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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS- THE IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTATION

A MASTER'S THESIS
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OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

BY
CHAD FELTY

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN SCHOOLS- THE IMPACT AND IMPLEMENTATION

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Abstract

Are restorative practices producing fewer negative outcomes for students and improving relationships within schools? The following literature review and application looked at the effectiveness of restorative practices in schools. The evidence showed that restorative practices are an effective way to decrease the number of negative behavior outcomes for students. Intentional relationship work was defined as a major theme in the effective implementation of restorative practices. The literature described the main themes that were imperative in implementing effective restorative practices in schools. The gathered evidence led to the application which defines a specific way to enhance the restorative practices within a school. Despite the many challenges that exist in implementing a restorative system into a school, the evidence suggests that students and staff alike will greatly benefit when using restorative practices to address negative school behaviors.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Defining Restorative Justice

Early in my career, I was able to see first hand, students who struggled with relationships had trouble remaining in their mainstream schools. I worked in a small day treatment center where we had a strong restorative focus. In this setting, I was able to see a major transformation in our students both relationally and academically. Working in a setting with a strong restorative approach, rather than an exclusionary approach, students were able to get the appropriate support from the staff to navigate their issues without escaping from them. This approach supported a major increase in academic growth and a significant change in the students' mindset concerning school. Restorative interventions as a method to addressing behaviors in schools is important to me because I want all students to feel heard, receive needed support, and find success in school.

The Restorative Justice Consortium (2006) used the following definition for restorative justice that spans across settings, "Restorative Justice works to resolve conflict and repair harm. It encourages those who have caused harm to acknowledge the impact of what they have done and gives an opportunity to make reparation" (as cited in Liebmann, 2007, p. 25).

Over the past 15 years, more and more schools have adopted restorative practices while the processing questions have remained similar in their implementation. McCluskey et al. (2008) listed the following questions, which are imperative in a restorative approach in schools: "What happened? What were you thinking at the time? What have you thought since? Who has been affected by what you did? In what way? What do you think you need to do to make it

right?" (pp. 202-03). These questions are consistent with the questions outlined by White (2012) as well as the restorative questions published by creducation.net (2016).

The four questions by McCluskey et al. (2008) outlined above can be used as a guide to meet the principles of restorative justice laid out by Liebmann's (2007) core concepts in effective restorative justice approaches. The first hallmark of a restorative approach is that victim support and healing must be made a priority. This is a shift in perspective as previous methods have oftentimes focused on identifying, catching, and punishing the offender. These actions do not address the desires of the victim, which is imperative to understand in order to repair the damage caused by an incident.

The second principle of a restorative approach, according to Liebmann (2007), is that offenders take responsibility for their actions. Doling out punishments is not the same as an offender taking responsibility for their actions; in fact, taking responsibility can serve as a starting point to restoring harm.

This leads to the next principle, dialogue to achieve understanding. With this principle, respectful discussion is used to seek answers for the victim and help the offender understand the impact of their actions. For victims, common questions may include: Why me? What happened to my things? Will it happen again? By answering these questions, the offender can begin to understand the greater impact or harm caused to the victim.

Once the impact and harm are identified and understood, the group can move to the next principle, attempting to put right the harm done. This stage can be satisfied with an act as simple as an apology, or it may be connected to fixing or replacing a physical item that may have been damaged. If the larger community was affected, community work may need to take place

such as graffiti removal or park clean-up. These events are typically agreed upon by both the victim and the offender.

Liebmann's (2007) fifth principle is that the offenders must identify how to avoid future offending. This stage supports the offender in connecting with support or seeking help with underlying issues that may have led them to make the choice that negatively affected others. This support should serve as motivation for the offender to be able to do the work necessary for themselves.

The last principle, where the community helps to reintegrate both victim and offender, brings the whole process full circle. Offenders may require additional healing or assistance to help them become successful and positive members of their community. Employment, lodging, positive relationships, and community connections are all vital components of successful reintegration. Similarly, the victim may need support in managing the emotional distress from the incident, which connects directly back to the first principle of victim support (Liebmann, 2007).

This group of researchers suggested implementing restorative interventions in a tiered manner, including modeling ways to express feelings and needs to enhance relationships through emotional connections. This kind of implementation decreases the number of negative feelings among students and staff and oftentimes prevents conflict before it arises.

More specifically, Green et al. (2019) described a two-tiered system in which the first tier focuses on fostering relationships through *Connection Circles* where teachers facilitate discussions to build rapport and increase empathy. They can be used daily in a school setting such as a classroom, meeting spaces, or the lunchroom. Regardless of the particular setting,

participants have the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences in a specific order. Tier one practices can also be implemented on a one-on-one basis where the teacher and student discuss their relationship and outline what each individual can do to improve the relationship (Green et al., 2019).

The second tier that Green et al. (2019) outlined focuses on the time after the conflict has occurred, where individuals meet directly to discuss the harm that has been caused by a specific situation. The researchers describe four different ways that tier two services can be implemented. *Problem Solving Circles* are spaces created where each participant takes an uninterrupted turn to share their thoughts about the incident, the harm caused, and possible reparative actions that may be needed. In *Restorative Agreement Meetings*, both parties separately make written agreements about how they can increase the positive nature of their relationship in order to achieve a specific, desired outcome. *Restorative Mediation* occurs when both parties meet together with a trained facilitator to better understand their role in the situation; they work together on actions to repair the harm, make written agreements about reparations, and brainstorm possible ways to handle the situation in the future without negatively affecting their relationship. Lastly, *Community Group Conferences* involve the individuals who caused harm, those who were harmed, supportive individuals such as family, counselors, or coaches, the affected community members, and a trained facilitator. In this meeting, everyone involved signs an agreement that outlines the actions they need from the individual who caused the harm to be able to move forward from the incident. In each practice, the individual who caused harm hears from the affected individuals and tries to understand the impact of their action. Together, as a group, they explore the root of the problem behavior and

address how to repair the harm while maintaining and restoring the community impact. These actions can be seen as a way to move forward from an incident without removing the offender from the school community (Green et al., 2019).

Key Terms

Restorative circles describe the process of bringing a group of people together in a conflict. Generally speaking, restorative circles include these three parties: those who have acted, those who have been impacted by the actions, and the school community (Matsuda, 2019).

Zero tolerance policies refer to the idea of a prescribed response, usually removal from school, for certain behaviors. The assumption is that if schools have a firm stance on these behaviors, others will not engage in the behavior (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008).

Exclusionary discipline practices refer to suspensions and expulsions from schools. These practices are a behavior modification technique in which students are excluded from the school as a method to address behaviors in school (Anyon et al., 2016; Skiba et al., 2014).

Green et al. (2019) defined a *two-tiered approach* where tier 1 restorative interventions outline the intentional relationship building that occurs before any conflict may arise while tier 2 pertains to the post-conflict interventions that repair harm between parties.

