolorado.org) or contact us at [rjcolorado@judicial.state.co.us](mailto:rjcolorado@judicial.state.co.us)

## **Principles**

Restorative Practices in Schools is philosophically based in fostering relationships, strengthening understanding, repairing harm, and building strong communities. Identifying and addressing the needs and harms that occur when there is conflict in the school community by cultivating empathy and modeling conflict resolution skills serves students and adults alike. Restorative Practices, when practiced with fidelity, create a safe space for connection and dialogue. When facilitated by trained practitioners, Restorative Practices lead to a more equitable and inclusive environment for students, staff, families, and community members.

The variety of practices or models used in applying this philosophy have been developed and honed by indigenous peoples and religious groups for centuries. They have been further developed and implemented around the world by academics, governments, schools, communities and practitioners for decades. Restorative Practices in Schools assist in building a school culture of relationship and respect. At the core, Restorative Practices are built on what are known as the 5 R's: Relationship, Respect, Responsibility, Repair, and Reintegration.

The following definitions of the 5 R's were written by Dr. Beverly Title in *History and Operational Values of Teaching Peace* and can be found [here](#) on the RJ Council's website.

### **The 5 Rs**

**Relationship** - Restorative Practices recognize that when a wrong occurs, individuals and communities feel violated. It is the damage to these relationships that is primarily important and is the central focus of what Restorative Practices seek to address. When relationships are strong, people experience more fulfilling lives, and communities become places where we want to live. Relationships may be mended through the willingness to be accountable for one's actions and to make repair of harms done.

**Respect** - Respect is the key ingredient that holds the container for all Restorative Practices, and it is what keeps the process safe. It is essential that all persons in a restorative process be treated with respect. One way we acknowledge respect is that participation in a restorative process works best when it is chosen by the participant. Every person is expected to show respect for others and for themselves. Restorative processes require deep listening, done in a way that does not presume we know what the speaker is going to say, but that we honor the importance of the other's point of view. Our focus for listening is to understand other people, so, even if we disagree with their thinking, we can be respectful and try hard to comprehend how it seems to them.

**Responsibility** - For Restorative Practices to be effective, personal responsibility must be taken. Each person needs to take responsibility for any harm they caused to another, admitting any wrong that was done, even if it was unintentional. Taking responsibility also includes a willingness to give an explanation of the harmful behavior. All persons in the circle are asked to

search deeply in their hearts and minds to discover if there is any part of the matter at hand for which they have some responsibility. Everyone needs to be willing to accept responsibility for his or her own behavior and the affect it has had on others and the community as a whole.

**Repair** - The restorative approach is to repair the harm that was done and address underlying causes to the fullest extent possible, recognizing that harm may extend beyond anyone's capacity for repair. Once the persons involved have accepted responsibility for their behavior and they have heard in the restorative process about how others were harmed by their action, they are expected to make repair. It is this principle that allows us to set aside thoughts of revenge and punishment. It is through taking responsibility for one's own behavior and making repair that persons may regain or strengthen their self-respect and the respect of others.

**Reintegration** - For the restorative process to be complete, persons who may have felt alienated must be accepted into the community. Reintegration is realized when all persons have put the harm behind them and moved into a new role in the community. This new role recognizes their worth and the importance of the new learning that has been accomplished. The person having shown him or herself to be an honorable person through acceptance of responsibility and repair of harm has transformed the hurtful act. At the reintegration point, all parties are back in right relationship with each other and with the community. This reintegration process is the final step in achieving wholeness.

**These five principles** are a guide for restorative justice practices regardless of the setting. Building a restorative school culture based on relationships and respect among members of the school and community are the starting point for Restorative Practices in Schools. They enhance collaboration and problem solving, create a culture of inclusiveness and personal responsibility, and generate higher levels of engagement and satisfaction. Through the fostering of relationships and the building of respect, students and staff communicate better and discipline will be seen as supportive and reparative, rather than adversarial. The practice of building relationships and respect among all members of the school community are the proactive elements of Restorative Practices. Strong restorative culture makes responsible repair of harm the norm when disciplinary situations arise. This is done through fostering a shift in thinking from who broke the law or school rules, what law/rule was broken, and what is the punishment, to who was harmed, how we meet the needs of all involved, and how to repair what has been harmed.

