

Oakland Unified School District

# restorative justice

implementation guide

A Whole School Approach



*Oakland Unified School District  
Restorative Justice Implementation Guide:  
A Whole School Approach*

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OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Community Schools, Thriving Students



OUSD RESTORATIVE PRACTICES



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# Using This Guide

This guide is designed for a Restorative Practices Facilitator to support their school to create an implementation plan to introduce restorative practices to a school, school wide.

We hope this guide supports you to establish the following RJ Principles:

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES

- Builds relationships.
- Strives to be respectful to all.
- Provides opportunity for equitable dialogue and participatory decision-making.
- Involves all relevant stakeholders.
- Addresses harms, needs, obligations, and causes of conflict and harm.
- Encourages all to take responsibility.

- 1. IF CRIME HURTS, JUSTICE SHOULD HEAL.**  
The focus is on repairing harm if it has occurred
- 2. NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.**  
Those impacted feel welcome and safe to speak and participate.
- 3. THERE IS SIMPLY NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE PERSONAL.**  
Building respectful relationships is foundational and an outcome of any process.
- 4. THIS CAN WORK, I CAN LIVE WITH IT.**  
Agreements are made by consensus
- 5. I AM WILLING TO DO THIS.**  
Participation is voluntary.



# Stepping Stones to Creating a Restorative School



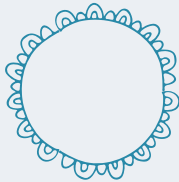
Additional Resources can be found on the OUSD Restorative Justice Resources page, located here: <https://sites.google.com/a/ousd.k12.ca.us/ousd-rj-resources/documents>



# STEP 1

## Frame Restorative Justice for Your Site

Welcome to Oakland Unified School District’s restorative justice initiative. Each school’s journey to understand, implement and institutionalize restorative practices will be unique. However, we all begin by understanding the history and roots of the Restorative Justice movement. As you read the following text, consider your site, and what is most relevant for you.



### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

In your role as a Restorative Practices Facilitator, you will be asked to explain what Restorative Justice is to many different audiences. The following paragraph offers one definition of RJ. Read this definition, then respond to the questions below.

### WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Inspired by indigenous values, **restorative justice is a philosophy and a theory of justice** that emphasizes bringing together everyone affected by wrongdoing to address needs and responsibilities, and to heal the harm to relationships as much as possible. Restorative justice is a philosophy that is being applied in multiple contexts, including schools, families, workplaces, the justice system, global conflict, and as a tool to transform structural and historic harms. Though only about 40 years old, the restorative justice movement is rapidly expanding, with tens of thousands of initiatives worldwide.

Many people mistakenly assume restorative justice is solely a conflict resolution process that comes into play after harm has occurred. Though school-based restorative justice offers a more equitable and respectful alternative for dealing with disciplinary infractions, it is also a proactive strategy to create a culture of connectivity where all members of the school community feel valued and thrive. Restorative justice is a profoundly relational practice.

How would you describe restorative justice in your own words?

Think about your school site. How would you tailor your definition for:

A Principal?

Teachers?

Parents?

Students?



### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

A good rule of thumb is that about 20 percent of a school’s restorative practices

respond to conflict while 80 percent are proactively creating shared cultures and building strong relationships.

This approach cultivates a climate where destructive responses to conflict are less likely to occur.

## REFLECTION

Think back to the last conflict you experienced at your school. Describe it:  
(What happened? Where? Who was involved?)

The primary difference between *restorative* and *retributive* justice can be categorized by the types of questions that inform our analysis of a problem. To illustrate the difference, walk through each set of the questions in the table below, with your scenario in mind. Write down your responses to each question in the spaces provided, then use the reflection questions that follow to analyze the difference between restorative and retributive justice.

### **THREE QUESTIONS RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE ASKS:**

What law or rule was broken?

Who broke it?

What punishment is deserved?

### **THREE QUESTIONS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ASKS:**

What is the harm?

What are the needs and obligations  
of all affected by the harm?

How can all the affected parties  
create a plan to heal the harm as  
much as possible?

What is the difference in the types of responses you generate from retributive vs. restorative thinking?

What problems has retributive thinking created in our community?

What resources and supports would we need to embed restorative thinking in a school?

A restorative culture supports all school stakeholders to shift their analysis of a problem from using exclusionary discipline tactics to support healing and accountability.





## STEP 2

# Assemble the Restorative Justice Team

The first step is to create a restorative school culture team.



**TO BUILD YOUR TEAM** of four to six people, consider:  
**Are there already existing school climate teams?**  
**How will you optimize existing resources?**

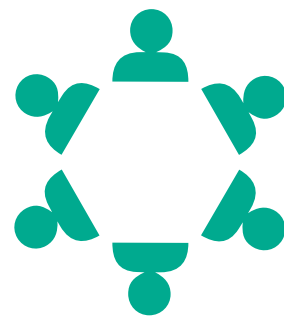
Ideally, the team will include the Restorative Practices Facilitator (or another individual primarily tasked with implementation), an administrator, two to three early adopter teachers, a school security officer, a counselor or clinician, students, representatives of support staff and after-school program staff.

**A full-time Restorative Practices Facilitator** working for the school is ideal. Alternatively, a trained and motivated vice principal, dean, teacher on special assignment, or counselor can manage training and school-wide implementation of restorative practices.



This team should **MEET BI-MONTHLY** to:

- Develop shared values
- Assess the school's strengths and needs
- Create an implementation plan for the site
- Develop a training and professional development plan for staff and students
- Use data based decision making to streamline and hone in on the challenges, successes, and problems of practice
- Continually reflect upon what is working, what are areas of growth, and how RJ practices might continuously be improved at the site



Ideally, the team will use the **TALKING CIRCLE PROCESS**, the core practice of whole school restorative justice, to conduct most of its meetings.

Ultimately and ideally, each member of the school community will be trained to play some part in the school-wide implementation of restorative justice. The **KEY CHAMPIONS** and their roles are:

### **PRINCIPAL**

- Hires or participates in hiring Restorative Practices Facilitator for the site
- Has had first-hand experiences of sitting in Tier I, II, and III Circles
- Engages entire school community and parents in pre-implementation phases
- Makes sure the district discipline matrix is utilized in a restorative fashion with training on the restorative justice protocols for classroom-managed and office-based disciplinary referrals

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FACILITATOR**

*or other designated individual*

- Is trained and experienced in RJ community building, RJ discipline, RJ reentry, and in offering RJ trainings (Tiers I, II, and III)
- Offers continuous training, coaching, and technical assistance to site-based practitioners and parents
- Uses Model-Mentor-Transfer process to Coach and cofacilitate classroom Circles with teachers
- Facilitates recurring professional learning community convenings of practitioners
- Coordinates Advisory Circles and other school-wide restorative practices
- Facilitates ongoing restorative interventions as alternatives to punitive discipline
- Facilitates restorative intervention to help students re-integrate into school following an absence
- Engages parents in site-based restorative practices, including training and supporting parent dialogue circles

### **TEACHERS**

- Receives introductory training (Tier I) in whole school restorative justice
- Are coached to facilitate classroom Circles and engage in restorative conversations
- Develops adult capacity to share power with youth
- Facilitates classroom Circles with students, including a Shared Values Circle
- Uses restorative conversations to address students' struggles and misbehavior
- Uses restorative practices to address tensions with colleagues
- Uses trauma informed restorative practices in the classroom

## STUDENTS

- Co-creates norms and practices of a restorative classroom and school culture
- Facilitates Conflict Circles to build community and respond to conflict among peers

## PARENTS

- Reinforce restorative values and processes at home
- Participate in restorative processes at the school site

## SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICERS

- Receives Tier I training and coaching in engaging in Restorative Conversations and effective communication and de-escalation strategies
- Participates in Community Building and Conflict Circles

## DISTRICT RJ SUPPORT STAFF

(Ideally, a school has access to school district resources, but this may not always be available.)

- Trains and coaches the site RP Facilitator and other leadership at the school site
- Shares lessons, strategies, stories, and data from other schools and districts
- Offers technical assistance to RJ Coordinator, Principal, and others to develop a three-tier restorative justice infrastructure

## SUPPORT STAFF

- Participates in and/or facilitate Community Building Circles

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

- Participates in and/or facilitate Community Building Circles



**IMPLEMENTATION TIP** Engaging as many members of the school community early on in the planning and training process is important. But don't wait until you have assembled the "perfect" team to get started. Even if your team is small to begin with, move the process forward, especially if school leadership is on board and staff have generally expressed an openness about proceeding.



# STEP 3

## Assess Your School

### PART A: ADOPT A SOCIAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS

#### RACE EQUITY & RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

##### IMPLICIT BIAS

**Implicit Bias.** Some argue that racism is a thing of the past. Others assert that skin color still plays a huge role in the way people are treated. Today, overt racism is less common than it was in the past. Although it has not been eradicated, these days people are less likely to express racist views openly and intentionally and more likely to express them unconsciously. This is known as “implicit bias.”

Implicit bias occurs when someone rejects stereotypes on conscious levels yet holds onto them on unconscious levels. And because their racial prejudices are unconscious, people don't know they have them. More than 85 percent of all Americans view themselves

as unbiased, yet studies show that most people in our country have implicit bias.

The good news is that studies also show that if we put race on the table and talk about it instead of ignoring it, and if we are motivated to change it, we can overcome implicit racial bias. If we don't have conversations about it, bias will continue.

So it's important to create spaces in our schools where we can talk about race in a nonthreatening and productive way. Circles are excellent ways to have these difficult conversations.

*Note: Do you or your colleagues have implicit bias? Take the Harvard University Implicit Bias test online.*

##### ZERO TOLERANCE & RACIAL DISPARITY

In recent decades, out-of-school suspensions have become the norm for not only brandishing weapons and assault but also for talking back to teachers, dress code violations, and tardiness. School-based arrests result from playful adolescent behavior such as milk fights in the cafeteria and even for a child's temper tantrums.

Suspension rates have more than doubled over the last three decades for all students. At the same time, racial disparities are growing: Black students are three-and-a-half times more likely to be suspended or expelled as their white peers, according to the US Department of Education. Studies also reveal gaps between white and Latino/Chicano students.

## START RACE & GENDER EQUITY CONVERSATIONS AT YOUR SCHOOL

Our goal is to create a school climate that is inclusive and feels welcoming to all persons, regardless of race, culture, or sexual orientation.

Use the following process to determine whether discipline at your school is impacting one racial group disproportionately compared to others.

**1. Analyze the Data:** Gather recent school discipline data to analyze. (Data like this is available from the Restorative Justice District Office.)

### SOURCES OF DATA YOU CAN COLLECT:

- Discipline handbook
- School improvement plan goals
- Annual Action Plan for meeting school-wide behavior support goals
- Social skills instructional materials/ implementation time line
- Behavioral incident summaries or reports (e.g., office referrals, suspensions, expulsions)
- Other related information

As a group look for the following patterns in your data:

- Are students of a certain race, gender, or age disproportionately represented?
  - Are behavior issues occurring in a particular teachers' class, or at a particular time of day?
  - Are students who struggle in some times/classrooms more successful in other times/classrooms?
- 2. Build Staff Comfort Discussing Race:** When staff feel uncomfortable or scared to talk about race, it can be swept

under the carpet, but racial disparity is rampant in Oakland Public Schools. We can only address it by first accepting it. Organize Circle conversations to explore feelings about race before a conflict or troublesome incident occurs. Using talking Circles to address race and gender equity issues in a preventive way is very important.