Research Questions

I started my research process by defining what it means to use restorative interventions in schools in order to narrow the focus of my research. I was particularly interested in answering the questions: Is restorative justice in schools effective? Is there data to support the conclusions

reached by the researchers? What are the results of the studies about the effectiveness of using restorative practices in schools? Although I have limited experience using restorative practices in a larger school setting, I have witnessed the positive impact it has made in my work. I was curious if the data from my school was indicative of restorative practices in other schools. Lastly, I wanted to know how schools defined the effective implementation of restorative practices in their schools? In answering these questions I sought to understand best practices when implementing restorative practices in a school setting.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two reviews scholarly and peer-reviewed literature found in EBSCOhost, CLICsearch, Google Scholar, and ERIC through the Bethel University Library. The search parameters included articles that were published after 2010. The key terms used in the search were restorative justice in schools, restorative interventions in schools, suspensions, exclusionary, behavior, and relationships. This chapter reviews literature that relates to the impact of restorative interventions in schools, the impact of exclusionary behavior responses on students, inequities of suspensions, and the importance of positive relationships and positive culture in schools.

Decreasing Suspensions

Gregory et al.(2018) emphasized the core concepts of effective restorative processes in a school setting; the researchers described three underlying elements that must be present in the school. First, there must be the promotion of interpersonal support and connection. Second, there must be a dedication to upholding structure and fair process; the staff in the building must demonstrate that they care and are willing to advocate for the shared expectations of school behavior. Lastly, student voice must be encouraged, present, and honored within the school community.

The Gregory et al. (2018) research-based study was about restorative interventions in schools reducing negative behavior consequences (suspensions and discipline referrals) within the same school year. This study sought to determine if restorative interventions decreased racial disparities in negative behavioral interventions by comparing the responses between

racial groups as opposed to the responses between racial groups who did not receive the restorative interventions.

The researchers in this study hypothesized that restorative interventions only marginally narrowed the disparities in suspension rates between black and white students. The group used the following three questions to guide their research:

Were alternatives to suspensions such as RIs may have associated benefits for students from all racial groups in general without yielding greater associated benefits for Black students in particular? Were alternatives to restorative interventions or suspensions changed or altered in their delivery based on the race of the student and receipt of suspension? What factors are associated with the equitable assignment of suspensions?
(Gregory et al., 2018, p.170)

The sample for the research consisted of 9,039 K-12 students from 193 schools during the 2014-2015 academic year (Gregory et al. 2018). The participants were from various racial backgrounds of 57.7% Latino, 24.9% Black, 11.4% White, 3.6% multi-racial, 1.4% Asian, and .2% Native American; 31.8% were female and 68.2% were male. Thirty-nine percent of the students were English Language Learners, 87.4% qualified for free or reduced lunch and 21% qualified for special education services (Gregory et al. 2018).

This meta-analysis research analyzed the specific demographics of school discipline referrals, out-of-school suspension forms, participation in restorative intervention forms, in-school suspension forms, and behavior contracts. The review of data by groups was compared to the schoolwide percentages to see if restorative interventions were effective in closing the disparity in suspensions and behavior incidents.

Gregory et al. (2018) found that restorative interventions created less negative behavioral responses throughout the school district but only marginally improved the disparity of the disproportionate negative outcomes between racial groups. Black students were 11% more likely than white students to receive out-of-school suspension when using restorative interventions. This number is decreased compared to situations where restorative interventions were not being used and black students were being suspended at a rate of 57% greater than their white peers.

The study did not account for the fidelity in which the restorative interventions were implemented, and did not track if high-quality interventions were used with all students. Restorative interventions require consent, so students who are less likely to talk through an issue before suspension may not have chosen to participate in the study. However, the strength in this study shows that the restorative interventions worked, producing fewer negative outcomes. In order to decrease the racial disparities in the area of negative behavior responses, the focus may need to be supporting prevention while continuing to use restorative interventions.

Gregory et al. (2018) concluded that proactive relational efforts would increase the chance to reduce the racial disparity in suspensions and behavior referrals; in addition, restorative measures would continue to support students in reducing the chances of a second occurrence. The authors also suggested that future research may address the positive impact of proactive relational development for the students such as experiencing academic engagement, reporting the school as a safer place to learn, and having a greater sense of community.

Exclusionary Practices

Schools that have used zero-tolerance policies have experienced a direct correlation with the school-to-prison pipeline (Daly et al., 2016). The Council of State Governments collected data in 2011 which showed that only 2% of students who come into contact with the juvenile justice system had no behavior incidents in school. In fact, students who were subjected to exclusionary discipline practices due to classroom disruption, disobedience, or insubordination were three times as likely to be involved in the juvenile justice system within one year of the incident, as compared to their peers (as cited by Daly et al., 2016). In support of the statement above, Sedlak and McPherson conducted a study in 2010 that found that 61% of students in juvenile detention were excluded from school due to suspension or expulsion the previous year.

The above numbers are alarming, especially considering that the data collected by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014) indicated that black and special education students are being suspended at a much higher rate. In fact, black students are being suspended or excluded from school at a rate that is more than three times their white peers, and special education students are being suspended at a rate that is more than double compared to their non-disabled peers (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2014).

Schools have had to continue to assess their behavior practices as more and more studies point to the ineffectiveness of exclusionary practices. Eden (2019) pointed out the inconsistencies in the system in relation to the response to suspension by stating the following “the utility of suspensions likely stems from their role as a consequence of misbehavior within a

consistent system of rules and consequences” (p. 12). This means that the adults in the home will have different responses to their student’s suspensions, thus creating inconsistencies in understanding and learning from their behaviors (Eden, 2019).

Rosenbaum (2020) examined the effects on students in the United States based on responses to the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent and Adult Health. The study hypothesized that students who were suspended were less likely to achieve educational attainment and more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system in the future, compared to their non-suspended peers. The study defined educational attainment as the attainment of a high school diploma, not including students who may have earned an equivalency degree. Involvement in the criminal justice system was defined as being arrested or convicted for a crime. The study began during the 1995-1996 school year with follow-up surveys five and twelve years later (Rosenbaum, 2020).

The study was comprised of 9,113 students who had not been suspended in the 1995-1996 school year and 480 students who were suspended in the same year. The study matched the 480 suspended students with 1193 non-suspended students with the same pre-suspension self-reported risk behaviors, parent-reported socioeconomic status, and administrator-identified school disciplinary reports.

The researchers found that in 2001, five years after the initial survey was completed, the suspended youth were 8% less likely to have graduated from high school and 2.7 times as likely to have been expelled from school at least once compared to the matched non-suspended students. During the same time frame, the suspended students were 40% more likely to have

been arrested as an adult and 94% more likely to have been arrested as a minor (Rosenbaum 2020).

The outcomes of the surveys in 2008, which was twelve years after the 1995-1996 school year, revealed that the students in the suspended group were 8% less likely to have graduated high school and 24% less likely to have earned a 4-year degree compared to their non-suspended peers. The suspended group of students were 30% more likely to have been arrested at least once, 23 % more likely to have been in prison, and 49% more likely to have been on probation in comparison to their non-suspended peers (Rosenbaum 2020).