The impact of Restorative Practices on the school community will be much greater than a decrease in suspension, expulsion, and the increase of equity. A restorative school community increases student social and emotional engagement through:

- Allowing all voices to be heard and respected
- Understanding the impacts of behavior
- Increasing responsibility for actions
- Repairing harm caused by behaviors

**Restorative Practices differ from traditional and Zero-Tolerance policies in a variety of ways:**

<b>Punitive/Zero-Tolerance</b>	<b>Restorative</b>
Misbehavior defined as breaking school rules or letting the school down.	Misbehavior defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another.
Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt.	Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process. Includes an authority figure with the power to decide on penalty, in conflict with wrongdoer.	Dialogue and negotiation, with everyone involved in the communication and cooperation with each other.
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent.	Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices
Attention to rules and adherence to due process.	Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.
Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school.	Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflict with opportunity for learning.
One social injury compounded by another.	Focus on repair of social injury/damage.
School community as spectators, represented by a member of staff dealing with the situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless.	School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.
Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment	Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility of choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.

(Adapted from Ashley, Jessica and Kimberly Burke. *Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools*. Chicago: ICJIA, 2009: 7)

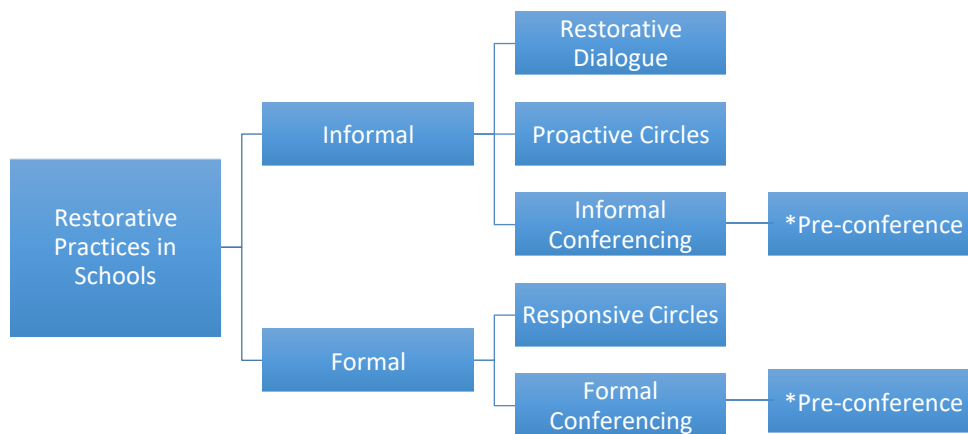
A school committed to Restorative Practices is encouraged to develop an implementation plan (see [National Implementation Research Network](#) for more information on Implementation Science), and execute it over an appropriate time period based on a readiness

assessment, get key people who are interested trained, work toward whole-school engagement with regular use of the practices or restorative models and include restorative language and a brief explanation in student and teacher handbooks. Staff members and others in the school community experienced in Restorative Practices should mentor and train those who are unfamiliar with a restorative culture. Communities of practice should be developed. As with any prevention/intervention structure, facilitators should be observed and evaluated on a regular basis.

## **Practices**

Restorative Practices in Schools occur on a continuum: from prevention to intervention, proactive to responsive, informal to formal, and relationship building to repair of harm. It is a full spectrum approach to building a safe and caring community that is relationship-based and repairs harm where all voices are heard and valued. Practitioners use and model these practices themselves and understand the larger system or context in which they work so the practices are culturally relevant. Participation in Restorative Practices is in theory, voluntary, however, it's important to encourage a culture of full participation among students in this powerful community building practice. This may take some time with certain student populations. Creating the opportunity for these students to be heard, until they trust they will be listened to, pays off over time. It is with regular use, i.e. practice that confidence and consistency in positive outcomes will occur.