Use the agenda templates in the appendix of this guide to get your school's race and gender Circle conversations started. These templates are drawn from *Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School Community*, Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis, Living Justice Press (2015).

- 3. Make the Time!** Try your best to allot enough time for these difficult conversations, especially when getting them started at your school.
- 4. Consider launching a series of Circle race conversations.**

As the RJ Coordinator, you can support teachers to build their comfort and skill to bring intention to making all people feel included and welcome!

**5. Use the following questions to identify your next steps:**

In what contexts do you wish to have race conversations in Circle? In classrooms, advisories, staff meetings, professional development sessions?

[Dotted-line response box]

Are there teachers knowledgeable about race studies who you can bring into your Circle?

[Dotted-line response box]

Do you have a plan to conduct conversations when important racial issues are in the news?

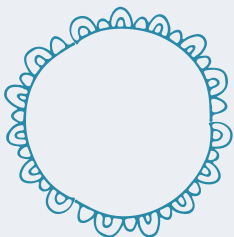
[Dotted-line response box]

Has your school scheduled intercultural programs throughout the year?

[Dotted-line response box]

**STRATEGIES TO INTEGRATE RACE DIALOGUES INTO EXISTING STRUCTURES**

- Hold race circles in staff meetings
- Organize school-wide introductory circles on race and gender for advisories
- Hold a circle to address national or local events in the news involving race/gender violence
- Partner with ethnic studies teachers or school district agencies like African-American Male Achievement Office to co-sponsor educational presentations to your school
- Connect with history teachers to have an academic discussion on the historical events that led to racial tensions in the US, or Oakland in particular.



**IMPLEMENTATION TIP**

When an issue of race or gender bias arises in a Circle that is meant to focus on another subject, address that issue immediately when it arises in Circle if at all possible.

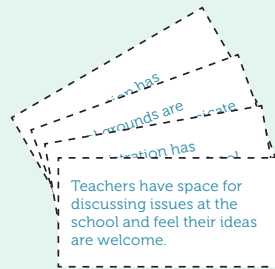
For example, if an African-American woman expresses discomfort at using a stuffed monkey for a talking piece, even though it may be uncomfortable, don't just ignore it and keep going with the Circle as if nothing happened.

Rather than moving forward with the discussion round, the facilitator

might stop everything, validate the discomfort, acknowledging that the explicit association of monkeys with African-Americans has been part of the dehumanization and degradation of African-Americans for centuries in the nation. An apology for the lack of awareness might be in order. Then the facilitator might invite others to share, including the black woman who voiced concern over the monkey-talking piece in the first place. Resume the original Circle discussion after it feels the issue has been satisfactorily addressed by all.

## PART B: CELEBRATE YOUR SCHOOL'S BRIGHT SPOTS

1. **Invite** your RJ Culture and Climate team to a group meeting.
2. **Print** out a set of **What's Going on at Our School Cards**, which can be found in the appendix, as well as on our Resources Website.
3. **Place** the header cards "We Do this Well," "This is in Place but Needs Work," and "We Don't Do This" on a large table in three separate columns.
4. Equally **divide** the cards by the number of team members. **Distribute** the divided stacks to each team member.
5. Use a speed-sort process to have team members **place** each of the cards into three piles, placing each under one of the header columns as appropriate.
6. Once the piles have formed, pause, and **review** the cards that landed under each heading. Invite participants to **ask** questions and ultimately find conscious about where to place each card.
7. Explain to the group that they will now use the debrief question to celebrate all the things that are going well. These represent your schools **bright spots**. Rubber-band the remaining two piles together and set aside to use in Part B.



WE DO THIS WELL

THIS IS IN PLACE  
BUT NEEDS WORK

WE DON'T DO THIS

### DEBRIEF

- How do cards in the "We Do This Well" column create a positive school climate and culture?
- Do you remember a time when some of these bright spots were not in place?
- What did it take to make these bright spots happen consistently?
- How do your teachers, students, and parents experience these bright spots?
- Who/what would you like to appreciate for these bright spots?

## PART C: ALIGN YOUR CARDS WITH OUSD'S RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION MODEL

OUSD uses an implementation strategy based on the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. This ensures that all students receive support tailored to their needs and

circumstances. The goals of whole school restorative justice are to:  
(1) strengthen community  
(2) repair harm  
(3) reintegrate and provide

individualized support for students who have been absent due to suspension, truancy, expulsion, incarceration, or who simply do not feel welcome.

### RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION MODEL



**REFLECT:** How does this model support the inclusion of all young people?

Now let's organize the **Whats Going On in Our School Cards** to correspond to the three tiers of this framework.



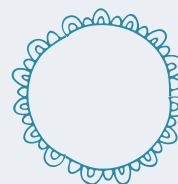
1. **Reproduce** the color-coded RTI model from page 16 on a large piece of flipchart paper.
2. **Gather** the three stacks of cards from Part A.
3. **Take** the cards from the first category, "WE DO THIS WELL," and **place** each one inside the appropriate circle using the color-coding to guide placement.
4. Now **take** the cards from the second category, "THIS IS IN PLACE BUT NEEDS WORK," and **place** them outside the three circles. This will

represent the elements of your school's RJ-RTI model that need to be addressed.

5. Each of the cards outside of the circle **indicates** a need or an action item to consider as you build your work plan (in step four).
6. **Debrief** using the questions below.
7. **Take a picture** of the completed model with the cards to document your starting place. Replicate this process quarterly to see what has shifted.

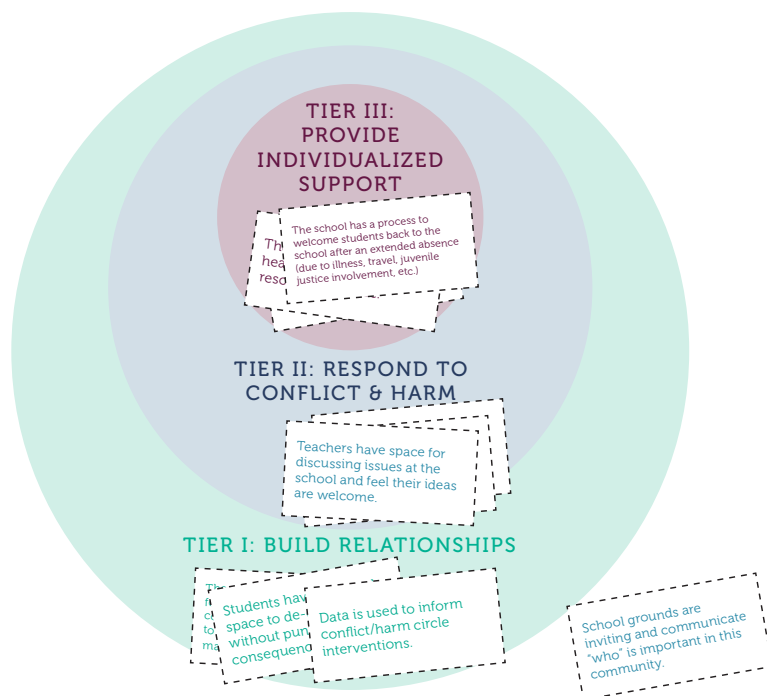
## DEBRIEF

1. What did you like about this process?
2. What items feel most urgent or important to do first?
3. What are you excited about?
4. What is missing from these cards?



### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Notice the emotions that come up for the participants in this process. It is common to want to be perfect in every category, and to feel disappointed at areas that still need work. As the RJ coordinator, create space for the emotions that may come up for the participants. Consider holding a circle to process these emotions.



## PART D: ESTABLISH SCHOOL GOALS

Looking at all the cards at once can be overwhelming! Try not to be concerned if many of your cards are outside of the triangle. Creating a Restorative Justice initiative is a process and will take time. Don't take on too much at once.

1. Based on what you learned from your RTI RJ model read the questions below and for each one, **brainstorm** as many ideas as you can on index cards (write one idea per card).
  - How could we take what is already working well and boost these areas through more intention and focus.
  - How could we tweak our current practices or systems with a restorative lens.
2. Now **look** at your third stack of cards, "WE DON'T DO THIS." Is there one goal you would like to work on this year from this set of cards?
  - How could we take some of the cards that live outside of the triangles?
  - Is there something that we are not working on that we could develop new practices or procedures around?
3. Finally, **select** 5-10 of your index cards as priority areas for this year.

What are the priority goals your school has chosen to focus on this year:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

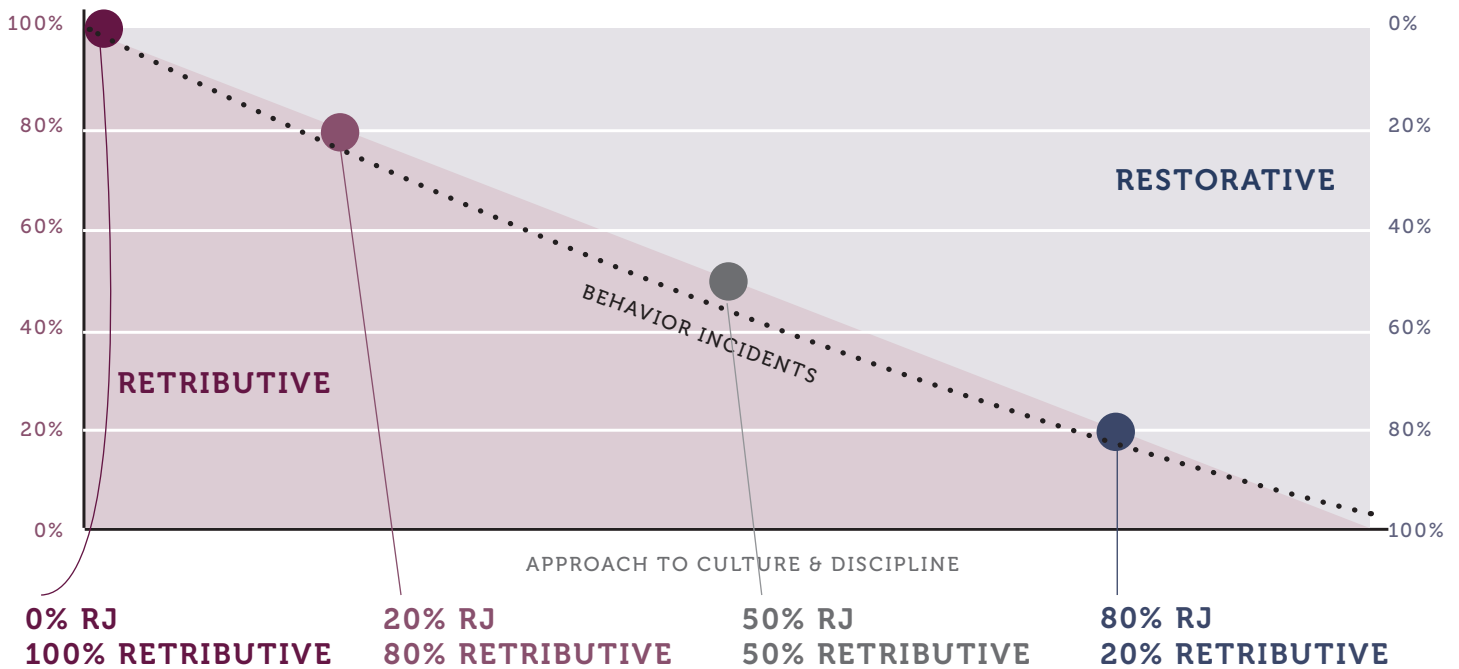


# STEP 4

## Moving From Punitive to Restorative Practices

You can't institute RJ overnight! The most sustainable way to institutionalize whole-school restorative practices is to gradually increase restorative practices over time.