Rosenbaum (2020) concluded that the data is consistent with his hypothesis that suspensions make it less likely that students would graduate and more likely that students would become involved with the criminal justice system. These results support schools in their attempts to seek other measures of addressing behaviors in schools.

Data Supporting Restorative Practices

A challenge facing our educational system today is how many of our behavior interventions negatively impact students. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2013), the common practice of exclusionary discipline methods, including out-of-school suspensions (OSS) and expulsion from schools, is proving to be ineffective and inequitable (as cited in Anyon et al., 2016). Anyon et al. (2016) discovered that these exclusionary discipline methods are often implemented with students who are black, eligible for free and reduced lunch, and/or qualify for special education services at a much higher rate.

The inequitable implementation of exclusionary discipline practices has prompted schools to look into alternative ways to handle behaviors. Anyon et al. (2016) conducted

research in a large, urban school district composed of slightly over 90,000 students and 180 schools. The district decided to implement restorative practices because it noticed that certain segments of the population were over-represented in the school's discipline practices. The students participating in restorative practices had fewer discipline referrals and suspensions, but the racial disparity remained the same between black and white students.

The sample size of the study above consisted of 9,921 K-12 students, which comprised 11% of all of the students within the district. The students were identified as individuals who were given at least one office referral during the 2012-2013 school year. These students were represented with the same disproportionality toward Black, Native American, Latino, special education, male, and low-income students (Anyon et al., 2016).

The research was conducted in a quantitative format by reviewing school discipline referrals, out-of-school suspension forms, participation in restorative intervention forms, in-school suspension forms, behavior contracts, expulsion tracking, law enforcement referrals, and tracking of incident type. Students who were given discipline referrals in the first semester had the choice of whether or not they participated in restorative interventions. The group of students who chose to participate in the restorative interventions was then tracked to see if they had discipline referrals again during the second semester. The study also tracked the racial disparities of the referrals to see if the implementation of restorative practices would lessen the racial gap in behavior referrals.

Anyon et al. (2016) found that of the students who participated in restorative interventions in the first semester, only 21 percent had a behavior referral in the second semester during that same academic year. It also demonstrated that for students participating

in the restorative interventions, only seven percent were suspended in the second semester of that school year. Finally, the study found that 72 percent of the students who did not choose to participate in the restorative interventions received office discipline referrals in the second semester.

A strength of the Anyon et al. (2016) study is the sheer numbers to which the researchers had access. In a field that has little published research, a study of this size is beneficial in supporting the implementation of restorative interventions. Another strength of this study is the researcher's ability to track the inequities of the behavioral interventions and how this unfairly impacts specific groups of students. With that knowledge, research can transition from an analytical stage to implementing experimental designs attempting to decrease the disparity. That being said, the study did have limitations as well. First, it lacked random assignments. Given that there was a choice whether or not to participate in the intervention already shows a willingness for change and cooperation. The study also did not account for the effect that relationships among staff and students had on the study (Anyon et al., 2016).

Relationships are the Key

Developing positive relationships is key in building a positive school culture. Restorative interventions play a vital role in nurturing these relationships by focusing on a student's positive contributions to the school community. "Unlike zero-tolerance, which banishes young people from the school, restorative justice seeks to keep students connected to peers and adults, highlighting the ways in which young people belong in their school, regardless of wrongdoing" (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012, as cited in Bruhn, 2020). Restorative interventions allow

students to be viewed as complex individuals and their behavior as a vessel to build and repair relationships not simply as a reason to be excluded from the school community (Bruhn 2020).

In another study conducted by Anyon et al. (2018), researchers identified some of the key components in behavior interventions in schools with low out-of-school suspension rates (rates of less than 3% of the school population) and fewer racial disparities in out-of-school suspensions. The researchers looked for themes that could be introduced to administrators in an effort to create policy reform that would lessen the number of exclusionary practices and reduce racial disparities in behavioral interventions implemented in schools.

In the 2018 study conducted by Anyon et al., of the 198 educators who participated in the study, 71 percent were female and 73 percent were white. Sixty percent of the teacher sample had been teaching in the school they were currently working in for less than five years. The roles or job titles of the participants were 39 percent administration (principals, school leaders), 24 percent teachers, and 23 percent school social workers and school psychologists. The participants were interviewed or partook in a focus group. Initially, interviews were held with the school administrators, more specifically the principals and deans. Focus groups were composed of key school personnel such as social workers, restorative justice coordinators, lead teachers, and the dean of culture. Both interviews and focus groups consisted of the same set of questions, only differing in how they recorded their answers; the focus groups compiled answers on post-it notes while the administrative interviews were answered verbally. The topics addressed were tailored specifically to the various work sites on the topics of hiring practices, discipline policies, staffing structures, prevention, intervention programming, and professional development opportunities.

The results of the Anyon et al. (2018) study showed that the school staff and administration believed that focusing on relationship building with their students was the main reason that their schools were meeting the bar for less than 3% of students being suspended. The two most common themes were building relationships with their students followed by building relationships with their students' families. Some of the other identified themes were providing professional development about how to build effective relationships, making positive contact with families, greeting others by using their names, and promoting morning meetings, advisory periods, and staff visibility.

Anyon et al. (2018) concluded that relationship building is key to experiencing fewer exclusionary discipline measures in schools. Increasing staff knowledge and connection to their students allowed staff to view their behavior in context. In addition, viewing the student behavior with background knowledge allowed staff to use appropriate interventions to best meet the needs of the students and limit the number of exclusionary interventions (Anyon et al., 2018).

In a similar study conducted by Gregory et al. (2014), researchers tested "whether teachers with greater (compared to less) implementation of restorative practices, as reported by teachers and students, tend to have more positive relationships with their students." (p.331). The collaborative group's guiding question was, "Is greater implementation of restorative practices, as perceived by students and teachers, associated with teachers issuing fewer misconduct/defiance discipline referrals to Latino/African American and Asian/White students?" (Gregory et al., 2014, p.331).

In the study by Gregory et al. (2014), a survey was given to 31 teachers during the 2011-2012 school year. Twenty-nine of the teachers completed the survey creating a sample size of 29 teachers whose teaching experience ranged from 3-32 years. The average teaching years of the sample size was 13 years. Almost 75% of the teachers were women; one identified as Puerto Rican and the others identified as white. The total student population of these teachers consisted of 412 students.

The study consisted of surveys that were completed by 29 teachers and their students. Likert scales were used to measure if the teachers were effectively implementing the restorative practices and if the restorative practices were increasing the positive relationships between the students and their teachers. The study was also used to measure the disparity in racial inequities and determine if there would be a reduction in suspensions with greater implementation of restorative practices in the classroom.