## **Restorative Practices in Schools Continuum**



## **Definitions of some Restorative Practices along the continuum:**

*All Restorative Practices should be deployed after training. The RJ Council does not endorse, support or otherwise recommend any particular training, trainer, curriculum or methodology. Some trainers are listed in the RJ Directory at <https://rjcolorado.org/find-rj-providers/>*

## **Informal Restorative Practices**

### **Restorative Dialogue or Conversation**

Includes the use of restorative language that addresses what happened and how the speaker was impacted or affected by the behavior. There may also be requests for changed behavior moving forward. The use of Non-Violent Communication to identify needs and address harm in the event of a conflict builds empathy and awareness between people. Using a structured restorative response and speaking from personal experience rather than global or superlative comments helps connect the involved parties. These types of affective statements and affective questions, including identifying harms and repairs can be found in a variety of

restorative dialogue or conversation techniques for communication. (See [Nonviolent Communication](#))

Affective statements and questions, and questions identifying what happened, who was affected, and ways to repair harm, are useful for teacher-student conversations, hall conferences, and administrator interventions (in the lunchroom, passing periods, etc.) This approach is consistent with other Restorative Practices and prevents escalation of minor incidents.

### **Proactive Circles**

Proactive circles are preventative in nature and provide a focus that is not necessarily related to conflict or harm. This setting provides an avenue for community building, trust, authentic listening, empathy, and conflict resolution skill building that serves as a foundation for responsive Restorative Practices. Simply put, Proactive circles are facilitated processes in which a group gathers in a circle, preferably with no barriers (i.e. desks, tables etc.) and each person in turn has the opportunity to speak uninterrupted and be heard by the other members of the group. Examples include routine Proactive Circles, Connection Circles, and Peace Circles, preferably conducted weekly with the same group of students and teacher. Students can be facilitators of proactive circles, once they have learned the structure).

### **Informal Conferencing**

Informal conferencing may also be referred to as Restorative Mediation is generally utilized for less serious school violations, with parties directly involved in harm or conflict. These are facilitated interactions designed to support the involved parties to identify what happened, who was affected and how and what they will do to repair harm. Examples of appropriate use of informal conferencing include (but not limited to) gossip and rumors, social media issues, teacher/student conflict, name calling, disruptive behavior in the classroom, verbal arguments, etc.

## **Formal [Generally reserved for more serious offenses]**

### **Formal Conferencing**

Formal conferencing is similar in structure to Informal Conferencing but for more serious harms. These conferences usually include identified victim(s), offender(s), and interested/affected parties such as parents, community members, school staff or trained peers, and/or law enforcement. Examples of types of harms addressed in formal conferences include: theft, property damage, serious fights, drug violations, and racial slurs/threatening comments.

### **Responsive Circles**

Responsive circles should be utilized after proactive circles are established and routine. Responsive circles can address incidents that result in harm or conflict, or a change in the community that needs to be addressed. Proactive and Responsive circles *follow the same structure, only the focus changes* to the impact or affects resulting from an event(s). Responsive circles may also be known as Restorative circles, Solution circles, Intervention circles and other



names. The common ground is they are held in response to an event. Responsive circles are effective in addressing an issue not directly related to harm, for example, “Today is Olivia’s last day at our school, let’s make a circle and voice what we like most about Olivia, and what we’ll miss about her when she’s gone.”

### **\*Pre-conferencing (Informal and Formal Conferencing Precursor)**

Pre-conferencing is the preparatory phase of all conferencing models. It is the point of information gathering and airing of heated emotions so the facilitator(s) are prepared to hold the respect and safety of the restorative process that will follow. The goal is to prepare each participant for the conference. Pre-conferencing is an essential step for successful facilitation of these conflict resolution processes.

