

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

in Park Hill School District



Restorative Practices Are for Everyone

While students are at the heart of every school district, **Restorative Practices** benefit everyone in our school communities. These practices help build and maintain healthy relationships across all levels, from teachers and administrators to staff and parents.

When all members of the school community engage in **Restorative Practices**, we reinforce a culture of respect, accountability and shared responsibility, creating successful futures for all Park Hill students.

The Why: Aligning with Our Vision

Belonging is a key component of our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). To build successful futures for Park Hill students of all backgrounds, it is essential to foster an environment where every student, staff member, and community member feels a sense of belonging.

Restorative Practices are deeply embedded in our district's goals, including our CSIP and Access and Inclusion work.

GOAL
*Build successful
futures for
Park Hill students
of all backgrounds*



CULTURE

Create an environment where all students, staff, and members of the Park Hill Community feel a sense of belonging.

What are Restorative Practices?

Restorative Practices (RP) are a proactive approach to building a positive school community by emphasizing relationships, communication and accountability. RP focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships when conflicts arise and harm occurs. Through open dialogue, students and staff can explore the root causes of behavior, understand the impact of their actions and collaborate on ways to make things right.

During the creation of the 2018-2023 CSIP, the district committed to exploring restorative practices. In the 2023-2028 CSIP, it was fully adopted as a strategy under the culture objective of creating an environment where all students, staff and members of the Park Hill community feel a sense of belonging.

The Restorative Practices Central Blueprint is grounded in affective (emotional) theory and focuses on how emotions influence behavior, relationships, and learning. It outlines three key goals:

1. Maximize Positive Affect: This means creating environments where people experience and express positive emotions like joy, pride, connection, and

belonging. Restorative practices—such as circles, affective statements, and inclusive decision-making—help build strong, supportive relationships that encourage these emotions.

2. Minimize Negative Affect: While negative emotions like anger, shame, or fear are natural, the goal is to reduce unnecessary or harmful experiences of these emotions. Restorative approaches do this by preventing conflict through proactive community-building and by resolving issues in a respectful, non-punitive way when harm occurs.

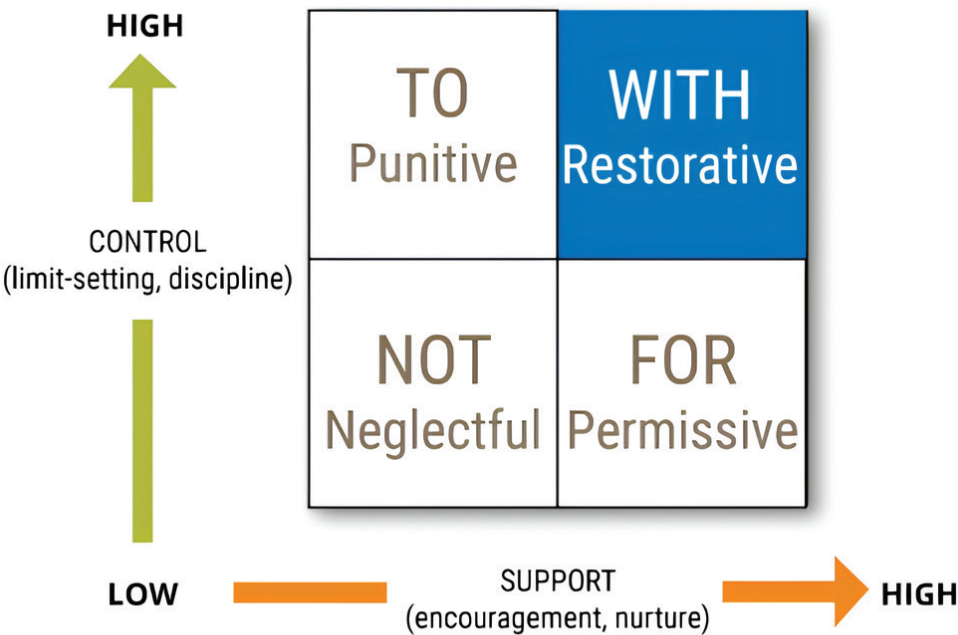
3. Minimize Inhibition of Affect (Encourage Healthy Expression): This means creating safe spaces where people feel free to express their emotions appropriately rather than suppressing them. Restorative practices foster open, honest communication and emotional safety, allowing individuals to share their feelings, needs, and experiences—key to healing and relationship repair.