The results found by Gregory et al. (2014) showed that greater implementation of restorative practices increased in the positive outlook of the teacher-student relationships as measured by the student perceived teacher respect and teacher use of exclusionary discipline measures. The data showed that restorative practices reduced the number of exclusionary discipline approaches for African American and Latino students who had a range of misconduct referrals from low use of restorative practices (9.13%) to high use of restorative practices at (2.92%). The White and Asian student referrals in the low restorative practice areas were 1.69% compared to the high use areas where discipline referrals were .77%. Despite the areas showing that the relationships were positive and decreased the number of referrals, they did not eradicate the racial discipline gap in the referral patterns.

Lessons in Effective Implementation

Sandwick et al. (2019) conducted a study to better document how restorative justice is implemented in a school setting. The study researched key practices with high reports of restorative justice, noting specific strategies that were implemented and the challenges schools faced in building a schoolwide restorative justice practice to identify common themes among the schools.

Sandwick et al. (2019) met with 109 individuals from five different secondary schools in New York City known to take a restorative justice approach that had limited or decreased suspensions. The group consisted of school staff (32), students (44), parents (23), and school safety agents (10). The school staff and safety agents participated in individual interviews while the parents and students participated in focus groups to document the school's restorative practices and the perceptions of the approaches used. Both focus groups and individual interviews were questioned about the school's responses to conflicts, school safety, and other student issues, noting the specific strengths and challenges of restorative practices within their schools.

After compiling the data, Sandwick et al. (2019) produced several valuable lessons. The first lesson, centering on community building, found tier 1 relationship-building to be crucial in preventing conflict before it arises. School-wide community building is a foundational concept for all schools in order to implement restorative practices because of its relational nature. Restorative justice requires students and staff alike to be trustworthy, sincere, and respectful. Community building circles aided in developing stronger relationships where individuals were able to listen empathetically to the concerns of others. The schools in the study used the

strategy of an advisory period for staff to support students in areas such as social-emotional skills, study skills, current events, course planning, and college preparation. The advisory period was a dedicated, consistent time for the staff and students to develop relationships. The relationships were perceived as a way to de-escalate situations before they occurred. One student reported “Most likely when you’re in a bad mood, a teacher or staff will recognize you and they will ask you what’s going on” (Sandwick et al., 2019, p. 16). Another student commented, “When there’s a problem, teachers immediately know. Maybe they’re magic or something. There hasn’t been a physical argument just yet” (Sandwick et al., 2019, p. 16). This type of de-escalation was due to this intentional relationship development.

In addition to intentional relationship building with students, the Sanwick et al. (2019) study focused on the importance of family engagement in community building. The schools involved in the study reported significant challenges in family engagement; however, despite the challenges, the researchers noted the importance of the effort made by school staff to mitigate barriers. In doing this, families were more likely to engage in events like parent nights, family dinners at school, and parent classes on a variety of topics. The parents in the focus groups recognized that the connection with staff made them feel more welcome in the building.

The second lesson, undoing hierarchies of school and enhancing equity, addressed the challenges for school staff to relinquish the old model of power and authority to give way for a more open, fluid method that everyone plays a role in the conflict (Sandwick et al., 2019). The teacher interviews showed that teachers were concerned they would lose control of their classrooms and their ability to maintain the classroom structure. However, the focus group

feedback suggested that teachers who respect and listen to their students are more likely to see an increase in student cooperation in their classroom.

Sandwick et al. (2019) identified two areas that teachers reported as necessary in changing their mindset from punitive to restorative: creating space for staff to reflect, learn, and grow, as well as modeling a more equitable relationship between school leadership and school staff. The teacher interviews reported the hypocritical nature of expecting the students to engage in the restorative process while being unwilling to do it themselves. In order to have a schoolwide approach to restorative justice, the staff must be willing to abide by the core principles of restorative justice themselves, not just to expect them from the students. Another area of modeling identified in the study was between the school leadership and the school staff. In the same way, the leadership expected the staff to be active listeners and acknowledge their parts in conflicts and they needed to provide space for staff to report concerns and process incidents, especially when feeling frustrated. Space provided for staff to voice their concerns and to be heard, not only modeled positive behavior for the students, but would also increase staff buy-in and create a more equitable place for students, staff, and leadership (Sandwick et al., 2019).

Lesson three was to move beyond the punishment paradigm (Sandwick et al. 2019). The school staff interviews reported that one of the challenges in having a successful schoolwide restorative approach is the perception that restorative practices are too easy on students, allowing them to continue to make the same mistakes. In order to change the school staff's view on punishment, school leadership needed to increase staff participation and communication in restorative practices.

The same interviews also revealed that staff who participated in circles to repair harm with others had an improved view of restorative practices afterward. Similarly, a schoolwide issue viewed restorative practices as letting kids *off the hook* for their behaviors. One school reported that they changed that perception by increasing their communication to all who were involved or affected by an incident. This practice of increased communication decreased the view that nothing was being done about incidents with students. It cleared the air when there was a question about accountability for the incidents that had occurred in the school. This follow-through on communication is necessary when laying the groundwork for schoolwide buy-in to a restorative justice model.

Lesson four was institutionalization via infrastructure and integration. In order to find success in schoolwide restorative justice implementation, schools needed to integrate restorative practices into their current structure and create positions to track the fidelity of the practices (Sandwick et al., 2019). School staff reported that finding time to implement something new on top of their already busy schedules often felt overwhelming. One school staff member said the following when comparing the restorative process and suspension “it (suspension) does not work but it’s quick” (Sandwick et al., 2019, p.20). The study found that if the leadership wanted to integrate a schoolwide restorative program, the school must find explicit ways to demonstrate its value to the staff and students. Two ways leadership could demonstrate their appreciation of the restorative process would be to have designated space and to focus on the follow-through of the initiative. By creating positions to focus on the implementation of restorative justice practices within the schools, the process becomes easier to accept. One of the schools in the study created a Restorative Justice Coordinator position and

had grade-level coordinators who worked in support of this position. All schools in the study had integrated restorative practices into their schedules via weekly meetings to discuss the week's past circles and the week's upcoming circles. The schools normalized circles by implementing the structure into classes such as clubs or advisory.

The fifth lesson was confronting adversity and engaging diversity (Sandwick et al., 2019). Multiple reports from the school staff and students shared the importance of affirming student identities "by providing space for students to explore and honor their backgrounds" (Sandwick et al., 2019, p. 22). The schools in the study met this goal by integrating clubs and curricula that celebrated different identities. For example, the schools provided leadership groups for students to join LGBTQ+ and Black Lives Matter student groups. In addition, it was discovered via school staff interviews that there was a high need for diversity training for staff so that they are better prepared to engage in thought-provoking discussions with their students. School staff suggested training on understanding how systemic power has affected groups and individuals through biased policies. The student reports showed that students tended to view culturally representative staff as trustworthy, collaborative, and supportive. This addressed the importance of hiring staff members who are culturally representative of the student population.

Lesson six, or student leadership in restorative justice is one possible way to create a greater understanding of the purpose of restorative justice in a school system for students (Sandwick et al., 2019). Student leadership provides opportunities for students to connect and support their peers while giving voice to the issues that they, as students, face within their schools and communities. These roles can require students to serve as a mediator or a third-party support person in a peer conflict. The student leadership roles might also look like a

student-led club. The study reported that students viewed the option to start a club or support group within their school as a way that school staff and leadership provide agency to their students.

