Restorative Justice Practices & COVID

HELLO!

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I have supported the implementation of restorative practices in schools across Colorado.

Restorative Justice Practices as Tiered Supports

REINTEGRATION

After someone has repaired the harm they have caused or has even just been absent from our community, they should be **reintegrated** or welcomed back. They may need some help.

REPAIR

When we do have conflicts, our goal should be to repair the relationships that have been impacted and the harm that was caused to the best of our ability. The person repairing that harm may need some help.

RELATIONSHIP, RESPECT, & RESPONSIBILITY

If our community has **healthy relationships, mutual respect, & shared responsibility,** conflicts will still happen but not as often and they will be easier to resolve.

Relationships, Respect, & Responsibility

Fostering Community

Challenges Related to COVID

- Health precautions:
  - Physical distancing
  - Masks
  - Mandated quarantines
- Divided communities: remote, hybrid, and in-person
- Elevated stress and anxiety
- Less organic time for community-building
- Increased emphasis on academic losses

Community-Building Practices

Two-way Journaling

Respond to student's responses to check ins, Write letters to the class and encourage student responses

Solicit Feedback

Google forms, Surveys, Hear from students who are not meeting expectations

Icebreakers

Cultivate joy in the classroom and at staff gatherings by using icebreakers that can connect both virtual and in-person community members

Communicating beyond Email

Normalize 1:1 conversations with virtual or phone check-ins, Share a Google voice number, Try home visits

Social Hours

Lunch bunches, Scavenger hunts, Mix and mingle time across cohorts

Notes of Appreciation

Educator to educator, Educator to student, Student to student, Educator to family

Community-Building Circles

In-Person

Talking piece creativity

Utilizing the great outdoors

Small groups to navigate challenges with volume

Remote

Posting questions and order of response

Alternating chat, visual, and outloud prompts

Tech tools

Chat guidelines

Hybrid

Training students

Utilizing 1:1 tech

Small groups to navigate “clunkiness”

Posting circle order

Tech tools

Written responses - chat and sticky notes, Google doc

Circles to Discuss COVID

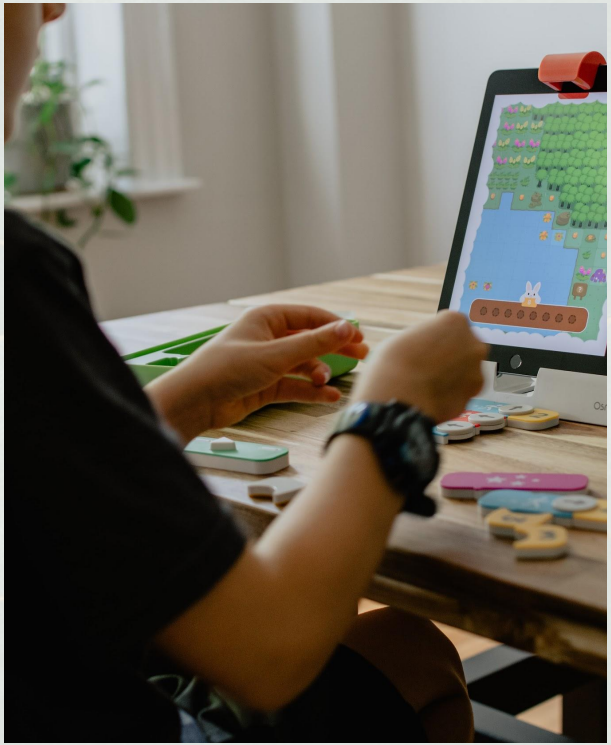
- What's something you've lost this year? What's something you've gained?
- What is something you are more appreciative right now because of COVID?
- What is something you worry will get in the way of following health precautions?
- There are many articles being written about students being "behind" academically because of COVID. What is something you want those authors to know?

Repair & Reintegration

Addressing Behavior & Conflict
and Navigating Transitions

Challenges Related to COVID

- More internalized behaviors:
  - Attendance
  - Disengagement
  - Disconnection
- Less organic time to check in and discuss behavior
- New behaviors that we aren't as practiced in addressing
- Elevated stress and anxiety
- Inconsistent time in school & constant renorming



Addressing Behavior & Conflict

Redirects

Have clearly established expectations, particularly in virtual spaces

Develop transparent responses to online behaviors

Utilize private chats & breakout rooms for individual redirections

Restorative Conversations

Normalize & systematize 1:1 conversations

Allow students the opportunity to prepare for the dialogue

Continue to partner with the student to determine a meaningful way to repair harm

Conferencing & Harm Circles

Assess the benefits of in-person versus virtual

Establish expectations for taking breaks & guidelines for use of technology

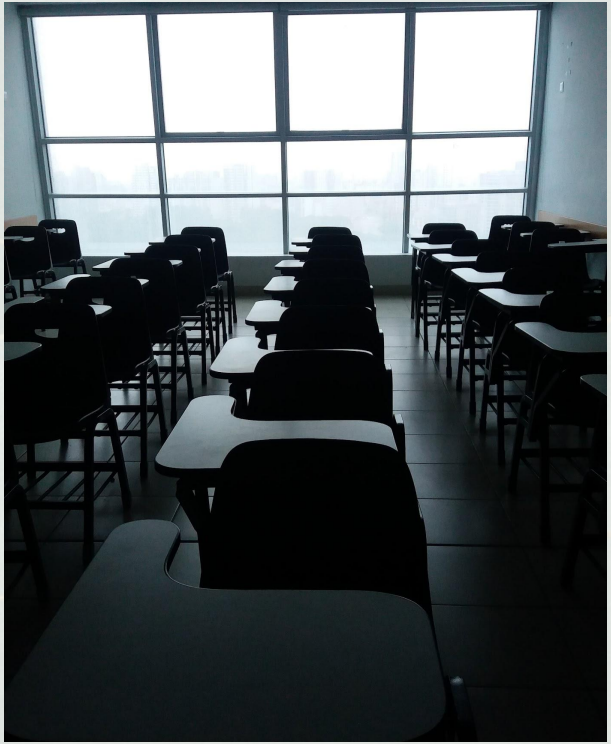
Utilize waiting rooms and breakout rooms as needed

Schedule intentional follow up

Recognize limitations

Circles to Navigate Transitions

- How are you feeling about the transition to (mode of learning)?
- What is one thing you'll miss about our previous mode of learning?
- What is one thing you worry about as we move into this new mode of learning?
- What is one thing you are looking forward to with this new mode of learning?
- Is there anything adults or peers could do to make this transition easier for you?



The New Normal

Post-COVID Classrooms & Schools

Planning for the Relaxation of COVID Restrictions

What positive shifts in mindset (staff, students, & families) have you seen during COVID times? What can I do in my role to sustain those?

What challenges are you anticipating as students return & COVID restrictions are relaxed? How can you support students and staff in navigating those?

What changes in practices (written or unwritten) that we've utilized during COVID do we want to keep in some form?

Examples of Systems & Practices Worth Keeping

- Every student is greeted by an adult every day (symptom screening)
- Very intentional and repeated review of COVID expectations: why they exist, time to practice
- Staggered dismissal
- Recess pockets/stations
- Lunch procedures
- Students who can't be at school for safety reasons and their access to remote learning (but not using that as an excuse)
- Increased family/caregiver communication and engagement
- Support staff regularly and proactively popping into Zoom rooms more than they would actual classrooms, teachers being open to it
- Everyone actually does community building during advisement video calls

Restorative is a way of being.

When we view restorative justice practices through the lens of the five Rs, we can be creative in how we uphold those values in both virtual and in-person yet physically distant spaces.

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