Together, these goals promote emotional intelligence, strengthen communities, and support the growth of healthy, connected individuals.

Why Restorative Practices?

The Park Hill School District is adopting **Restorative Practices** to create a safer, more inclusive environment where students, staff and community members feel heard, and valued. By encouraging responsibility, empathy, and collaboration, RP helps build strong and inclusive communities, resolve conflicts and strengthens our school culture. RP is built upon the core belief that positive changes are more likely to occur when those in authority or people who influence us work with us instead of doing things to or for us.

The Engagement Window provides a framework for “doing things WITH” rather than “TO/FOR/NOT.” Engaging others with high accountability and high support is considered the restorative “north star” (from Collaborative School Culture).



Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel

Key Restorative Practices Concepts

The Compass of Shame

The Compass of Shame is a tool that illustrates the common ways people react, when their positive emotions have been interrupted—often in ways that can harm relationships or community. It includes four primary responses: withdrawal (pulling away or isolating), attack self (self-criticism or self-harm), avoidance (denial or distraction), and attack others (blaming or aggression). We all experience these types of emotional responses from time-to-time.



Nathanson, 1992

In Restorative Practices, understanding these responses helps staff, students, and other stakeholders recognize when they are occurring and how to respond in a way that restores connection rather than deepening harm. The goal is to guide individuals toward healthy engagement and accountability, using restorative dialogue to address underlying emotions and repair relationships.

Inclusive Process Decision Making

Inclusive Process Decision Making emphasizes involving stakeholders—those affected by a decision or conflict—in the process of finding solutions and making choices. Rather than relying on top-down or authoritative decisions, this approach seeks input, values diverse perspectives, and builds consensus whenever possible. It promotes fairness, transparency, and shared responsibility, helping to strengthen trust and community bonds.

This might look like holding restorative circles where students, staff, or team members collaboratively discuss policies, address concerns, or resolve issues. Inclusive Process Decision Making is not a majority rules approach to decision making, but rather a process that gathers and considers the perspective of those directly impacted by potential decisions, provides explanation and rationale for decision parameters and limitations, and clearly communicates final decisions providing clarity of expectations to stakeholders. By including everyone in the decision-making process, Restorative Practices foster a sense of ownership, respect, and collective accountability.



Key Restorative Practices Concepts

Restorative Questions

The Restorative Questions are a key tool used in Restorative Practices to promote accountability, empathy, and problem-solving. They are designed to guide conversations after conflict or harm and help individuals reflect on their actions and their impact on others. There are two main sets of questions:

For those who caused harm:

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who has been affected by what you did and how?
5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

For those who are affected by harm:

1. What did you think when you realized what had happened?
2. What impact has this had on you and others?
3. What has been the hardest thing for you?
4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

These questions support honest dialogue, encourage responsibility, and help restore relationships by addressing emotional needs and finding meaningful resolutions.



Restorative Practices Continuum *in Park Hill*

These are words and actions our students, staff, and community might hear and work through with our Restorative Practices implementation.



Affective Statements: “I feel” statements are used proactively or responsively to share impact of another person’s behavior on you, provide feedback, set boundaries, and teach empathy. When used proactively, it makes it easier to have the harder conversations.

Affective Questions: Open-ended questions asked of someone that has been harmed or caused harm (intentionally or unintentionally) to facilitate reflection, learning, and repair.

Curbsides (Small Impromptu Conversations): Quick, empathetic conversation to address lower-level incidents or minor negative things (or proactively to acknowledge positive behaviors). Prevents minor things from building up. Can use a few of the Affective Questions to structure the conversation.

Circles: (Proactive or Responsive) are structured group dialogues used to build community (80%) and address conflict or repair harm (20%).

Formal Restorative Conferences: Formal responses to more serious wrong-doing with a large group; those directly involved, others impacted, and supporters come together with a neutral trained facilitator to process.



Park Hill School District

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