The results from the Sandwick et al. (2019) study confirmed that restorative justice needs to be implemented schoolwide, and not just for individual concerns. This holistic approach addressed the tier 1 relational supports that preemptively address conflict, builds student and staff connection, and help to shift the school culture.

A limitation of this study is that the case study samples were from a small number of schools that were already actively using a restorative model within their schools. Sandwick et al. (2019) noted the importance of continual evaluation and training for the growth of a restorative justice program in schools. This study is also limited in that all of the data was self-reported by a small number of students, staff, and parents and may not be representative of the entire school-wide community.

CHAPTER III: Application

Introduction

The application I am choosing to implement at my school is to enhance the implementation of tier 1 restorative justice practices within my building. The purpose of this application will be to enhance the current tier I restorative practices at Quora Secondary School by increasing the staff's understanding of student identities. The Anyon et al. (2018) study has shown that when school staff know about the student's life experiences they are more likely to see their behaviors in the context of their life and respond to behaviors more appropriately. I plan to start a schoolwide "Who Am I" project that will be introduced at the beginning of each year as well as anytime a new student starts mid-year. The project will consist of a recorded student presentation and a parent interview, introducing the scholar's hopes for the upcoming school year both inside and outside of school.

Northeast Metro 916 School District's Quora Secondary School is located in Little Canada, MN. Quora is a federal setting IV special education facility, where students are divided into small classes (5-9 students) with a high staff to student ratio and high availability of related service providers. Students in setting IV programs are served under Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and do not have contact with typically developing peers. The school serves 150 7-12th grade students primarily categorized as EBD, ASD, or SLD. The school first introduced restorative justice practices during the 2017-2018 school year with the 2018-2019 school year being the first year with the schoolwide implementation of the two-tiered restorative model. The current tier 1 model includes the following relational building ideas:

- Morning homeroom to check-in and prepare for the day

- Token economy to acknowledge when scholars are engaging in a desired behavior
- Positive verbal praise
- Staff present and greeting scholars by name at busing, during passing time, and during lunch
- Positive parent contact (goal is one time per month)
- Social-emotional learning class with an emphasis on relationship building
- Schoolwide events
 - Clubs
 - Student vs staff sporting activities
 - Eating competitions
 - Home run derby
- Requested breaks

The tier 1 activities are explicit activities intended for staff and students to increase their knowledge of each other and build positive, stronger relationships.

The current tier 2 restorative structure provides students a space to receive support in processing an incident that has occurred. These incidents are processed with staff in a written or verbal format and consist of correcting any physical or relational damage that has occurred. The process includes working through a restorative worksheet to help the scholar take responsibility for their actions, making a plan for what they could do next time they are in a similar situation, and either repairing physical damage or meeting with the individuals who experienced the harm. The students will have the support of their social worker, and a

preferred staff member to manage the incident. There is no time limit put on a scholar to complete the restorative repair, but they must complete it before continuing with their day.

Quora Secondary School uses problem-solving circles in response to every suspension. When a student is suspended from school, the student will engage in a circle upon their return, which is generally attended by the student, parent, administrator, case manager, social worker, restorative justice lead coordinator, and others impacted by the incident. The purpose of this circle is to provide a space to share perspectives, discuss the impact the incident had on the school community, plan for how to navigate a similar situation in the future, and create a restorative plan for how to return to schoolwide programming.

In the school's first full semester of schoolwide implementation, Quora saw the negative impact decrease significantly compared to the first semester of the previous year. There were 555 fewer behavior incident forms, 19 fewer out-of-school suspensions, 17 fewer arrests, and 15 fewer seclusions.

Tier I Enhancements

The first part of this project will consist of students introducing themselves. Although some flexibility is allowed, the presentations must be presented in a format that can be video recorded. The students will receive support from their case manager, classroom aide, and social worker. The lesson plan for this activity can be found Appendix B.

The initial work can be created via google slides or on a poster board. The student worksheet for this activity can be found in appendix C. The purpose of the visual presentation will be to describe the student. The presentation should include pictures, artwork, clip art, and

any other visual representation to enhance the slides or poster. Although the format is flexible, it should include the following information:

Slide 1- Name, grade, and home district

Slide 2- Favorites (food, activities, people, hobbies, subjects in school)

Slide 3- Childhood (Where you were born, describe childhood, things that happened the year you were born)

(<https://247wallst.com/special-report/2019/07/31/most-important-event-the-year-you-were-born-2/2/>

<http://whathappenedinmybirthyear.com/>)

Slide 4- Homelife (Who lives in your home? What are they like? What activities do you do with them?)

Slide 5- School (What schools have you attended? What did you like? What did you not like about those schools?)

Slide 6- Goals (What are your goals for this school year?)

Slide 7- Future (What do you want to be or do after high school?)

Slide 8- Support (How can the staff best support you in meeting your goals, and prepare you to be who you want to be after high school?)

Once the slide show or poster board is created, with support from the student's school team, a video will be created where the student verbally shares the presentation describing themselves to the staff. The student will understand that the information shared in the project will remain confidential and will only be shared with the staff at Quora Secondary School.

In the second half of this project, the student's case manager and social worker will interview an adult currently living with the student. A formal letter will be sent to the students home and can be found in appendix A. The purpose of this interview is to connect with an adult in the home to gain their perspective and understanding of the student. This interview should consist of information relating to stories from the student's childhood, highlighting their strengths and struggles, previous positive and negative experiences with schools, as well as their hopes for their student in the upcoming year. Here are some sample questions that can be used in the creation of the interview:

Question 1: What are your student's strengths, interests, or favorite activities?

Question 2: Tell us about your student's childhood. What were they like when they were younger?

Question 3: What are your student's relationships like at home?

Question 4: Have there been any major changes at home in recent years?

Question 5: What have you appreciated about the previous schools your student attended? For example, how did the schools communicate? Were they sensitive to your family's needs? Did they plan any activities for families that you enjoyed or found helpful?

Question 6: What have previous schools done that you haven't liked? For example, do you feel like the school policies were fair to your student? Should they have offered more academic support? What parts of the programming did not meet your student's needs?

Question 7: What should we know about your student's school history that will help us understand any behaviors we might encounter?

Question 8: What are your goals for your student this year in school?

Question 9: Is there anything in particular that we can do to be supportive to both your family and your student in meeting those goals?

Once this information is collected, it can be added to the video, either by requesting the parent to share the information or by asking a staff member to record the information about the student. Both the student and parent videos should be compiled into one video presentation about the student.

Project Implementation

The case manager, classroom aide, and social worker will be responsible for compiling the videos into a single presentation. Case managers will be responsible for getting each student's guardian to sign the media opt out form so the student can be filmed as a part of this project. This form can be found in appendix D. Once the final product has been created, staff will be required to watch the videos of all of the students from their learning community. This could occur during school meetings, preparation time, or other scheduled times over a two-week time period. The staff will be expected to first watch the videos of all of the students from their assigned classes, followed by videos of other students from their learning communities who they might encounter.