**GRADUALLY INTRODUCING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES TO REPLACE RETRIBUTIVE PRACTICES WILL DECREASE BEHAVIOR INCIDENTS.**



- Little structured time for community building is provided.
- Rules are established by adults with no input from students.
- Time outs, phone calls home and suspension are primary disciplinary tactics.

- A few teachers use community building circles in classrooms.
- An RJ Coordinator addresses some behavior issues.
- Sometimes circles are used to address harm and healing with families and community.

- Regular community building circles are held in classrooms.
- Teachers use circles to address harm and restore relationships as issues occur.
- Most times circles are used to address harm and healing with families and community.

- A peer RJ group is used to address most conflicts.
- Retributive practices are reserved for severe, infrequent instances of harm.
- Circles are always used to address harm and healing with families and community.

Start off by placing more emphasis on prevention (Tier I), by establishing strong relationships. This will eliminate some behavior issues before they even start, de-escalate others, and equip more students and teachers with the capacity to handle conflict restoratively.

**DOES RJ ALWAYS WORK?**

**There may be times when a restorative process won't work, because the conditions have not been fully established. Here are some common challenges sites face, and some suggestions on how to proceed.**

If...	Then ...
The person responsible will not admit to the harm and be accountable for their actions or doesn't want to participate in a harm circle.	RJ may not be appropriate at this time. RJ only works when the parties involved are open to the process.
A person has gone through multiple circles and it doesn't seem to be working.	Reflect on why the environment created in the circles did not support accountability. Make sure mental and behavioral health services are also provided
There is a bullying situation. The person responsible for the bullying behavior will not be accountable for their actions. The person harmed is not willing to meet with the aggressor.	Create individual circles of support for the student engaged in the bullying behavior and the target of their aggressions.
The RJ Circle Keeper is concerned that further harm will be done by bringing the impacted parties together.	Create individual circles of support for the student and the students involved in the harm.



**IMPLEMENTATION TIP**

**BUILD A PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN**

1. With your School Culture team, make a list of common behavior challenges.
2. For each one, determine how you will address harm and restore relationships.

**If members of your community are not willing or ready to address harm through restorative practices, it is an indicator that more community building (tier 1) work is needed.**



## STEP 5

### Include Others in Your Vision

A restorative approach requires input and buy-in from the whole community. Your draft rollout plan will serve as a starting point for you to share your vision with others, but will need to be filled in and adapted based on the feedback and input of other teachers and school stakeholders involved.

**Connect** with district RJ staff to create a professional learning opportunity to orient your staff to what RJ is, why you care about it, and your draft plan for implementation.

**Schedule** a staff retreat or meeting to introduce the RJ approach and model restorative practices with your staff using the Introducing RJ to Your Staff Agenda in the Supporting Documents website.

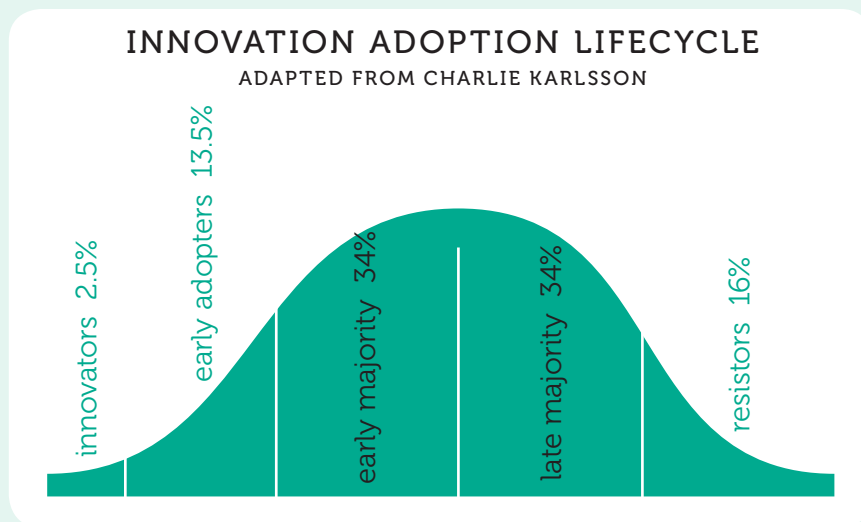
**Download** the Appetite for RJ Staff Poll from the Supporting Documents website, and distribute to staff at the end of the PD.

**Schedule** a follow-up meeting with your implementation team to review the results.

## ANALYZE YOUR STAFF BUY-IN

We don't expect every teacher or other staff members to jump on board right away, but no initiative can work without support from a critical mass. The Innovation Adoption Lifecycle visual to the right shows the different ways staff members may respond when invited to adopt restorative practices. This tool will help your implementation team make strategic choices to target your RJ implementation efforts. This process will help you identify who is more inclined to pilot RJ Practices, who might need to see concrete results to get on board, and who might resist.

1. **Gather** together your Implementation Team.
2. **Write** each staff person and administrator's name on an index card.
3. **Review** the Innovation Lifecycle graphic below, and read the descriptions of each category.



4. Using the Appetite for RJ Staff Poll results, **decide** where you believe each person in your staff falls within this chart with regards to adopting school-wide restorative practices in 3 tiers.
5. Now **review** your RTI RJ model and your RJ coordinator work plan. Given the buy in of your staff, do you have the right goals in mind?

Don't worry about the members of your team with a low appetite for Restorative Justice. These people represent those that will need to see a proof of concept to feel brought in, which will take time. Get curious about what each of the staff members in the early majority, late majority and resistor categories will need to buy into whole school RJ. Providing all staff opportunities to experience the power of circle will help move those that are skeptical.



## STEP 6

# Implement Tier I Strategies

Launch your whole-school RJ implementation with an emphasis on Tier I restorative strategies. Tier I includes training and coaching teachers, counselors, administrators, school security officers, support staff, and after-school program staff in facilitating restorative conversations and community-building circles school-wide. This proactive approach builds the capacity of adult staff to utilize restorative practices to create a restorative school. Children learn by emulating the behavior of the adults in their lives. Implementing Tier I interventions can foster a strong interconnectivity that can radically transform the culture and climate of the entire school.

### TRAINING

Schedule an **INTRODUCTORY TRAINING** early in the school year for as many staff as possible. Ideally, the introductory training prepares the school to implement proactive community-building processes school-wide.

At the next level, a smaller group is trained to **FACILITATE RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESSES** to address rule infractions and alternatives to suspension.

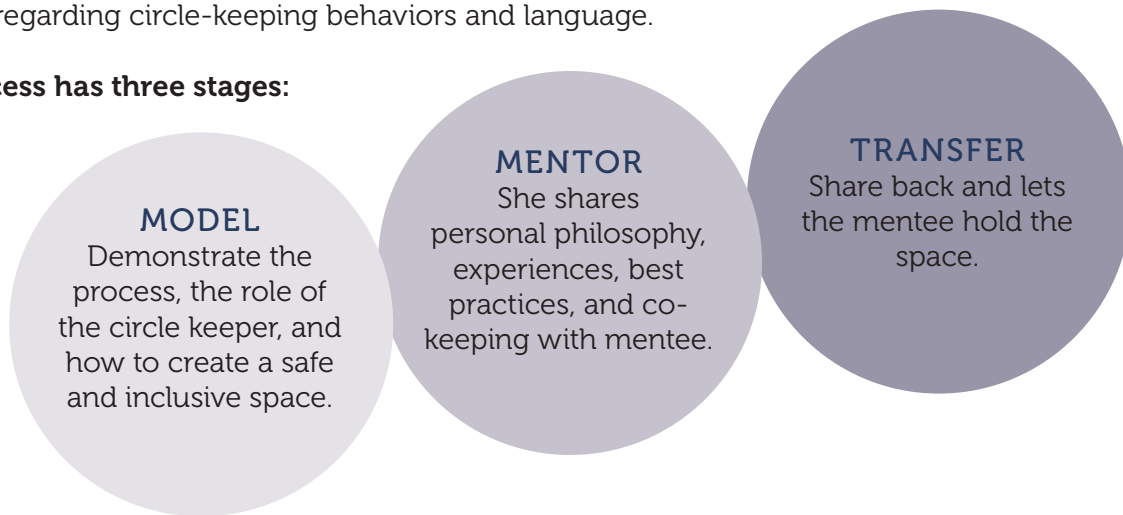
Create **A SCHOOL-WIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY** that allows RJ practitioners at the site to continually reflect throughout the school year on what is working, what are areas of growth, and what tweaking is needed. Depending on the size of your school, it may take more than one year for all or most staff to complete the Tier I training.

OUSD offers several off-site training opportunities. Ask district RJ staff for a current list of training offerings to plan your attendance.

## COACH USING THE MODEL, MENTOR, TRANSFER PROCESS

The RP Facilitator can support teachers in circle-keeping and restorative conversations using the Model, Mentor, Transfer (MMT) process. This is a process that involves a coach, usually the RP Facilitator, partnering closely with a new practitioner. The coach uses an observation tool to promote a processing dialogue regarding circle-keeping behaviors and language.

**This process has three stages:**



## INTRODUCING THE MODEL, MENTOR, TRANSFER (MMT) PROCESS TO YOUR STAFF

1. **Schedule** a meeting for teachers who have been trained in RJ for the Classroom.
2. **Present** the MMT framework, as described in this guide.
3. Ask for one volunteer to **practice keeping a circle** for your staff team.
4. **Explain** that the RJ Coordinator will use the MMT process to provide feedback to the volunteer facilitator.
5. Have the volunteer **keep a check-in circle** with their colleagues for about 20 minutes on an interesting topic. The topic will ideally generate differing viewpoints and lively discussion, using their facilitation skills.
6. **Call**, "Time" after 20 minutes, and have the mentor and volunteer **assess** the circle using the assessment tool.
7. Have your team **reflect** on the process:
  - What do they like about the MMT process?
  - How do they feel about being mentored?
  - How would they feel about mentoring a colleague?



## SUGGESTED TOOL

The MMT processing tool may be used by the coach and/or mentee to observe circle-keeper behavior and language. This process can be gradual where the mentee initially co-facilitates parts of the circle process agenda, gradually moving to facilitating the entire circle process on his own. This tool can be used in sections or all at once. It is designed for anyone who is keeping circle or who wants to improve their circle process.