Arguably the most important component of informal and formal conferences pre-conferencing sets the restorative tone. The facilitator should never underestimate the value of a thorough pre-conference of each participant. Pre-conferences often uncover other information about the participants, such as difficult family events, that provide context. However, conferences should focus on the most recent event that caused the conference to occur.

Before bringing people together for a conference, it is necessary for the facilitator to meet with each party separately to ensure readiness and willingness to participate. Each pre-conference allows the facilitator to gain valuable insight into how the violation/incident occurred, build rapport with the parties, explain and set expectations for the restorative conference process, give reassurance of the facilitator’s role and answer any questions. The timing of the pre-conference and the subsequent conference is not prescribed. Factors such as heightened emotions, teacher and/or facilitator availability, potential for escalation, etc. are factors to consider when determining how and when to pre-conference and follow up with the informal or formal conference. Frequently in school settings, the pre-conference and conference occur the day of, or within a few days of the event.

Questions pertaining to what happened, who has been affected, what the participant can take responsibility for, and a solution going forward can be asked directly or gleaned through the conversation. Participants will be briefed on the norms of respect, mutual empowerment, no cross talk, active listening, and cultural sensitivity.

If anyone risks re-victimizing a participant, or is unable to take some measure of responsibility, the facilitator may make the decision to not proceed with the restorative conference but rather use more traditional school responses.

### **Special situations that benefit from Circles or Conferences:**

- Attendance Mediation
- Reintegration after a Suspension or Extended Absence
- Integration of new students/Saying goodbye to departing students
- Addressing a significant local, national or global event (school shooting, natural disaster, death of a student, etc.)

### **Basic Circle Process Outline:**

- State the purpose of the Circle
- Discuss Ground Rules (suggested examples are):
  - Listen and speak with respect
  - Only tell your truth
  - Use school-appropriate language
  - Respect people's privacy; only tell your own story
- Use of a talking piece
  - Significance of the object used
  - Speak only when you have the talking piece
  - No cross talk of any kind, verbal or nonverbal
  - Facilitator may need to speak to move the process along
  - Share the time fairly
  - You may pass and we'll come back to you
- Questions / Rounds
- Closing the Circle

### **Willing Participation**

Voluntary participation is universally accepted as a primary principle of restorative justice. It shifts away from the punitive or adversarial response to focus on acceptance of responsibility, speaking the truth, and repair of harm. **Creating a positive restorative school culture may necessitate adult encouragement for student participation.** Especially in the case of proactive circles, participation empowers students to hear their own voice while others listen, and provides an opportunity for personal growth.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality should always be stressed. There may be exceptions to confidentiality if the information is determined to be a future threat to self or others. Mandatory reporting roles apply in Restorative Practices, and adults should clarify this role with students.

### **Debriefing**

In particularly emotional situations, facilitators should provide ample opportunity for debriefing of all parties following a restorative practice/justice intervention. It is imperative for self-care that all participants have an opportunity to ask questions, make comments and work through any issues or concerns that have come up for them. Generally, the more serious the offense, the more need for debriefing. Keep that in mind, facilitators should understand that each individual comes to RJ/RP with their own backgrounds and experiences which may affect them during and following an intervention.

## **Implementation**

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School leaders are encouraged to engage the support of experienced practitioners, trainers and consultants who abide by the [Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct and Standards of Training and Practice](#) when developing a plan and implementing Restorative Practices in Schools. A list of practitioners and trainers can be found on the State of Colorado Restorative Practices website: <http://www.rjcolorado.org/>.

Engaging Restorative Practices in Schools requires full leadership commitment to what is often a culture shift. Planning for the changes using Implementation Science is recommended in CO (see [National Implementation Research Network](#) for more information on Implementation Science). Professional development time and communities of practice within a school building to ensure adherence to the principles and best practices are essential to successful implementation of Restorative Practices in Schools. It is recommended that schools and/or districts identify key strategies and data to measure change over time. It is important to assess the readiness of the school before embarking on the full implementation of Restorative Practices. For a comprehensive guide and useful tools for implementing Restorative Practices see the [Minnesota Department of Education](#).