Additional viewings of the videos will be required when specific students are being referred to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team for consideration of tier two and tier three services. Additional viewings may be required by staff participating in student success team meetings if a student is referred for further interventions. The current practice at Quora Secondary School is to read an equity statement about the student that includes age, race, disability category, and a strength to provide a brief background of a student. By implementing

the video review before the meetings, staff will have a more comprehensive view of the student.

This practice will ensure that all members developing student plans will have background knowledge about the student when making student-centered decisions about appropriate interventions. In fact, Anyon et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of a school staff's ability to see behavior in the context of who students are as individuals. This video project is an additional tier 1 intervention that can be used to support staff in understanding the behaviors they are encountering at school.

Training

To ensure fidelity of implementation and consistent utilization of the project, school staff will be provided training before the beginning of the school year. This training will consist of two parts, part one will be training in the specific areas of confidentiality and mandated reporting. The training will be a part of our schoolwide back-to-school training at the beginning of each school year. Our school-based therapist, employed through Canvas Health, and our district's lead social worker will partner together to provide specific training on the importance of confidentiality when dealing with sensitive information. The training will also include the importance of confidentiality in building relationships with students. The same team will conduct training on mandated reporting, including a scenario review in which staff will practice their ability to decide if they should report a situation or not. This training will include instructions on how to inform the students and parents about confidentiality and mandated reporting in relation to this project.

The second part of the staff training will be for staff to complete the “Get To Know Me” project to present to the students. Staff will also partner with their learning community team and social workers to practice asking the questions and responding to answers. The practice will allow staff to familiarize themselves with the questions and possible responses. At the end of this practice school staff will develop their own Get-to-Know-Me presentation. This will be shared with students when the project is presented. The staff’s project will serve as an example of the work but also allow for the beginning stages of relationship development.

After school staff has viewed the projects, staff will complete a self-reflection on the projects; how the assignment went with their students, takeaways from parent/student interviews and learnings for the staff in implementation will be reviewed. The self-reflections will be shared and themes will be reviewed with the MTSS team and Restorative Justice team before next year’s project.

CHAPTER IV: Discussion and Conclusion

Summary of Literature

I reviewed the literature on restorative practices in schools. The two main areas of focus were the impact of restorative justice in schools and the effective implementation of restorative justice in schools. Connected to those two overarching areas, the studies had an abundance of information on restorative interventions producing fewer suspensions and the importance that relationship building plays in restorative work in schools.

After a thorough review of the literature, I found a strong correlation between restorative interventions in schools and the decrease of out-of-school suspensions and or expulsions (Anyon et al., 2016). This same study found that students who participated in restorative interventions in response to a behavior referral, not only decreased the chances of receiving an out-of-school suspension, but also decreased the chances of the same student having an office referral the following semester. The Anyon et al. (2016) results also concluded that students who received an office referral in the fall semester and chose not to engage in restorative interventions were more likely to receive another office referral the following semester, suggesting that the school's non-restorative measures in addressing negative behaviors are ineffective (Anyon et al., 2016). The results indicated that the implementation of restorative interventions continues to show improved or less negative behavior responses and more positive outcomes, and more positive behavior outcomes translate to more minutes in

school learning with peers. The skills being taught through restorative practices must be experienced and practiced with key individuals within the school setting. Many schools have taken on this approach as a measure to decrease the racial disparities in exclusionary methods. The studies have shown that restorative interventions have equity in their results, decreasing exclusionary discipline outcomes to behaviors equally across racial categories. Despite the restorative interventions approach finding success in decreasing the number of suspensions and expulsions, the racial gap in exclusionary practices in schools remains (Anyon et al., 2016; Gregory et al., 2018).

The exclusionary discipline behavior model has a strong correlation with students who are involved with the juvenile justice system (Daly et al., 2016; Skiba et al., 2014). The exclusions from school have had a direct impact on the number of minutes a student is spending in the classroom, resulting in a lack of school engagement and a loss of educational opportunity. Both Brophy (1988) and Greenwood et al. (2002) found that engagement in school and educational opportunities have been two of the most consistent factors when predicting academic success in students (as cited in Skiba et al., 2014).

I found that the studies often broke the restorative practice process in schools into two areas, the first area is relationship-building before any incidents occur. One study showed that the school staff and administration believed that focusing on relationship building with their students was the main reason that the schools they worked in had a low rate (less than three percent) of students being suspended (Anyon et al., 2018). The results of a similar study showed that with greater implementation of restorative practices, the results did indeed increase the positive outlook of the teacher-student relationships as measured by the student perceived

teacher respect and teacher use of exclusionary measures (Gregory et al., 2014). Both of the studies listed above stated that preemptive relationship-building lays the groundwork for pre- and post-conflict restorative interventions in schools (Anyon et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2014).

The second common denominator identified by many studies was the importance of a post-conflict restorative response. This often took place through restorative circles (Green et al., 2019; Sandwick et al., 2019). The restorative circles helped build empathy and created a plan to decrease the chances for incidents in the future (Green et al., 2019). Using circles as a disciplinary approach decreased the number of negative responses to behavior in the future (Sandwick et al., 2019; Gregory et al., 2018).

Lastly, the studies found that the implementation of restorative practices matters. Schools must take a holistic approach when implementing restorative practices in order to maximize the potential for an increased school climate and decrease the number of negative behavior responses (Sandwick et al., 2019). The study continued to demonstrate that appropriate modeling between administration, school staff, and students were viewed as an integral part of the holistic implementation of restorative work in schools.

Limitations of the Research

I limited my research by focusing my attention on the impact restorative justice is having on schools and what components are present in successful restorative justice schools. I could have widened the research by digging into its Indigenous history and its initial implementation in the North American juvenile justice system. Restorative interventions in schools were first introduced in Australia in the early 1990s, so there has been little time to do longitudinal studies on the effects of restorative interventions in schools.

When I began the research on this topic, I was surprised by how difficult it was to find studies on the impact that restorative interventions had in schools. There were plenty of articles on restorative practices in schools, but few studies were conducted on the impact of restorative interventions on school exclusionary practices. I think that maybe the reason this caught me off guard was that I have worked in schools that have had components of restorative practices integrated into their programming since 2005. I was also disconcerted by how little research had been done on the positive effects restorative approaches have had on students.

Implications for Future Research

Although there is research on how restorative interventions increase positive relationships in schools and decrease the number of time students spend outside of the classroom, there is little research on the positive outcomes that restorative justice is having on students. More specifically, are students who attend schools with holistic approaches to implement restorative interventions experiencing academic success at a higher rate? Are graduation, college attendance, or attainment of full-time employment rates after graduation increasing at schools that use restorative practices? Are restorative interventions having a more significant impact on the lives of the students outside of school? Do the students who use restorative practices while in school, continue to use them after graduation as a method to solve a conflict?