## ENGAGING THE MMT PROCESS, STEP BY STEP

1. **Schedule** a time to meet with each teacher (mentee), and orient them to the circle process, using the following roles of a circle keeper:
  - The circle keeper is not responsible for “fixing” or “managing” anything.
  - The circle keeper is a servant of the circle. The circle keeper does not run the circle, but empowers the circle to run itself.
  - The circle keeper is responsible for creating and holding a safe space, the keeper models the art of listening and asking well formulated prompting questions.
2. **Invite** the mentee to observe you holding an RJ Circle.
3. **Give** the mentee a copy of the observation tool which appears on page 22, and ask them to take notes, focusing on one aspect of the circle.
4. **Establish** a time to debrief the circle and provide feedback.
5. **Schedule** a time for the mentee to facilitate a circle, while the RJ Coordinator observes and fills out the observation tool.
6. **Set a time** for the RP Facilitator to provide feedback and identify strategies to build circle-keeping skills.

# OBSERVATION TOOL

Date:

Circle Type: Tier I II III

Circle Keeper(s):

Grade Level: TK K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Mentor:

Mentee:

Select a focus: **THE CIRCLE-KEEPER...**

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has adequately prepared.    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engages as a circle participant while holding the space. | <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses and redirects harmful or problematic behaviors in circle. | <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses racial and gender inequities that arise in circle. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creates a safe space.       | <input type="checkbox"/> Shares power and responsibilities in the circle.         | <input type="checkbox"/> Addresses the needs of circle participants.                         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creates an inclusive space. |   |  |   |

Describe 3 examples of the selected focus area:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

SEE



What did you see from the circle keeper?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

What did you see from the on-task students?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

HEAR



What did you see from the off-task student(s)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

What did you hear from the circle keeper?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

What did you hear from the on-task students?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions

What did you hear from the off-task student(s)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions



# STEP 7

## Support Teachers through Ongoing PD

Restorative practices requires facilitation skills—listening, empathy, validating, mirroring—all tools that are not taught in every teacher-credentialing programs. Creating a restorative school culture will require un-learning as well as new learning for your staff. Build the following systems of support to decrease teachers’ barriers to engage, participate, and explore.

### SET UP IN CIRCLE.

Ask all teachers to consider how to best quickly get the desks or chairs in a circle when needed. It is helpful to practice getting in and out of circle prior to your first circle.

### ESTABLISH SCHOOL-WIDE CLIMATE CIRCLES

Create time for community building, values-creation, and norms-building for the first six-weeks of school in each class and school-wide. Revisit activities midyear to refresh commitment to values and practice.

Some teachers may be able to set up a physical conflict resolution space or a peace table in the classroom where students can resolve problems on their own using a “talk it out” or circle model.

### TRAINING CALENDAR

Build out an RJ training calendar for the school year. See the sample RJ training calendar below.

*Sample Staff PD Calendar*

<b>AUGUST</b> School Year Launch Staff Retreat: a 2-6 hour orientation to RJ Training with the staff.	<b>SEPT</b> Welcome Circle with Teachers Community Building Circles	<b>OCT</b> Holding a Restorative Conversation
<b>NOV</b> Using a Circle to Address a Current Event	<b>DEC</b> Addressing Harm with a Circle	<b>JAN</b> Community Building Circle
<b>FEB</b> Teaching in Circle	<b>MAR</b> Reflecting on Restorative Practices	<b>APRIL</b> What Happens in a Circle of Support and Accountability (COSA)
<b>MAY</b> Celebrating the Year	<b>JUNE</b> Year-end Surveys and Reflection	Hold Community Building circles throughout the year, whenever possible, to send the message that relationships come first!

### PEACEMAKING ROOM

Establish a physical peacemaking space on campus. This is a space you can send students and teachers when a conflict arises or when “cooling-off” is needed, it is largely a comfortable, student-friendly space where dialogue, community-building, collaborative learning, and other proactive activities take place. Ideally youth will co-design the space. Make sure to distinguish this from any on-campus suspension or detention space. It must be voluntary, and feel restorative.

### ADVISORIES

Use advisories to deepen community, teach social-emotional-learning skills, and introduce restorative conflict resolution tools.

Even the most skilled circle facilitators meet with challenges. The following section lists some common challenges we have faced along with suggested strategies to address them.

## WHEN GOOD CIRCLES GO BAD

If you experience this...	Then try this...
<p>It takes too long for students to get in a circle...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice getting in and out of circle before holding an actual talking circle.</li> <li>• Figure out possible alternate furniture or room arrangements.</li> <li>• Use a timer and build in an incentive for meeting the time expectation.</li> <li>• Have students sit on top of desks in a circle.</li> <li>• Ask the students to come up with suggestions.</li> </ul>
<p>The circle process takes too long...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a “speed check in” circle: Ask for a one- or two-word check-in on how the weekend was or how they are feeling at the moment.</li> <li>• Time spent up front building relationships and coming up with shared values and guidelines will save time in the long run dealing with problem behavior.</li> </ul>
<p>No one is talking, or English may be a second language for my students, and they are hesitant to speak...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use alternative methods of expression such as drawing, freestyle poetry, journaling, movement, activities with no words, etc.</li> <li>• It is ok not to share as long as everyone participates by being present in circle.</li> <li>• Use a partner-share icebreaker or concentric circles so every student can have a chance to talk without speaking to the whole class.</li> <li>• Try to set a fun and community-building tone, gradually getting to more serious content over time.</li> <li>• Build in incentives for participation.</li> <li>• Ask students to brainstorm why they or others aren’t talking (could be written, anonymous, etc.) and some suggestions to encourage it.</li> <li>• Ask questions students are more likely to want to answer like “What is it you want adults to understand about youth?”</li> <li>• Lead the circle in another language.</li> </ul>

If you experience this...

Then try this...

There are specific misbehaviors that derail the circle...

- Revisit the shared guidelines and values you created together.
- Try to determine underlying needs likely being expressed through the misbehavior, and focus on those rather than the behavior itself.
- Engage the students who are misbehaving as circle-keepers, or ask them to think of questions for the circle.
- Have 1:1 restorative conversations at another time with the students who are misbehaving to get to the root of the issue.
- Consult with colleagues for ideas.

One or a few students do all the talking...

- Have students make or bring their own talking pieces that are meaningful to them or their culture, and ask them to speak about it in circle.
- Consider giving the "natural leaders" jobs such as being a circle keeper or making a centerpiece for the circle.
- In private conversations with the quieter students, ask if there is something they need to feel safe in order to participate more fully.

Students make rude or mean facial expressions...

- Clarify unacceptable nonverbal behaviors as not following the shared guidelines.
- Acknowledge kind, respectful nonverbal behaviors.

Students talk about private family issues, abuse, suicide, drugs, or alcohol...

- When you start facilitating circle be very clear as to what types of issues you are mandated to report. Students will appreciate the clarity.
- Be sure to clearly explain the limit of confidentiality is anything related to danger to self or others.
- Consult with your Principal and mental health support staff about how to preplan for this possibility and discuss in an age-appropriate way.
- Follow up with administration, school-based mental health counselor or school nurse immediately, and make a mandated report as necessary. You may even need to personally walk the student to a school mental health professional.

The circle just doesn't seem to go well overall...

- Consult with colleagues for ideas, suggestions, or MMT coaching.
- Observe another colleague's circle, or ask them to observe yours.
- Have a colleague cofacilitate a class circle with you.
- Ask students what they thought about the circle, and how it could be made better, verbally or through a very simple written evaluation.



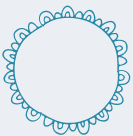
## STEP 8

# Implement Tier II Practices

Tier II circles are restorative alternatives for disciplinary infractions. Deep Tier II work can dramatically alter your school's detention and suspension rates. If newly trained, the coordinator or administrator will need MMT coaching from more experienced district staff or others qualified to implement Tier II interventions.

Tier II practices often involve parents. Consider offering introductory RJ training to family members. It makes an enormous difference in the school culture when youth and families are using RJ Circles to talk through instead of fight through their differences both at home and at school.

- Make sure the RP Facilitator is trained to facilitate Tier II interventions.
- Revise the school discipline manual and use the Universal Referral Form in a way that supports restorative practices.
- Use the district RJ data collection tool to document RJ processes.
- Formalize Restorative Discipline Protocols.
- Offer Community Conferencing as an Alternative to Suspensions.
- Offer Harm Circles as an Alternative to Suspensions.
- Introduce Peer RJ Mediation and peer circle process.



#### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Restorative practices may or may not be appropriate in bullying situations. Please do careful prep to rule out re-traumatizing the target. Consult with behavioral and mental health support as needed. Individualized circles of support for the aggressor and target may be more effective.

## PHASE ONE: ATTEND TO YOUR OWN SELF-CARE



To be a great circle keeper for others, take good care of yourself. Take a moment to check in with YOU.

### BEFORE THE CIRCLE

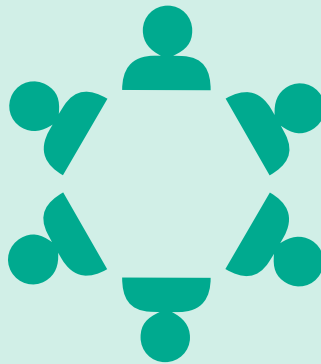
Check in with yourself and notice how you are doing.

- Are you tired, hungry, sleepy?
- Do you have personal emotions about the conflict you are going to facilitate?

**tip** Sleep and eat as well as possible before you go into circle. Take some time to ground yourself and get into a good space. Remember, your feelings will enter the circle with you and impact participants.

### DURING THE CIRCLE

You may find yourself bothered by something someone else says about a person or issue. Or, you may recognize that how you are feeling is negatively impacting what you are thinking or what you want to say or do next.



**tip** Breathe deeply, and invite circle participants to breathe with you as well.. Remember, the circle is not about YOU and you are not alone. Circle is about US as a community. Think about what you can do or say to keep everyone in the circle together.

### AFTER THE CIRCLE

At times, you may feel energized from joy and pride in doing your job well. Other times, you may feel tired, drained, or have a heavy heart.

**tip** Whatever the feelings, it is most important that you are nonjudgmentally aware of your emotions. Take a moment to figure out what you need to come back into balance. Make sure to follow through with the self-care needed.



## PHASE TWO: CONTACT ALL PARTIES INVOLVED



Contact the central parties of the conflict or harm individually. This step can be done by phone or in person. Choose the approach that is most accessible and quick acting.

### INVITE

Explain the opportunity for circle process, and invite participants to consider choosing this option.

**why?** The ability to choose how to address a personal harm or conflict is empowering and educational. Whatever choice is made, the participants are more likely to take the process seriously and to honor the agreed upon plan if they have made an informed choice about participation.

### SUPPORT

With each participant, determine who needs to be present so that all people feel supported. Common examples of supporters include family members, friends, and community members. Clarify if there are others who have been impacted by harm who should also be present.

Create a list and obtain contact information for each person. Repeat the invitation step above for each new participant.

### SCHEDULE

Set a date, time, and location to meet with each party, their respective supporters, and others impacted. This will result in multiple small-group sessions to prepare participants for the larger circle.





## PHASE THREE: PREP MEETINGS

Effective prep is crucial to successful conflict circles. Hold a separate prep session with each party and their respective supporters. Ideally, your prep will take place using a community-building circle format. This will begin to acclimate the parties to the process while allowing you to start the all-important process of trust and relationship building. While prep by phone is possible, it is not recommended—do so only if absolutely necessary.