While there is a difference between punitive and restorative approaches, implementing a restorative framework does not mean upending an already existing discipline matrix. Rather, Restorative Practices works to support school discipline matrixes by providing new skills to engage with students and staff, integrating with already existing evidence-based practices such as PBIS, MTSS and SEL, building classroom management skills, and allowing for supportive approaches to low to mid-level conflicts such as class disruption, gossip, pulling fire alarms, etc. In cases of higher-level conflicts such as fights and bringing weapons, Restorative Practices assists in bringing the community together before, during, after, or in lieu of suspension or expulsion to discuss harm and impact. Restorative Practices create an opportunity for the student(s) who caused harm, to repair the relationships and for everyone to reintegrate back into the right relationship. As with all evidence-based school supports, Restorative Practices works through utilizing multi-tiered responses and adapting to the needs of students, staff, and community.

Restorative Practices are an avenue towards more equitable culture and discipline. Every school is unique and will face its own challenges with equity. These various forms of diversity could include: levels of poverty and wealth, English Language Learners, ethnic make-up, community views towards education and discipline, and specific community challenges that spill into school culture. Through integration of Restorative Practices in School, students and staff can discuss the impacts and challenges of community issues, how they affect school culture, and how, as a

community, they can work to be more equitable in handling these issues from individual behaviors to school-wide discipline.

### **Stages of Implementation**

Whether implementing Restorative Practices at the district, building, or classroom level, the climate will not change from punitive to restorative overnight. Having a framework for implementation, in which Restorative Practices are implemented in stages, helps ensure fidelity to best practices and build capacity for long-lasting change. While stages of implementation will be unique to each site, they might include:

- Building awareness about Restorative Practices in Schools within the setting.
- Developing a team of people with the desire to initiate Restorative Practices to be responsible for implementation so that the cultural shift does not rely on any one person.
- Ensuring the core group is trained and supported.
- Integrating Restorative Practices with existing framework/programs in the classroom, school and/or district.
- Developing an organic system for consistent use of Restorative Practices at the Pro-Active level and ways to refer students to Responsive Restorative Practices processes.
- Training additional staff to implement Restorative Practices in the classroom.
- Training students and families to lead restorative work.
- Supporting Communities of Practice within the work day and school year.
- Sharing data and stories of success and learning.
- Adapting to the needs of the school culture and climate.

While implementation stages will be sequential, as suggested by Implementation Science, stages will build upon one another. Early stages may often need to be revisited as the work moves forward.

### **Avenues of communication**

Over time, those who have been trained in Restorative Practices (eg. implementation team) will identify appropriate staff members, students and others in the school to be trained as well. The capacity to have more trained practitioners over time leads to a gradual school wide implementation and culture shift. The opportunity for all school individuals to communicate with one another, as well as the larger school community, is of great importance to the success of implementation.

In order to establish those avenues of communication the Restorative Practices facilitator(s) and leadership should:

- Train all staff on the philosophy of Restorative Practices, identify internal and external reasons for implementation, what types of Restorative Practices the school is interested in, provide training for staff to implement multiple approaches to Restorative Practices, and clarify the initial teacher/staff role, ie. to participate in conversations when asked.
- Meet in communities of practice and share their experience, debrief and problem solve the process so it is culturally appropriate for the school, identify key people to participate in training, and ensure consistency and fidelity of processes.

- Make sure that roles are established for implementation, including but not limited to:  
Leadership  
Teacher/educator implementers  
Implementation team  
Data collectors  
All School Staff  
Parents  
Students  
Community
- Share successes with staff frequently in order to learn from one another and generate buy-in.
- Share data and note changes on an annual basis as the culture shifts are occurring.
- Create a two-way avenue for educators and the implementation team to communicate successes and challenges in order to identify early interventions for educators struggling with implementation, to generate buy-in from staff, and to dispel myths around Restorative Practices.