Implications for Professional Application

One of the reasons I chose to do my literature research on restorative justice in schools is because of my first-hand experience in witnessing restorative measures make a difference in the schools where I have worked. In contrast, both schools used the traditionally exclusionary

behavior model when I started. So, in both settings, I was able to see the change occur. One of the identified issues with the exclusionary model is the inconsistency with which it is applied and supported. The in-home response to exclusionary practices varies because there is no guidance provided for parents concerning the conversations about understanding behaviors that would be helpful for the students. Keeping students in schools where staff is trained to educate students about their feelings and behaviors will help the students make a different decision the next time they experience a similar feeling or situation. Due to the nature of relationships, all people relate differently to one another. I don't see a way, even with guidance, that the exclusionary model can be implemented in a consistently fair and equitable manner.

In its application, we are seeing that students of color are being suspended at a higher rate than their white peers. This raises the question: why is this happening? Although restorative practices are not solving the racial inequities of responses to behaviors, the studies are demonstrating that restorative practices in schools are decreasing exclusions for all students equally. Because of my experience of working in a therapeutic school, where building relationships was put at the forefront of all aspects of the program, I wanted to see what the research said about the impact of restorative practices on schools and how restorative practices were being implemented.

The research conclusively found that using restorative practices in schools decreased the amounts of behavior referrals and exclusionary responses for students. In addition, the studies shared some common themes, one of them being relationships matter. The schools that took an explicit, school-wide approach to increase positive relationships both on a staff/student and student/student levels reported a more positive school culture. The time spent on relationship

building laid the groundwork for another key aspect of restorative interventions in schools, the implementation of circles. Using the circle model to work through issues gave voice to all parties involved. Engaging in the process with the students gave them the ability to have a voice in getting their needs met, create change in their school, and understand how to make different decisions in the future. Another common theme found in the literature was that for change to occur, the implementation of restorative practices needed to be holistic and modeled for students. Students needed to see that this was a schoolwide approach that set aside power dynamics in order to increase the power of one's voice in all situations. Students were able to experience teachers model restorative approaches in circles by having them own up to actions they could have done differently in various situations. It was also noted that the change needed to include breaking down the power dynamic between the administration and school staff as well. This school-wide approach increases the power of everyone's voice and connects all members of the school to its success. In order for a schoolwide approach to be successful, the research determined that the school's administration had to believe enough in the restorative process that they would dedicate time and positions to solely focus on restorative training, schoolwide implementation, and fidelity checks throughout the school. The studies found that if restorative practices were added to school staff's already busy jobs, it was viewed as an extra task with minimal importance. Creating restorative positions within the school made it easier for teachers to have follow-through with their roles as restorative agents.

I am currently teaching in a smaller setting with a high restorative focus. It was reaffirming to realize that we are already implementing many of the best practices outlined in the research. I am hoping to take an active role in continuing to enhance our tier 1 services by

making sure our scholars' voices are heard throughout school-wide events. Lastly, I think an area of focus at my school will be to help add to our structure to make sure the communication circle gets closed with all parties involved in incidents. The research suggested that when people are not aware of the restorative interventions that are being put in place, they feel as if behaviors or incidents are being ignored. Our school has a solid restorative foundation, and I believe all staff will increase their confidence in this approach if communication about restorative measures becomes more consistent.

Conclusion

The main purpose of my research was to have a greater understanding of the impact that restorative practices are having in schools. My research affirmed some of my thoughts, including the idea that relationships are important and time should be spent fostering them, and as a result exclusionary outcomes would decrease. I did gain a greater understanding of the importance of a schoolwide approach. The research showed the connection between a schoolwide restorative implementation and a positive school climate. Positive school climates are linked to schools with better attendance rates and less staff burnout.

The implementation of restorative practices needs to be explicit and set as a priority in a school. To demonstrate the priority levels, the school administration must allocate time for staff to be trained, to implement the strategies, and to allow feedback from their staff and students. In dedicating time specifically focused on restorative work, staff and students alike will find it easier to participate in the school-wide change. This research will continue to guide my practice and support change in my classroom, school, and hopefully district. As a federal setting four

teacher, the restorative model is the most effective way for my scholars to experience success in a school setting.

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Appendix A



May 29, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians and Caregivers:

As we embark on a new school year, you may be wondering what this new school year will bring, as well as how we will support your student in meeting their goals. This is a perfectly normal concern.

I'd like to share that our number one goal to ensure the success of your student, is that they feel like a valued member of our school community. To do our best at setting this standard in our learning community we would like to team with you to help us understand your hopes for your student. To do this, we would like to set up a phone call, google meet, or an in-person meeting so you can share with us about your child's interests, strengths, and areas of concern. In doing this, our staff will have a great starting point at understanding the best ways to support your student in their development and goal achievement.

I have attached a list of sample questions, so you can have an understanding of what the conversation might look like. You can feel free to add information that you think is important for us to know about your student and your family. You may also choose not to answer any questions that you don't feel comfortable answering. We will use the information you share with us to create a video with your student that will be shared with only our staff to help them develop a more personal relationship with your student.

You can expect an email and or a phone call from your student's social worker or case manager before the start of school to set up a time to review the questions. Thank you for your partnership throughout this upcoming school year. Together we will make this a wonderful year.

In partnership,
Chad Felty
Quora Secondary School

Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District
651-415-5434
cfelty@916schools.org

Question 1: What are your student's strengths, interests, or favorite activities?

Question 2: Tell us about your student's childhood. What were they like when they were younger?

Question 3: What are your student's relationships like at home?

Question 4: Have there been any major changes at home in recent years?

Question 5: What have you appreciated about the previous schools your student attended? For example, how did the schools communicate? Were they sensitive to your family's needs? Did they plan any activities for families that you enjoyed or found helpful?

Question 6: What have previous schools done that you haven't liked? For example, do you feel like the school policies were fair to your student? Should they have offered more academic support? What parts of the programming did not meet your student's needs?

Question 7: What should we know about your student's school history that will help us understand any behaviors we might encounter?

Question 8: What are your goals for your student this year in school?

Question 9: Is there anything in particular that we can do to be supportive to both your family and your student in meeting those goals?

Appendix B
Get To Know Me Lesson Plan

Name: Chad Felty _____ Date: 5/29/2021 Grade/Subject: Secondary SEL _____

Essential Question(s) or BIG IDEAS:

1. What should the staff know about you?
2. What are the positive and negative school experiences you have had?

General Instructional Objective(s) (GIO):

1. Relationship Skills Competency (from the Mn Department of Education SEL Framework)
Relationship Skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.

Specific Learning Outcome(s) (SLO):

1. **SWBAT** create a presentation to share with staff about their interests and struggles.

Academic Language:

1. **Google Slides**- An online application that allows you to create presentations.