**1. EXPLAIN THE CIRCLE PURPOSE AND PROCESS. ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THAT ARISE.**

**2. LISTEN TO THE PARTIES' STORIES. IDENTIFY HARM, IMPACT, NEEDS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

KEEP IT SECRET, KEEP IT SAFE	INTERESTS AND NEEDS	KEY QUESTIONS	POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES
Inform the participants that the conversation is confidential. Explain any limit to confidentiality that exists, e.g., you are a mandated reporter.	Listen to the participant's interests, needs, and story to assess circle suitability and safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• What are your thoughts or feelings about the situation?</li> <li>• Who has been impacted and how?</li> <li>• What needs to happen to make things right?</li> <li>• How do you think the situation should be handled?</li> <li>• Who should be involved in the process?</li> <li>• How can I be most supportive to you?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing trust</li> <li>• Building relationship</li> <li>• Processing the situation</li> <li>• Practicing roles</li> <li>• Designing the process</li> <li>• Writing responses or letters</li> </ul>

**3. IF PARTIES ARE NOT READY TO PROCEED, CONTINUE COACHING, TRUST BUILDING, AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.**

**danger!** Sometimes it is dangerous to bring people together to talk. For example, one person may want to physically or emotionally hurt the other person. Or, the other person may not be ready to be honest and real about their actions. Bringing the participants together at this point may actually cause more harm. Instead, it may be necessary to provide other supports until all people are ready to participate safely.



## **Ideas**

**COACH:** The problem may be that the participant needs to talk more. Work with the participant and try new questions.

**TRUSTING YOU:** If you sense that the participant's trust in you may be an obstacle, consider bringing friends, family, or other supporters.

**TRUSTING THE PROCESS:** Sometimes people don't want to move forward due to fear for their safety or fear of an unknown process. If this is the case, invite each participant to hold a talking circle with a group of peers, as a gentle way to experience the process.

## **4. IF PARTIES ARE READY, SET A DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION TO HOLD THE CIRCLE.**

### **YOU NEED A YES TO PROGRESS!**

- Is participation by choice?
- Do all participants feel safe and supported?
- Are all participants accountable for their part?

## PHASE FOUR: DESIGN YOUR CIRCLE



### 1. WELCOME AND OPENING

How will you open the circle? Consider a quote or short reading, a breathing exercise or meditation, music, movement, or similar activity. This unites and grounds everyone, marking the space and time together as special. How will you welcome everyone and share the purpose?

### 2. TALKING PIECE AND CENTERPIECE

What is your talking piece? Can you find one that positively relates to the issue at hand or is otherwise significant? The centerpiece reminds us of our interrelatedness: There are no sides, only one central focus on healing harm. During prep ask participants what special items they would like to use for the talking piece or centerpiece.

### 3. CHECK IN AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

How will you ask participants to introduce themselves (or check in if they already know one another)? Be creative while mindful of safety. Introduction activities may include interactive games, icebreakers, storytelling prompted by thoughtful questions, or a mixture of all of the above. In designing these trust-building activities, bear in mind the issue at hand.

### 4. GUIDELINES AND VALUES

Guidelines remind us of expectations for behavior while in circle in order to create a safe and open space for everyone. Circle participants may generate and adopt them by consensus. Or, if time is a factor and a shorter process is needed, you may suggest guidelines that you ask the group to adopt by group consensus. How will you handle this? At the foundation of circles are values that nurture good relationships with others. Establishing shared values allows us to bring our “best selves” forward. This creates a container strong enough to hold conflict, pain, joy, and other intense emotions. How will you ask participants to identify and adopt shared values in your circle?

### 5. DISCUSSION

Remember, conflict circles share the same four-part structure as community-building circles: (1) Opening, (2) Relationship Building/Values, (3) Discussion/Plans, and (4) Closing. The two main differences are you will do *extensive prep* and you will guide discussion using the *restorative questions as prompts for each round*. If the person harmed is prepared and willing, hand over the talking piece to him or her to begin answering the questions. Don't forget that conflict circles require the group to develop and adopt an action plan and follow up. Consider suspending the talking piece during planning rounds. Throughout, remember to encourage and model sharing from the heart.

### 6. REFLECTION AND CLOSING

How will you acknowledge circle participants for the good work done and give them the opportunity to share reflections and appreciations? Closing activities allow participants to reflect on the circle, offer appreciations if desired, and help them to transition from circle space back to outside life. Activities may include a quote, reading, a breathing exercise, movement, music, or similar activity.

Questions compiled by Kay Pranis

**The following questions can be used to both design and facilitate your circle. These questions are grouped by category. Choose questions based on your participants' needs—you can choose three to five from one section, or one question from each section.**

### COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

- What is a value you bring to this space?
- What value can you bring that would help us work through this conflict successfully?
- When you are at your best, what value defines you?
- What is something you value about...?
- What is a value you hope to share with others in your life?
- Share your name and something about your name.
- What do you appreciate about...?
- What is your passion?
- What touches your heart?
- What gives you hope?
- What are you thankful for today?

### GUIDELINES

- What agreements would you like for our circle to make you feel that you can speak honestly and respectfully?

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

- What did you dream about when you were younger? What do you dream about now?
- What is a goal you have for yourself? How will you celebrate yourself when you accomplish it?
- What is one obstacle that gets in the way of you reaching your goals? What is your plan to overcome this obstacle?
- What are you honestly looking for in your life right now?
- What are you really trying to learn at this point in your life?
- When you are hurting, how do you heal?
- What is your cultural heritage, and what role does it play in your life?
- If you could talk to someone from your family who is no longer alive, who would it be and why?
- What is the best thing that happened to you this week?
- What is the most important lesson in life you have ever learned? What made it so important?
- What do you think other people see as a quality that you need to work on?
- What change would you like to see in your community? What can you do to promote that change?
- What is something you value about your school and why?
- What is your favorite place to go at school and why?
- Share something that you like and something that you do not like about your neighborhood and why.
- If you could change or overhaul two things in our community, what would they be and why?
- What is the most important quality to you in a relationship with someone else? How and why is it important to you?
- Talk about a relationship between people you know that you admire or look up to.
- Who is someone in your life that has helped you to grow? How have you grown? How did they help you to do so?
- Who was a teacher who influenced you in positive ways? In what way did they influence you?
- In what social situation have you felt the least powerful? What was it that caused you to feel that way?
- What person or people know you the best, and how well do you feel they really know you?
- What do others want from you? What do you want from others?
- What do you most appreciate about someone who is important to you in your life?

## PHASE FOUR: DESIGN YOUR CIRCLE, CONTINUED

### STORYTELLING

- A time when you had to let go of control.
- A time when you were outside your comfort zone.
- An experience of letting go of anger or resentment.
- A time in your life when you experienced justice.
- An experience of feeling that you did not belong.
- A time when you were in conflict.
- An experience when someone harmed you. An experience when you harmed someone.
- Something that makes you angry. How do you deal with anger?
- A time that was one of your most difficult challenges. How did you deal with challenges?
- When was the last time you said “yes” and would have liked to say “no”? Why did you say, “Yes”?
- A life experience when you “made lemonade out of lemons.”
- An experience of causing harm to someone and then dealing with it in a way you felt good about.
- A time when you acted on your values even though others were not.
- An experience where you discovered that someone was very different from the negative assumptions you first made about that person.
- An experience of transformation when, out of a crisis or difficulty, you discovered a gift in your life.
- A time when you had to hear something very difficult from someone and afterward were grateful it happened.
- An embarrassing moment that you can laugh at now.

### EXPLORING CONFLICT & HARM

- What happened, and what were you thinking at the time of the incident?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what happened and how?
- What has been the hardest part for you?
- What do you think needs to be done to make things as right as possible?

### TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

- What are three things you did to make the situation worse? What are three things you can do to make the situation better?
- What do you need to clear up with someone else in the circle?
- What is unspoken in the circle that is blocking progress?
- What needs to be done to repair the harm and make sure it doesn't happen again?

### BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS

- How will you know if things are better?
- In your experience what supports healing?
- What change would you like to see in this group? What can you do to promote that change?
- What can be done now to create a healthy community?
- What do you expect to do differently as a result of this circle?
- What do you expect to be different after this circle?
- What will you do to make sure these agreements are followed?

### REFLECTION

- What would you like to leave behind?
- What are you taking from this circle that supports you?
- What have you learned?
- How will these insights help you in the next two weeks?
- What wisdom did you learn from others?
- Finish the sentence, “Today, I am reminded...”
- What do you appreciate about each person in the circle?
- Name one thing about yourself you would like to improve upon.



#### IMPLEMENTATION TIP

Remember that in your role as a mandated reporter, you must inform the students you are in circle with limits to confidentiality. These include disclosures of harm to self or others and physical and sexual abuse.

## PHASE FIVE: MAKE AGREEMENTS



In conflict and harm circles, you will create a plan with realistic agreements to address the needs and responsibilities that surfaced in the circle in order to heal. Agreements are important when there is a conflict that requires next steps or a harm that requires specific actions to repair the harm. The job of the circle keeper is to make sure that the agreements are realistic and will be monitored by participants of the circle. The process of making agreements is collaborative and should be agreed upon by all participants in consensus.

**CONSENSUS** means that all participants of a group support and accept the agreements made, even when the agreements are not the exact desire of each individual. In other words, each individual may not get exactly what was requested, however, they accept the solutions put forth.

### SPECIFIC

Agreements must be SPECIFIC and focus on tangible actions that can be measured.

Pay attention to words that are vague or words that could mean different things to different people. Remember, **it is nice to be NICE**, but what does that really mean? Consider the word "**RESPECT**"—an important value to everyone and yet many people have different ways of showing respect. What specific actions can you think of that show respect?

### TAKE ACTION

Agreements focus on what people should **do now, start doing, or do differently** to repair the harm.

In general, if an agreement uses the word "**NOT**," it is NOT realistic because the agreement is probably talking about what needs to stop happening. When stopping or changing behaviors is the desired outcome of an agreement, the agreement itself needs to outline what a person will DO. *For example: What behaviors are desired to repair the harm and to prevent further harm? Describe in concrete terms.*

## PHASE FIVE: MAKE AGREEMENTS

### AGREEMENT FORMULA

The formula for an effective agreement is **WHO will do WHAT by WHEN.**

- The "WHO" is a specific person in the circle.
- The "WHAT" is a clearly explained action.
- The "WHEN" is a specific date or period of time to mark when the action must be complete.

**WHO...**

**WILL DO WHAT**

**...BY WHEN**


**SIGNATURES OF CONSENSUS**




## PHASE SIX: FOLLOW-UP

### ONGOING SUPPORT

As part of the agreements, you may have a particular ongoing role as the facilitator. For example: to facilitate a mediation or community-building circle, or to update a particular outside party. To offer follow up support, set a time to talk with participants individually to check-in on progress. This can be done by phone or in person. You can also choose to meet with each support group separately or as a whole circle for this step.

### CELEBRATION

**WHEN AGREEMENTS ARE UPHELD**, then it is appropriate to organize a celebration circle and to congratulate the success of the participants. Listen to what your group says about how they want to celebrate.