### **Planning for Sustainability**

Throughout implementation of Restorative Practices the implementation team should prioritize how to make them part of a permanent culture shift rather than a fleeting program. In order to establish a sustainable restorative culture, the team responsible for implementation should:

- Ensure readiness for the shift by assessing value alignment and buy-in.
- Include Restorative Practices formally in all policies and procedures, including codes of discipline and student handbooks.
- Create forms to support the system--referral forms, means to collect data, surveys.
- Hire new staff members based on a restorative mindset.
- Train and coach staff in RP, partnering with an outside resource if necessary, and ensure training and coaching is intensive and ongoing.

In order to ensure this restorative mindset outlasts the tenure of any one person, it is critical to generate allies among staff, students, families, the district, community and partnering organizations to ensure there is a force to advocate for Restorative Practices in the future.

### **Evaluation**

The following are standards for evaluation for any individual, classroom, school, school community, and/or district implementing Restorative Practices in schools.

- Set goals for Restorative Practices implementation which are in alignment with the values and principles of Restorative Practices and the realities of the school setting.
- Creation of system and process for collection of process, outcome and program assessment data. Examples of types of data may include:
  - Satisfaction of participants in the processes
  - Feedback survey of participants in Restorative Practices trainings
  - Climate surveys of staff, students and/or parents

- Attendance/academic/discipline data
- Demographics of student participation
- Frequency and context of the use of Restorative Practices
- Use relevant data to regularly assess progress toward goals.
- Create and maintain a process for revisiting and adjusting goals as needed based on needs of community and assessment of program/process/outcomes.
- Acknowledgement of and communication to stakeholders that the process of implementation does not happen overnight. Research in implementation science shows that a full implementation of a culture shift can take between 2-5 years. (Chamberlain, Brown,& Saldana, 2011; Fixsen et al., 2001; Panzano & Roth, 2006).

## **Training**

*The RJ Council does not endorse, support or otherwise recommend any particular training, trainer, curriculum or methodology. The RJ Council takes no responsibility for training providers or the quality or adherence to guidelines and standards in the content of their training. Some trainers are listed in the RJ Directory at <https://rjcolorado.org/find-rj-providers/>*

After reviewing the Practices and Implementation portions of this Restorative Practices in Schools document, school personnel in partnership with Restorative Practices professionals should determine the specific goals, readiness and needs of the district or school requesting training. School leaders are encouraged to engage the support of experienced Restorative Practices in Schools practitioners, trainers and consultants who abide by the [Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct and Standards of Training and Practice](#) when developing Restorative Practices in their schools.

Training should include learning objectives and be differentiated based on the current staff understanding of Restorative Practice in Schools. Practitioners/trainers are expected to be aware of their own biases and demonstrate cultural sensitivity in knowing their audience; having an awareness of the cultural shift that Restorative Practices create in the school community. Training participants are identified after considering the Implementation Plan document. In order to establish common training practices and language in Colorado schools, all aspects of this document should be utilized, with special emphasis on those areas of need and practice identified in planning and preparation by the practitioner and school personnel.

### **Basic Standards for Restorative Practices in Schools Trainers:**

1. Trainer is expected to abide by the [Restorative Justice Facilitator Code of Conduct and Standards of Training and Practice](#).
2. Trainers should work with the school leadership to design the training(s) based on the *Principles and Practices sections of this document* and an implementation plan based on the readiness assessment and goals of the school/district.
3. Trainers should be able to demonstrate working knowledge of Restorative Practices in Schools and are responsible for maintaining their own professional development on evidence based and emerging practices.
4. Trainers should be experienced restorative practitioners able to demonstrate their skills and provide evidence of their work in schools and ongoing development as a practitioner.

