

Restorative Practices

Evaluation Brief

December 2019



Description of the Program

The Restorative Practices (RP) programs was introduced to the district during the 2017-2018 school year through the implementation at 10 schools. RP was implemented to address disciplinary activities and disparities that were not being effected by previously implemented interventions. RP highlights the importance of relationships. RP was introduced and integrated along with PBIS. Over the years, RP has expanded to 29 schools including 5 alternative schools.

Goal and Research Questions

In order to reflect and improve the effectiveness of Restorative Practices (RP), it is critical to examine the data regarding behavior, fidelity, and survey results. The following questions guided the analysis:

1. To what extent has Restorative Practices been implemented with fidelity?
2. What is the impact of Restorative Practices on school climate and culture?
3. What is the impact of Restorative Practices on behavior data?
4. Is there a relationship between implementation metrics and school outcomes?

Approach

The purpose of this brief is to provide a descriptive overview of RP effectiveness using a Pre/Post methodology over the past 2 school years

Results

1. To what extent has Restorative Practices been implemented with fidelity?

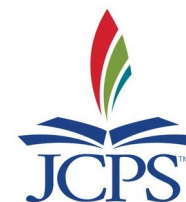
In order to measure RP fidelity, data from the RP Observations was analyzed in the four categories outlined in the observation tool: RP components, climate, relationships, and engagement. A percentage was given to each category based on the number of classrooms that items were observed in.

The average percent of fidelity was 41.39%. Fidelity ranged from 22% to 80%. For the purposes of the evaluation, a median split was conducted to separate higher implementers from lower implementers.

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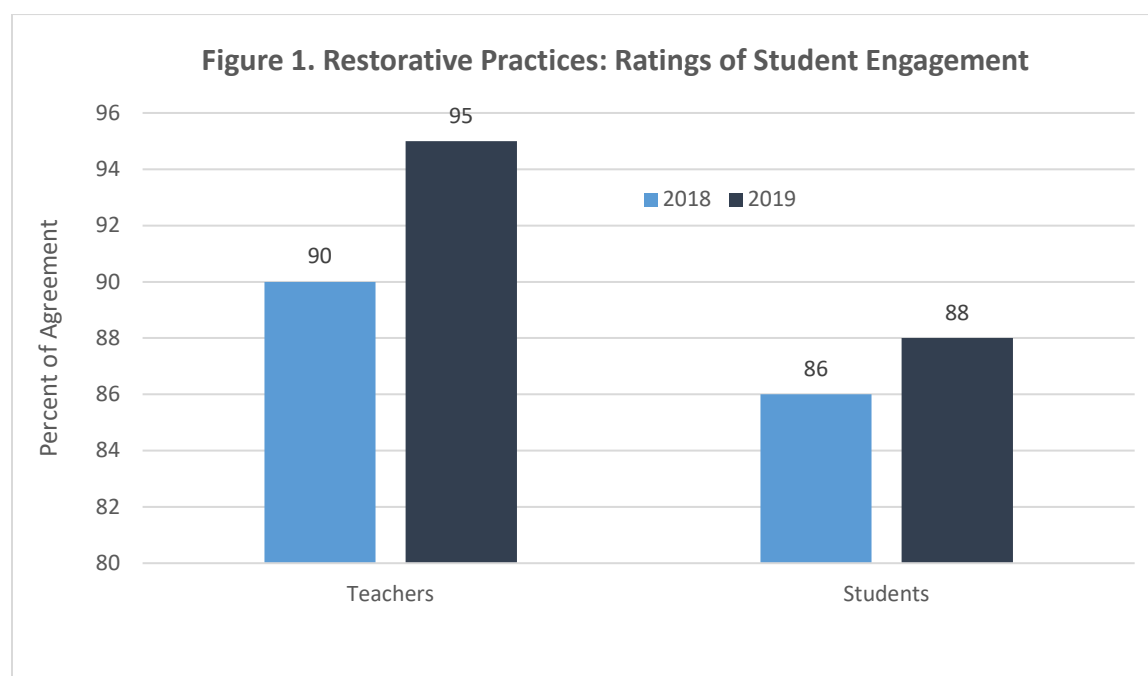
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2. What is the impact of Restorative Practices on school climate and culture?

The Comprehensive School Surveys are collected each spring from students, staff, and parents. The surveys assess aspects of school climate and culture across these stakeholder groups. In order to assess the impact of RP on school climate and culture, the following constructs were created and examined: Climate, Relationships, and Student Engagement.

Examining the Restorative Practice schools, a significant increase was found in the area of teacher ratings of Student Engagement, $t(1, 17) = -3.54, p < .01$, with Restorative Practice schools increasing from 90% to 95% in the items related to Student Engagement. A significant increase was also found in the area of student ratings of Engagement, $t(1, 17) = -2.27, p < .05$. Students at Restorative Practice schools increased from 86% to 88% in items related to Student Engagement. No significant differences were found with climate, relationships or among the parent constructs.



3. What is the impact of Restorative Practices on behavior data?

Data related to suspensions, referrals and in-school suspensions were examined across the 2017-2018 school year and the 2018-2019 school year. In terms of behavior, there were no significant differences in behavior when looking at the Restorative Practices schools across the two cohorts.

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4. Is there a relationship between implementation metrics and school outcomes?

Because of the variation in implementation, levels of implementation were examined against school outcomes. Results showed that high implementing schools had a statistically significant decline in referrals compared to low implementing schools, $t(1,17) = -2.24, p < .05$. Almost 80% of high implementing schools declined in student referrals compared to only 30% in the low implementing schools suggesting that the implementation of Restorative Practice components were essential to the outcomes of the school.

Recommendations

Overall, the data showed there is a significant relationship between implementation of Restorative Practices and behavior referrals. As schools were observed to have higher implementation of RP, school climate and culture as rated by teachers and students improved, and behavior referrals declined. This suggests that higher implementation schools were creating a learning climate that was more conducive to student engagement. Recommendations for improvement include:

1. Work with schools to improve implementation of core Restorative Practice components particular those who were identified as low implementation schools.
2. Conduct a whole-school staff survey to follow-up on components of Restorative Practices that may need additional training and support.
3. Share evaluation findings with key stakeholders to emphasize the importance of supporting quality implementation to reach the desired outcomes.