This is a momentous occasion. Hours were spent on challenging work to bring people together to heal relationships and truly facilitate justice. People cared enough about each other to follow through and uphold agreements. If there were a time to celebrate, it is now.

Express appreciations

Eat good food together

Write thank you letters for each other

Schedule an outing together

Play together

Listen to music together

Take photos together

Sing and dance together

Create small artwork or a mural together

### WHEN AGREEMENTS ARE NOT UPHELD

A full follow-up circle should be organized. Begin the Tier II process in this guide over again, this time with focus on the theme of addressing unmet agreements and what can be done to support the group in moving forward. Reflect on what worked and did not work. The key is being persistent in achieving success and consistent in the process.



## STEP 9

### Implement Tier III

The RP Facilitator will also begin to keep reentry circles for students returning from an absence due to truancy, incarceration, suspension, or expulsion.

#### WELCOME CIRCLES FOR REENTRY AND CIRCLES OF SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Prepare the Space:

- What is the space/environment the Welcome Circle or COSA will be held in? What can you do to make the space feel welcoming and reflect your values and intentions?

Invite Participants:

- Who should come to this meeting?

Motivate Participants:

- How will you invite participants to this meeting so they feel appreciated, valued, open and prepared?
- What will motivate them to attend, and participate with an open heart?

#### **SAMPLE EMAIL TO ANNOUNCE THE PROCESS:**

*On March 3, 2015, we are looking forward to welcoming back Marcus Rodriguez to our school community. In a conversation I had with Marcus last week he reflected that he "feels awful about how I left the school, and hope to make amends." We want to support Marcus as a school community to be successful upon his return. We will hold a Welcome Circle in room 3 to invite him back and support his transition. You are important to Marcus's on-going success here! You hold a significant relationship with him, and he needs to know you are on his side. He is also open to hearing how his choices and absence impacted you. Please come to this meeting with an open heart and an open mind. At this meeting we will determine who will be a part of the COSA that will support Marcus and meet on a regular basis for the rest of this school year.*

## TIER III WELCOME CIRCLE/REENTRY PROTOCOL FOR OUSD STUDENTS

### TIER III OUTCOMES

- Students returning from incarceration or other sustained absence receive a supported transition to their assigned school.
- Students needing individualized support receive circles of support and accountability (COSAs)
- Student and family receive needed supports to enable student to be successful in school.
- A plan is created which clarifies each participant's role and responsibilities in supporting student.
- Student is supported and held accountable to fulfill their plan.

### PRIOR TO REENTRY

#### (FOR STUDENTS RETURNING FROM INCARCERATION)

1. Upon release from Juvenile Hall, Camp Sweeney, or DJJ Supervision, OUSD student will receive school placement. Transition Center staff will send an email to the Site Administrator and in some cases the RJ Coordinator. The email will contain the name of the student, the Oakland Unite Case Manager, and the Probation Officer if one is assigned.
2. A Welcome Circle will be scheduled by the RJ Coordinator or designee at assigned school. All participants will be notified by phone and/or email of Welcome Circle date and time.
3. Participants will include Site Administrator, Student, Parent/Guardian, Facilitator, Probation Officer, Oakland Unite Case Manager, school-based MH counselor, and others as appropriate.
4. Special attention should be given to the family of the child. The Welcome Circle process should be explained to the student and his/her family at the time of release from the JJC, and questions they have should be addressed. The family should be aware of possible attendees.

### WELCOME CIRCLE

#### AT SCHOOL SITE

1. The circle begins and ends on time in a room that has sufficient seating for all participants. If possible, chairs should be arranged in a circle without a table.
2. Drinking water should be provided.
3. A sign-in sheet should be distributed that collects names and contact information including cell phone numbers and email.
4. **OPENING:** The Circle Keeper will open the circle with a welcome followed by a brief explanation of the process to follow and the desired outcomes.
5. **TALKING PIECE:** The facilitator introduces the talking piece and how it will be used to ensure all participants equal opportunity to speak and be heard.
6. **CHECK-IN:** Using the talking piece, the facilitator invites a brief check-in by all participants.
7. **AGREEMENTS:** Participants are asked to identify and agree upon 3–5 guidelines for the circle. *An example of a guideline is "Listen with respect" or "speak with respect."* The circle keeper may identify core guidelines for the circle and ask if anyone has any additional guidelines to share.
8. **STORYTELLING ROUND:** If there is time, you may want to ask a question that allows everyone to tell a story about themselves that is related to the larger conversation. *Examples of storytelling questions:*
  - Name a time you made a mistake.
  - Discuss a time you were given a second chance.
  - Talk about a time you felt supported by a community.



## TIER III WELCOME CIRCLE/REENTRY PROTOCOL FOR OUSD STUDENTS, CONTINUED

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

The majority of the circle time is used to address questions that are framed in a positive manner with the intention of identifying needs and generating a plan for supporting the student.

*Examples of guiding questions:*

- *What are your hopes for this student at this school?*
- *What would success look like for this student here?*
- *What resources are available to help this student achieve success?*
- *Who will be the “go to” person at this school when the student has questions or needs support? Make sure the student has this person’s contact information.*

Time should be allowed for questions or other necessary discussion. The talking piece may be suspended for this conversation if the circle keeper deems it appropriate.

### CREATING A WRITTEN PLAN

The outcome of the circle is a plan for support. The group will identify one participant who will have the role of monitoring the plan. The decision-making process used shall be consensus. The plan should be written down on an Action Plan form and signed by all parties. Copies shall be distributed to all participants.

### PROMPTING QUESTIONS

#### THAT MAY BE HELPFUL TO ASK THE STUDENT

- What do you feel you need to be successful and feel supported?
- What are your triggers? What space do you need when you feel triggered?
- What are your challenges away from school?
- What did you learn from what happened?
- Is there anything in your life that we should be aware of?
- What is new, has changed, or been different?
- Disarming Question: What don’t you like about probation?
- Describe the best day you had at school.
- Name a time you were successful.

### FOLLOW-UP

The team should schedule a follow-up circle prior to closing this meeting. The next circle of support should be 2–4 weeks from the date of the first Welcome Circle.

### CLOSING

The facilitator will close the circle with a summary of the plan and a round of appreciations.

### FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

- The circle format above should be followed again. The agreements from the original circle should be reviewed and updated as needed.
- **FORMAT:** All follow-up meetings should involve a check in, a review of the written plan, and celebration of progress to date followed by an assessment of needs and revisions to plan as needed.
- Special attention should be given to the student and family. The student and family should be encouraged to discuss supports received, how they are working, and any unmet needs.
- **ONGOING SUPPORT:** The facilitator should schedule another meeting 4-6 weeks prior to the conclusion of the meeting.



## STEP 10

### Involve Students

## OUSD'S PEER RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

To succeed in fostering a cultural shift at your school, active student involvement and empowerment in your site's restorative justice initiative is invaluable. OUSD's Peer Restorative Justice Program (PRJP) is an intentional resource designed to help you promote student involvement at your site. The purpose of the district's Peer Restorative Justice Program is to provide a site-based youth facilitator team that builds community and resolves conflict among students and supports OUSD's strategic goals of reducing racially disproportionate discipline, promoting social/emotional learning, and increasing academic outcomes through the development of restorative leaders and a restorative school culture.

The PRJP provides a school community with resources and support to build a youth team capable of facilitating restorative practices. Students are trained to promote and facilitate circles. They are empowered to create safe and respectful spaces to talk through instead of fight through differences.

Through district training resources, your school can offer trainings to develop adult capacity to share power with youth and recognize the opportunities where youth can work in authentic partnership with adult allies to improve the effectiveness of the school and district's restorative justice initiative.

The Peer Restorative Justice Program Guide is an excellent hands-on resource for schools developing a peer restorative justice program. For a PDF of our Peer RJ Manual please visit: <https://sites.google.com/a/ousd.k12.ca.us/ousd-rj-resources/documents>



## STEP 11

# Evaluate, Reflect On, and Refine Your Efforts

To make sure you're on track, review and analyze data quarterly. Compare past and present data on office referrals, physical altercations, suspension rates and incidents, racial disparities in school discipline, standardized test scores, and truancy. Survey teachers, students, and administrators regarding how they feel about their school:

### ASK THESE QUESTIONS RELATED TO...

#### ...YOUR ACTIVITIES, STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES:

- Have students, staff, and leadership been trained in Restorative Justice Practices?
- How many staff members and leadership team members report using Tier II and Tier III strategies?
- What percentage of teachers and staff have been trained in Restorative Justice practices?
- How many of the trained teachers and staff report learning Tier I strategies they can apply to their classes and advisories?
- Do students report that they were treated with respect in their experience of Tier I and Tier II strategies?
- Are trainings inclusive of teacher and support staff?
- Has there been an increase in the number of referrals to support services that serve the whole child?
- Has there been an increase in the number of students reentering the school community feeling welcomed and having a plan to reintegrate into the school community?
- What percentage of students involved in disciplinary action were invited to a process using a restorative approach over a more punitive approach? How does that percentage compare to previous years?

#### ...THE EFFECTS AND RESULTS OF YOUR SHIFT IN CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES:

- Do teachers and students practice speaking to each other in respectful tones and manner?
- How does the percentage of students reporting building skills to address harm and/or conflict compare to previous years? Does staff notice a change in the culture of the school?
- Do students report making intentional choices about how to deal with conflict?
- Do you notice a shift in staff retention rates over time as staff chooses to remain at the school site?
- Have you noticed a reduction in the number of incidents where community members use harmful language as opposed to engaging in healthy conversations?
- Do students and adults feel a greater sense of safety?
- Do students and adults report improved relationships among students and between students and adults?
- Are relationships better between the school, parents, and community?
- Do students, staff, and visitors report that the school environment is a friendly and caring place for student learning?

For pre-existing surveys you can download, please visit <https://sites.google.com/a/ousd.k12.ca.us/ousd-rj-resources/documents>

**BONUS**

## STEP 12

# Build a Restorative Practices Facilitator Work Plan

To make sure you're on track, review and analyze data quarterly. Compare past and present data on office referrals, physical altercations, suspension rates and incidents, racial disparities in school discipline, standardized test scores, and truancy. Survey teachers, students, and administrators regarding how they feel about their school:

1. Now that you have an idea of the focus areas for your school, it is time to build your RJ Coordinator Work Plan. The Key Champions will look to you, the Restorative Practices Facilitator, to support the school as it makes this transformation.
2. Review the sample work plans provided for ideas.
3. Use the following checklist to develop the RJ Coordinator Work Plan.