5. Trainers should ensure the time period for the training is sufficient to equip participants with the appropriate knowledge, skills and confidence to provide safe and quality restorative practice in schools.
6. Trainers are encouraged to assist schools to develop sustainability through training for trainers model.
7. Trainers should advise schools and provide support for setting up communities of practice and professional development opportunities.
8. Following training, the trainers will give feedback to the school leadership on the progress of individual participant when there are concerns and provide recommendations for any further training needed. This arrangement should be organized and agreed before training commences.
9. Trainers should provide a way for participants to evaluate the course and share that feedback with the client.
10. Trainers will make themselves available to participants for feedback and advice where possible and appropriate and respond appropriately and restoratively to the feedback.
11. Trainers in Restorative Practice should make references and evaluations from previous courses available to potential clients.
12. Trainers are encouraged to assist schools to develop sustainability through training for trainers model.
13. Trainers should advise schools to use and support setting up communities of practice and professional development opportunities beyond initial trainings. Trainers should provide a way for participants to evaluate the course and share that feedback with the client.
14. Trainers will make themselves available to participants for feedback and advice where possible and appropriate.
15. Trainers should hold forth the maxim, “do no harm”.



## **Basic Standards for Restorative Practices in Schools Trainings:**

Depending on the level of training and engagement with Restorative Practices in Schools training participants should have:

### **Foundational level:**

- A working knowledge of restorative justice principles and values
- A working knowledge of restorative justice philosophy and history
- Basic communication/group facilitation skills (e.g. affective statements, active listening, open questions, tone of voice, body language, mutual respect, reframing, restorative language, group dynamics)
- Equity, Diversity and Cultural Awareness (e.g. Bias awareness in race, ethnicity, mental health, (dis)ability, culture, size, language, socio-economics, sex, origin, sexual orientation, gender identity etc.)
- Behavior as communication
- Distinction between Restorative Practices in Schools and Restorative Justice Practices in the Justice system
- An understanding that all restorative justice practices should be voluntary and why

### **Practitioner level:**

- Demonstration of a good working knowledge of a restorative practices to be used (Informal – Formal)
- Demonstration of the relative design or configuration of the participants in those models of Restorative Practices in Schools that the school will use
- Basic knowledge of school response to behavior and discipline best and evidence-based practices and how restorative responses integrate with school policies
- Recognition of trauma, crisis management and skill development to handle these circumstances in pre-conferencing or during a process and as may arise especially in Formal practices
- Training for (Formal) facilitation skill development must include:
  - Demonstration restorative justice skills based on models the school-based practices will use
  - Practical applications and experiential activities, including role plays with school based scenarios
  - Every participant must be given the opportunity to practice and observe facilitation skills and receive feedback
  - Preparation for the conferencing model if it will be used (pre-conferencing)
  - Agreement writing- allowing harmed parties and responsible parties to create
  - Equity and Cultural sensitivity skills
  - Facilitation and Co-facilitation models
  - Understanding of participant roles
    - Harmed Parties

- Persons Responsible for harm
  - School personnel
  - Peers
  - Law enforcement, Community and Support people (i.e. parents/guardians)
- An understanding of and commitment to confidentiality within the law and guidelines of the school district
- An understanding of the use of evaluations for program, process and self-improvement
- Training should be delivered over a time period sufficient to equip participants with the appropriate knowledge, skills and confidence to provide safe and quality restorative practice in schools.
- Training should be provided in a setting conducive to focused learning and practice.
- Training content may vary and should be designed based on implementation plan, readiness, varying levels of knowledge, skill and proficiency of participants. Although school-based practitioners should be able to verify knowledge and skills in the areas of practice noted above.
- Every Restorative Practitioner in Schools training participant must be given the opportunity to practice and observe facilitation skills and receive feedback. (A 10:1, participant: trainer ratio is recommended) \*Foundational training that is content focused may be done in large groups without the experiential component.
- Initial facilitation training should be followed by direct mentorship from experienced practitioners with opportunities for observation, debriefing and feedback.
- Following training, the trainers will give feedback to the client on the progress of individual participant when there are concerns and provide recommendations for any further training needed. This arrangement should be organized and agreed before training commences.