Materials Needed:

- Computer
- Poster Board
- Writing utensils (pencils, markers, pens, crayons)
- A device for recording (phone or computer)

Assessment (SLO's listed by number and formal or informal evidence to be examined):

1. I will conduct an informal assessment
 - By walking around the class and checking on progress and asking prompting questions to make sure the students are including any self-identified important information.
2. The students will be assessed on the completion of the assignment. Due to the nature of the assignment, the amount of information the student is comfortable sharing will not be graded.

Anticipatory Set:

I will have the classroom set up in a U-shaped manner, so every desk is facing toward the smartboard. I will start the conversation by sharing that their safety and comfort in our school is our number one goal. To be able to teach effectively, we will need to spend some time getting to know each other. I will continue to share about how sharing information with each other will give us all our best chance at creating an environment that will allow all of us to support one another. I will introduce the

Purpose and Meaning:

Set the purpose for this week's lesson:

1. How can I share information about myself?
 - a. Slides vs a posterboard
 - i. Instructions for using google slides
 - ii. Organizing information on a poster board

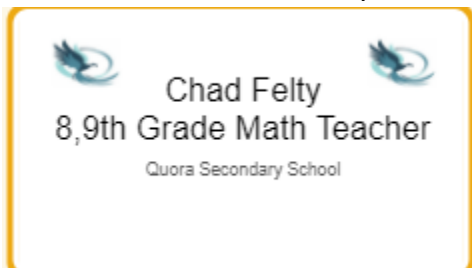
Teacher Instruction/Modeling/ Active Participation:

1. For us to develop a positive relationship, you all should know about me. I have completed the same assignment I am asking you to complete.
2. Share the google slides and talk about who I am. (I will also have created a poster board to show as an example with the same information but I will not walk them through the poster board). Another option could be having a classroom staff create a poster board and share about themselves, demonstrating the assignment with a poster board.
3. Share how I decided what information was important and what information was not important for the class to know.
4. Tell them that they will create a project of their own that will introduce themselves to staff.
5. Note that the project will only be shared with the staff and that the information they decide to share will be held in confidence with the staff.
6. Note that after we are done with the projects they will create a video with staff, possibly their social worker, that can be shared with the staff that they work with, in all of their classes. ***Note*** that staff will best be able to support them if they know who they are and what their interests and struggles are.
7. Lastly, inform the students that we will have informal information share in a circle format with the whole class at the end of the week. The informal share will be for only information they want to share with the class that they will not be presenting all of the information that they identify in this project.

Guided Practice (students working with direction and help):

1. Start the guided practice by asking the class to decide whether they want to create a google slide show or a poster board. ***NOTE*** Inform the students that they will be receiving classroom support. If they have never used slides before that staff will be there to guide them through it.
2. Once everyone has decided we will get the class the materials they need, either a poster board with writing utensils or a computer.
3. Pass out the information sheet with the guided questions on them to help focus their attention on what information to share (See student worksheet below)

4. Create the title page slide in front of the class, step by step, encouraging them to do the same for themselves. First, put your name somewhere at the top of your assignment followed by your grade.
5. Below that put your home district. Encourage them to add an image of the mascot but note that it is not mandatory. Walk them through how to use the snipping tool.



- 6.
7. For the scholars who are doing the assignment via poster board. You can encourage them to search images on their computer that can be printed or they can simply draw images if they would rather. Again, note that the images are not mandatory, that this assignment is about them sharing who they are with the staff.
8. Gradually release the responsibility to the class during the second set of questions. I will start to create the slide for myself, sharing my thought process out loud. I will tell them to label the slide or part of the poster board as FAVORITES. "My favorite food is lobster rolls, I might just write Food- Lobster rolls or I might just find an image and put it on the project".
9. Prompt them to start to identify the answers to some of their favorite things and place them on their project. I will say once they have identified their favorite food, move onto hobbies and continue to work on the project independently.
10. At this point, walk around the room to check in on progress and support any student needing guidance.
11. Make note of the following websites to help out with question/slide 3
<https://247wallst.com/special-report/2019/07/31/most-important-event-the-year-you-were-born-2/2/>
<http://whathappenedinmybirthyear.com/>

Independent Practice

1. Students will continue to work independently. I will continue to walk around and look at the projects, gauging pacing, answering questions, and making connections with all of the students.
2. This project will likely take 3 days to complete.
3. In the following days, the project will continue independently with staff continuing to offer support by prompting, asking questions, and offering guidance.
4. The video portions of the project will be scheduled individually with their social worker over the following week.

Closure:

1. At the end of day 1, ask the students to share what their favorite food is with another student sitting next to them.

Differentiation (*planned supports*):

1. Not knowing what the specific student needs are at this moment is tough to identify specific differentiation. Classroom staff will be available to offer support on an individual basis throughout the project.

Appendix C
Get To Know Me Project

Name: _____

Date: _____

What an exciting opportunity we have to learn together over the next school year! We are going to learn so many new things about life and ourselves. We are going to spend some time identifying some important things about us that we can share through a "Get To Know Me" project. In this project, we will create a slideshow or a poster board that has information about our interests and some of the support we will need to have a great year. We will find creative ways to share the information below and start building positive relationships with one another.

On a google slide show or a poster board, create a presentation to be shared with staff. This information will not be presented to your peers. You will meet with your social worker to create a video that all staff can watch and get to know you. This will help our school staff be able to best support your individual needs. Have fun, be creative, and let the true you shine through!

- 1- Name, grade, and home district
- 2- Favorites (food, activities, people, hobbies, subjects in school)
- 3- Childhood (Where you were born, describe childhood, things that happened the year you were born) * Ask staff for websites for assistance on this.
- 4- Homelife (Who lives in your home? What are they like? What activities do you do with them?)
- 5- School (What schools have you attended? What did you like? What did you not like about those schools?)
- 6- Goals (What are your goals for this school year?)
- 7- Future (What do you want to be or do after high school?)
- 8- Support (How can the staff best support you in meeting your goals, and prepare you to be who you want to be after high school?)

Appendix D



Media Opt-out Form

Student Name: _____

Program: _____

During the school year, staff of Northeast Metro 916, community organizations, and media representatives may want to interview, photograph, or videotape your student for use in publications, television reports, public presentations, and websites. The videos and photographs may include groups of students or individuals, and students' names may be used.

The purpose of this form is to **prevent** Your student from having their image used in these photographs or videos. Your preference is valid for a period of one year from the date hereof. If you wish to change your student's status, the form will be available in the school office.

Please complete and return this form ONLY if you do NOT give permission for your student's image to be used. If we do not receive your form within two weeks of the first day of school (or two weeks from the student's enrollment date if enrolling mid-year), we will assume that you give permission for your student's image to be used.

- I DO NOT** want photographs or videotapes of my student to be used by **Northeast Metro 916**, including but not limited to registration materials, school district websites, yearbooks, graduation videos, school newsletters, and training materials for the school district staff.
- I DO NOT** want photographs or videotapes of my student to be used by **community organizations and media representatives** in publications including but not limited to the 916 Educational Foundation website and newsletters, newsletters published by community organizations, news stories on TV or radio stations, and newspaper articles.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date: _____

Student Signature (if 18 years or more) Date: _____