### RESTORATIVE PRACTICES FACILITATOR WORK PLAN

Year:  School Name:

#### 1. RUN CIRCLES & CONDUCT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITH STAFF

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Introduce all staff to RJ principles.		
Use RJ principles to facilitate staff communication.		
Help incorporate new teachers into school community.		
Collect assessments/evaluation to reflect on the progress and process with the Implementation Team.		
Other		

## 2. SUPPORT THE ROLLOUT OF RJ CIRCLES IN CLASSROOMS

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Identify 5-6 teachers who want to do circles in their classrooms.		
Make sure pilot teachers attend Tier I training.		
Provide ongoing support with RJ resources, templates, and guidance in putting together circles and other RJ processes using the materials from the RJ Implementation Guide and the Supporting Documents website.		
Support each teacher using the Model-Mentor-Transfer process.		
In second semester, consider expanding cohort of teachers doing RJ.		
Other		

## 3. GENERAL WHOLE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Provide RJ perspective as a positive school climate plan is developed for all.		
Connect and align with other whole school initiatives, e.g., PBIS, SEL, AAMA.		
Continue building positive relationships with students, families, staff, and administrators.		
Encourage and alert school community to participate in district wide RJ trainings.		
Intentionally involve all of school community in RJ efforts, when appropriate.		
Provide process for inclusive decision making.		
Evaluate process/plan for harm circles, adding teachers to RJ classroom rollout and peer RJ program to make RJ roll-out plan for second semester.		
Beginning in Jan/Feb, begin to plan for the next school year in collaboration with appropriate committees.		



	Establish next set of goals/indicators drawing from your school assessment.		
	Plan for a summer retreat.		
	Expand RJ circles to additional teachers.		
	Other		

#### 4. RJ COORDINATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Attend weekly meetings with District RJ Staff.		
Attend monthly practitioner network meetings of larger OUSD RJ community.		
Continue to develop professionally—timing will be determined as opportunities arise and in conjunction with Principal and district RJ staff. Schedule should include at least three days of PD.		
Other		

#### 5. DATA COLLECTION

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Enter data of RJ activity at the school site into district RJ database.		
Participate in district-wide RJ evaluation, when necessary.		
Continue fine-tuning implementation of school-wide program with school community and district RJ staff.		
Collaborate with culture and climate survey designers to ensure that there are questions that will measure RJ's impact.		
Other		

## 6. HARM/CONFLICT CIRCLES WITH SCHOOL STAFF & STUDENTS

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Work with assistant principals to identify a few situations to pilot use of RJ harm circles. After facilitating several harm circles, work with the admin team to:		
Develop system for referrals, feedback, and monitoring of harm/conflict circle referrals.		
Create a restorative discipline matrix.		
Train staff on referral system and expectations.		
Facilitate circles.		
Develop training for school community on harm circles.		
Introduce staff and students to restorative practices, and model how issues can be resolved using restorative principles and practices.		
Other		

## 7. ESTABLISH A STUDENT-RUN PEER RJ GROUP

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
Identify students who will become peer RJ leaders.		
Select students who will become Peer RJ leaders in the second semester.		
Train Peer RJ leaders.		
Develop criteria for a referral system.		
Discuss w/ principal protocols on including student RJ leaders in circles.		
Document peer RJ actions and outcomes in RJ Database.		
Support Peer RJ leaders to run circles.		
Other		

## 8. INCORPORATE WELCOME CIRCLES INTO SCHOOL CULTURE

ACTIVITY	TIMING	RESOURCES NEEDED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CHECK OFF THE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT/VITAL TO YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.		
In collaboration with RJ Team develop protocols for use of Welcome Circles.		
Determine who will hold, schedule, and make arrangements for Welcome Circles.		
Collaborate with Coordination of Services Team (COST) on their participation and support of Welcome Circle.		
With COST and others determine services offered for the student and family.		
Provide follow-up on agreements made during Welcome Circle.		
Other		

Now build your work plan! Use the guiding points above to tailor a work plan for your school.

# SAMPLE RJ COORDINATOR WORK PLANS

## HIGH SCHOOL

### SCHOOL INFO:

- Comprehensive high school
- 1700 students, \_\_\_\_\_ teachers
- At least 15 students entering from middle school have strong Peer RJ experience and leadership.
- Few teachers and staff have attended RJ training—most are open, while a few are actively resistant and skeptical.
- Principal acknowledges current discipline system isn't working and became highly open and curious about RJ after attending a training session. Others on admin team "know" what RJ is but haven't attended a training session.
- One to three teachers have been to RJ training.
- A teacher who had a theft in her class last year requested and had an RJ process, which she greatly appreciated. She felt the circles helped build community in her classroom and began this school year doing circles and continues to have monthly circles in her classes and when needed.
- Four CBO staff members who work with the health clinic full time at the school are enthusiastic about RJ and have recently attended training in all three tiers.
- All school SSO's have attended a training session by the district's Behavioral Health Unit that focused on: trauma, vicarious-trauma, adolescent brain development, de-escalation and co-regulation skills, as well as self-care, and a one-hour intro to RJ.
- This is the current principal's third year, and staff turnover is slowing down. Ten or less teachers are new this year, and all admin have returned. Most programming will continue as it was last year, except block scheduling will be put in place.
- Principal will be main contact.

### 1ST SEMESTER

	GOAL/ OUTCOME	TASKS	RESOURCES	TIME FRAME/ DUE DATE
1	Get to know school and let school get to know me.	<b>Gather basic school docs.</b> Create binder/Google file w/school info: staff list, bell schedule, calendar (including proms, spirit week, special events, etc.).	Principal, office staff	Week 1
		<b>Map the school community.</b> Individuals, departments, and other aspects of school community. COST, SEL, PBIS, PROJECT PREVENT, etc.	Staff, students, district staff, parents, District RJ Staff, parent guide	Week 1-3 basics finished—add as year goes
		<b>Listen, learn, share.</b> Find occasion to talk to students and teachers—visit classes, hang out in staff room, go to staff and school events, talk to office staff and SSO's, learn about CBO's and what they do. What special programs, opportunities are available? What are the school traditions, sports, etc.?	District RJ Staff, principal, supporters, students, school map, your imagination	Ongoing

	<b>GOAL/ OUTCOME</b>	<b>TASKS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIME FRAME/ DUE DATE</b>
2	Increase number of staff who have taken RJ Trainings	<b># to recruit</b> Collaborate with principal to determine goal # of staff to attend training.	RJ Team, Principal	Set goal for year (within the first marking period)
		<b>Who to recruit</b> Determine w/principal and RJ Team who to recruit (i.e., all 9th grade teachers, all English teachers, only the enthusiasts, etc.).	Principal	
		<b>Copy of Training Schedule</b> Make sure you have digital copy of training schedule from RJ Specialist that can be shared w/staff.		
3	Develop RJ Team	With principal determine who will be on the <b>team and meeting schedule</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 CBO enthusiasts</li> <li>• 2 trained teachers</li> <li>• 1 teacher doing circles</li> <li>• SSO</li> </ul>	Staff, CBO, parents, students	1st meeting by 4th week of school
		<b>Meet</b> 2X month <b>Recruit</b> members <b>Develop</b> agenda/circle for 1st meeting	District RJ Staff	Complete by 3rd week
4	Hold 1-hour community building PD's monthly for staff, including initial PD to introduce staff to RJ	Develop & hold 1-2 hour <b>introduction</b> to RJ for school community	RJ Team District RJ Staff Principal	Per discussion w/ principal-in first 6 weeks
		Develop 1-hour <b>PD's for staff</b> —to be delivered monthly	District RJ Staff	At least 2 developed by 4th week
5	Develop Peer RJ Program	<b>Contact</b> middle school RJ leaders		By 3rd week of school
		Develop plan for <b>student recruitment</b>	RJ Team	By 5th week of school
		Develop <b>protocols</b> for student participation interventions—types of cases and how students will be released, permission slips	Principal	By 8th week of school
		Using Peer RJ Guide <b>schedule tasks</b> including recruitment and training and implementation	District RJ Staff Peer RJ Guide	Students have cases by mid-November

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### SCHOOL INFO:

- Comprehensive Middle School
- 750 students, 25 teachers
- Three teachers have been doing circles for 6th graders regularly over the past three years. There are an additional three teachers spread across the other two grades who regularly use circles in their classes and are also RJ enthusiasts. Fifty percent of 6th graders regularly participate in circles, and about a third of 7th and 8th graders experience circles monthly.
- School is getting a new principal this year who has had no RJ training but is

moderately open. RJ is coming to the school because the district has received funding for RJ coordinators for all middle schools. AP & TSA are RJ supporters although have not attended training.

- All school SSO's have attended a training session by the district's Behavioral Health Unit that focused on: trauma, vicarious-trauma, adolescent brain development, de-escalation and co-regulation skills, as well as self-care and a one-hour intro to RJ.
- The school's SSO enjoyed the training she received and is interested in learning more

about RJ.

- COST and PBIS are in place, working well and supported by the majority of the school's community. COST & PBIS leaders support RJ.
- There is strong parent support at the school. In spite of the school's racially diverse student population, parent participation is predominately white.
- Although there is quite a bit of Tier 1 activity for the students (not the staff), there is little or no Tier 2 activity. RJ enthusiasts would like to have Tier 3 (Welcome and Reset Circles) for students.

### 1ST SEMESTER

	GOAL/ OUTCOME	TASKS	RESOURCES	TIME FRAME/ DUE DATE
1	Get to know school and let school get to know me.	<b>Gather basic school docs.</b> Create binder/Google file w/school info: staff list, bell schedule, calendar (including proms, spirit week, special events, etc.).	Principal, office staff	Week 1
		<b>Map the school community.</b> Individuals, departments, and other aspects of school community. COST, SEL, PBIS, PROJECT PREVENT, etc.	Staff, students, district staff, parents, District RJ Staff, parent guide	Week 1-3 basics finished—add as year goes
		<b>Listen, learn, share.</b> Find occasion to talk to students and teachers—visit classes, hang out in staff room, go to staff and school events, talk to office staff and SSO's, learn about CBO's and what they do. What special programs, opportunities are available? What are the school traditions, sports, etc?	District RJ Staff, principal, supporters, students, school map, your imagination	Ongoing

	<b>GOAL/ OUTCOME</b>	<b>TASKS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIME FRAME/ DUE DATE</b>
2	Support teachers doing circles and increase their numbers.	<p>Touch bases with teachers doing circles and ask how to best support them. Discuss ways they can support other teachers.</p> <p><b># to recruit</b> Collaborate with principal to determine goal # of staff to attend training.</p> <p><b>Who to recruit</b> Determine w/principal principal and others who to recruit (all 9th grade teachers, all English teachers)</p> <p><b>Copy of Training Schedule</b> Make sure you have digital copy of training schedule from RJ Specialist that can be shared w/staff.</p>	<p>RJ Enthusiasts</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>District RJ Staff</p> <p>Google Drive w/ Circle templates</p> <p>"Circle Forward" by Kay Pranis</p>	First 3 weeks of school—touch base w/all teacher enthusiasts
3	Work to formalize RJ practices in the school	<p>Develop strong relationship w/ principal and other admin.</p> <p>With principal/RJ enthusiasts determine best way to formalize RJ knowledge and enthusiasm at the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RJ Team</li> <li>• Monthly/Quarterly meetings of RJ enthusiasts</li> <li>• Develop climate and culture team w/strong RJ influence</li> </ul>	Teachers, students, CBO, District RJ Staff	Schedule meeting to formalize in first meeting w/ principal- within 1st month of school
4	Hold 1-hour community building PD's monthly for staff, including initial PD to introduce staff to RJ	<p>Develop &amp; hold 1-2 hour <b>introduction</b> to RJ for school community. Include teachers and students who have been involved in circles at the school to share experiences with school community.</p> <p>Develop 1-hour <b>PD's for staff</b>—to be delivered monthly.</p>	<p>RJ Team</p> <p>District RJ Staff</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>District RJ Staff</p>	<p>Per discussion w/ principal-in first 6 weeks</p> <p>At least 2 developed by 4th week</p>

