

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Restorative Practices are a form of community building with roots in Indigenous communities and communities of color. It requires a belief that people are profoundly relational, interconnected, and inherently good. We will use restorative strategies to intentionally build community, repair harm if harm is caused, and amplify the impact of instruction in an effort to allow us to live up to our mission, vision, and core values.

We acknowledge the lived experiences of all students, staff and community members. Therefore, we will use restorative practices and mindsets to build a school culture encompassed in equity and respect.¹

Goals for SY 23-24

1. We will work collaboratively across departments and in partnership with students to address the YPAR Demands.
2. We will create sustainable practices and consistent processes that will guide the district's equity work into the future.
3. We will create consistent methods to support students throughout their educational journey at BCCS, encompassing all ages and developmental levels.
4. We will explore and establish various funding sources for the district's Restorative Practices work.
5. By Spring of 2024, we will establish consistent opportunities for all staff to participate in and lead circles/restorations based on individual skill sets.

¹Brooklyn Center Community Schools adopts the Minnesota Department of Education's [Principles of the Restorative School](#) and [Practices of a Restorative School](#) as the Restorative Practices Framework. From these frameworks, BCCS works daily to strengthen school climate, provide spaces to be in community with each other, and repair harm.

Critical Definitions of BCCS Restorative Work

Restorative Practices: [Restorative practices](#) are the belief that learning is relational and our interconnectedness and inherent value are linked; it is the work of unpacking, revealing, and healing ways of being in school and life.

Restorative Justice...

1. Focuses on the harms and consequent needs of the victims as well as the communities' and the offenders'
2. Addresses the obligations that result from those harms (the obligations of the offenders as well as the communities' and society's)
3. Uses inclusive and collaborative processes
4. Involve those with a legitimate stake in the situation, including victims, offenders, community members and society
5. Seeks to put right the wrongs.²

Social Emotional Learning: A process through which people build awareness and skills in managing emotions, setting goals, establishing relationships and making responsible decisions that supports their success in school and in life.³

Five Competencies of Social Emotional Learning:

1. [Relationship Skills](#)
2. [Self-Awareness](#)
3. [Self-Management](#)
4. [Social Awareness](#)
5. [Responsible Decision-Making](#)

² Zehr, *Little Book of Restorative Justice*, pages 32-33

³ CASEL. (2015). What is Social Emotional Learning?

Circle Routine: Circles are a tool that facilitate multi-directional communication and support an equity of voice. The circle routine is a foundational strategy that must be taught, practiced, and utilized in order to ensure equity of voice, interconnectedness of community members, and establishes a balance of power across the participants. [Click here for BCCS Circle Protocols/Routines.](#)

BCCS Agreements of the Circle:

1. Honor the talking piece
 - a. Every circle should incorporate a talking piece. Typically, this item is chosen by the circle keeper.
 - b. When you have the talking piece, you have the floor. When others have the talking piece, you are listening.
2. Speak and listen with your heart
 - a. Share your truth. Talk about what is true for you, based on your own experiences.
 - b. Being in circle is not about being “right” or sharing a perfect response. When you share, practice using your authentic voice.
 - c. Each participant has the right to pass.
3. Practice Mindfulness
 - a. As a community, make time and space for everyone to share.
 - b. Stay engaged by physically remaining in the circle.
4. Honor the expectations established by the circle keeper.

Restorative Conversation: The [Restorative Conversation Checklist](#) is a guide built to help people be more considerate of lived experiences, identity intersections, and trauma that people carry and how those things impact how two or more individuals talk to one another. The checklist had guides of what to consider before having a conversation, during a conversation, and how to follow up after a conversation has taken place.

Restorative Language: [Restorative language](#) is a set of talking prompts offered as suggestions for initiating a conversation with someone.

Interconnectedness: Interconnectedness the relationship between Restorative Practices, Restorative Justice, and Social Emotional Learning.