	<b>GOAL/ OUTCOME</b>	<b>TASKS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIME FRAME/ DUE DATE</b>
5	Develop Tier II practices	Encourage staff and CBO's to attend Tier III trainings after they have completed Tier I.	District RJ Staff	Immediately and ongoing
		<p>With principal and other RJ enthusiasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and prioritize list of students needing Tier 3 reset circles.</li> <li>• Determine other staff to participate with eye on those who can also be trained.</li> <li>• Determine if there are students to participate.</li> <li>• Determine best way to support outcomes of Reset circles and best way to provide follow-up, including overlap of COST and Reset circles.</li> </ul>	RJ enthusiasts in school	By 4th week of school
		<p>With principal and others develop protocols and procedures to welcome new students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and support others in leading welcome circles- teachers, students, CBO's using MMT model.</li> </ul>	Video of Welcome Circle on OUSD website	Begin holding reset circles by end of September



# Appendix

# What's Going On At Our School Cards

## TIER I

Administration has attended district RJ Training.	School grounds are inviting and communicate "who" is important in this community.
Administration has allocated time for school to build positive climate and culture.	Teachers have space for discussing issues at the school and feel their ideas are welcome.
School community understands and has had a chance to comment on overall school goals.	Negative, harmful language is addressed when it occurs and not allowed to persist even when seen as joking.
Teachers have a method to welcome the whole student into the classroom e.g. check-in check out circles, regular checking in w/ students and provide referrals or services as needed.	All are greeted when they enter the school and asked if they need help.
Services are available to support the whole child and family and staff know how to direct students to these services.	Efforts have been made to align school initiatives.



<p>The school has a functioning culture and climate team.</p>	<p>There are avenues for the community to have discussions on difficult race, gender, LGBTQ issues.</p>
<p>Teachers are given support to effectively and non-punitively manage their classroom.</p>	<p>There is acknowledgement that race, gender, and sexual orientation inequities of the larger society impact our students' academic and life outcomes.</p>
<p>There is an awareness of where racial/ethnic/cultural disparities are present in the school community and efforts are made to acknowledge and redress them.</p>	<p>We celebrate and embrace the diversity of our school community as well as recognize the gifts each race, ethnicity, and culture brings to us.</p>
<p>Members of community who are marginalized due to race, gender, or sexual orientation inequities feel they have a place to bring and have their issues effectively addressed.</p>	<p>All members of the school community have access to RJ practices and avenues to participate in circles.</p>



## What's Going On At Our School Cards, continued

### TIER II

<p>There is a designated space for students to process conflict and/ or for families to de-escalate in an effective manner.</p>	<p>There is a restorative reflection process available to interrupt unwanted classroom behaviors.</p>
<p>There is a conflict resolution/harm circle process available to students, staff, and families.</p>	<p>Staff, students, and families are aware of the discipline process on campus.</p>
<p>All staff on site are aware of the conflict resolution/harm circle process.</p>	<p>Data is used to inform conflict/harm circle interventions.</p>
<p>Students have time and space to de-escalate without punitive consequences.</p>	<p>All staff, students, and families are aware of the COST (Coordination of Services Team) referral process.</p>
<p>There are at least 3 trained adults designated to address conflict/harm on campus.</p>	<p>All site initiatives are aligned to effectively address conflict/harm in every area of the campus.</p>



Historical harms are acknowledged when appropriate.

Tier II data is reviewed for racial impacts. Disparities are acknowledged and addressed.

Suspension and other discipline data are monitored to determine if racial disparities exist. If so, the RJ process is used to discuss and create methods to address any disparities.



## What's Going On At Our School Cards, continued

### TIER III

<p>The school has resources and/or a protocol in place for integrating students into the community after a period of absence due to incarceration, suspension.</p>	<p>(For high school students) When a student enters the school who has been involuntarily transferred, there is an intentional choice to connect them to programs on campus real-world learning opportunities such as pathways to career, internships, etc.</p>
<p>There is a dedicated person that can arrange, facilitate, and follow up with students after a period of absence due to incarceration, suspension.</p>	<p>There is a space that is conducive to holding welcome circles after a period of absence due to incarceration, suspension, or expulsion.</p>
<p>There is a person that communicates with the OUSD Juvenile Justice Center transition team and DHP office to ensure students with JJ involvement are supported when they return to the school setting.</p>	<p>The school provides adequate and practical time allowances for students, teachers, admin and others to attend a session to welcome back a student after an extended absences, when necessary.</p>
<p>The school has mental health and SEL Tier III resources in place.</p>	<p>There are a group of caring adults who meet with a new/struggling student for a fixed amount of time (i.e. 2-6 months) to ensure they are successful.</p>
<p>The school has direct connections with local CBOs and government agencies that aid in the de-escalation and prevention of suspensions/incarcerations, e.g.. Oakland Unite Case Mgr, Probation, Mentors).</p>	<p>The school has a process to welcome students back to the school after an extended absence (due to illness, travel, juvenile justice involvement, etc.)</p>



The school has dedicated personnel who organizes the process to welcome students back to the school after an extended absence (due to illness, travel, juvenile justice involvement, etc.)

The school has an effective Student Success Team (SST) process.



# RACE & GENDER EQUITY CIRCLE AGENDA TEMPLATES

## CIRCLE 1. EXPLORING OUR FEELINGS ABOUT RACE CIRCLE GUIDING QUESTIONS

**INSTRUCT:** Think about a time when race had an impact on your life. Remember that experience for a moment. Now sit silently for a one more minute or so, eyes closed or gazing downward. Who was involved? Friends, family, or strangers? Was this a public or private event? Notice what's going on inside you. In your body, mind, heart, spirit.

**JOURNAL:** Journal about what you notice—words, phrases, images to reflect the feelings you notice.

### QUESTION ROUNDS

#### FIRST ROUND:

- Tell us about the experience. How do you feel when you remember that experience: How do your mind, body, heart, and spirit feel? If you'd like, share what you've written.
- What is the hardest thing about talking about race?

#### SECOND ROUND:

- Do you have conversations about race at your work or school site, and if so, describe; if not, explain.
- What wisdom about race would you want the people at your site to understand? (students, parents, staff)

#### THIRD ROUND:

- Anything else?

**REFLECTION/CLOSE:** What are you taking away from this conversation about race? What support do you need at your school or work site to have or deepen conversations/Circles about race?

## CIRCLE 2. EXPLORING OUR FEELINGS ABOUT STRAIGHT OR HETEROSEXUAL PRIVILEGE

**INSTRUCT:** Think of a time when gender/sexual orientation had an impact on your life. Remember that experience for a moment. Now sit silently for one more minute, eyes closed or gazing downward. Who was involved? Friends, family, or strangers? Was this a public or private event? Notice what's going on inside you. In your body, mind, heart, spirit.

**JOURNAL:** Journal about what you notice—words, phrases, images to reflect the feelings you notice.

### QUESTION ROUNDS:

#### FIRST ROUND:

- Tell us about the experience. How do you feel when you remember that experience: How do your mind, body, heart, and spirit feel?
- What is the hardest thing about talking about gender and sexual orientation?

#### SECOND ROUND:

- What wisdom about LGBTQI would you want the people at your site to understand? (students, parents, staff)

#### THIRD ROUND:

- Anything else?

**REFLECTION/CLOSE:** What are you taking away from this Circle about straight privilege? What support do you need at your school or work site to have or deepen these conversations/Circles?



## CIRCLE 3: EXPLORING WHITE PRIVILEGE

### FIRST SHARING ROUND

- What does the term “white privilege” mean to you?
- Do you see white privilege in the world around you?
- If so, describe it.

Search online for the article “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” by Peggy McIntosh. Distribute a copy to each participant. Read out loud. Allow a minute or two of silence for participants to digest or reread.

### SECOND ROUND

- Is anything in this piece surprising or compelling to you? If so, tell us what and why.
- What is the most important idea in the piece?
- What wisdom about white privilege would you want the teachers and others at your site to understand?

### THIRD ROUND

- Anything else?

**REFLECTION/CLOSE:** What are you taking away from this Circle about straight privilege? What support do you need at your school or work site to have or deepen these conversations/Circles?

## GLOSSARY

**Structural Racism:** A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead, it has been a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist.

**Institutional Racism.** Institutional racism refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor or put a racial group at a disadvantage. Poignant examples of institutional racism can be found in school disciplinary policies in which students of color are punished at much higher rates than their white counterparts, in the criminal justice system, and within many employment sectors in which day-to-day operations, as well as hiring and firing practices, can significantly disadvantage workers of color.

**Individual Racism.** Individual racism can include face-to-face or covert actions toward a person that intentionally express prejudice, hate, or bias based on race.

*From Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling Structural Racism/Promoting Racial Equity Analysis*  
<http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-Racism-Glossary.pdf>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### ARTICLES & BOOKS

"Racial Bias, Even When We Have Good Intentions"  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/upshot/  
the-measuring-sticks-of-racial-bias-.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/upshot/the-measuring-sticks-of-racial-bias-.html?_r=0)

State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2014  
[http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/  
uploads/2014/03/2014-implicit-bias.pdf](http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-implicit-bias.pdf)

"White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible  
Knapsack", P. McIntosh [http://amptoons.com/  
blog/files/mcintosh.html](http://amptoons.com/blog/files/mcintosh.html)

Heterosexual Privilege (Based on Peggy McIntosh's  
article on White Privilege) [http://www.sap.mit.  
edu/content/pdf/heterosexual\\_privilege.pdf](http://www.sap.mit.edu/content/pdf/heterosexual_privilege.pdf)

Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling  
Structural Racism/Promoting Racial Equity  
Analysis, [http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/  
default/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-  
Racism-Glossary.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-Racism-Glossary.pdf)

*Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School  
Community*, Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay  
Pranis, Living Justice Press (2015).

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age  
of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander (2010)

### VIDEOS

How the School to Prison Pipeline is Ruining  
Lives Before They Start [https://www.  
google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-  
instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=brave+new  
+films+school+to+prison+pipeline](https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=brave+new+films+school+to+prison+pipeline)

Racism is Real (Implicit Bias)  
[https://www.facebook.com/bravenewfilms/  
videos/10152730546222016/](https://www.facebook.com/bravenewfilms/videos/10152730546222016/)

Cracking the Codes: Elena Featherston on Privilege  
[http://blog.world-trust.org/blog/addressing-  
unconscious-bias-tip-3-creating-new-stories](http://blog.world-trust.org/blog/addressing-unconscious-bias-tip-3-creating-new-stories)

*Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial  
Inequality*, <http://crackingthecodes.org/>

### RESEARCH

Studies on increase in suspensions and on racial  
disparities [http://www.ed.gov/news/press-  
releases/new-data-us-department-education-  
highlights-educational-inequities-around-  
teache](http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/new-data-us-department-education-highlights-educational-inequities-around-teache)

US Dept of Ed 2012 study [http://nepc.colorado.  
edu/publication/discipline-policies](http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/discipline-policies)

### IMPLICIT BIAS TEST, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>





To truly  
listen is to  
risk being  
changed  
forever.

—SAKEJ HENDERSON