

Seattle Public Schools

Restorative Justice



Guiding Questions for this document:

1. What does this mean to us?
2. What is the current state of this program in the district?
3. What growth opportunities do we envision?

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a set of peacemaking practices, also known as restorative practices, that centers relational trust and serves as an alternative to punitive discipline. Incidents when issues arise, like rules being broken, are viewed through the lens of relational supports for healing, accountability, and intervention to help the student, staff, and community assess and repair the harm that has been caused. Restorative Justice practices and programming uses the collective wisdom and values of the school community to solve problems and encourage personal reflection, accountability, and healing for students, adults, and the community as a whole.

What is the current state of our program?

The district hired a Restorative Practices Program Manager starting September 1, 2021. For the 2021-2022 school year, the Coordinated School Health Department is repurposing 2.5 FTE to support the creation of the Restorative Practices Program. The program is in an inception phase. The team is meeting with school leaders, visiting schools, providing support to schools who have experienced large student conflicts, and attending trainings to enhance skill sets and knowledge. The initial goals of the team are to define what restorative practices are and are not, identify pathways for gathering relevant qualitative data, assess the readiness and engagement levels of schools and staff, and evolve and strengthen relationships between the team, the department, schools, and other central office staff and community stakeholders.

Currently many restorative practices are school based. These efforts have varied in approach, model, and implementation. Such varied approaches have led to inconsistent experiences by students within schools, across the district overall, and throughout the communities we serve.

What growth opportunities do we envision?

With the recent staffing additions Seattle Public Schools has taken steps to demonstrate a commitment to incorporating consistent and powerful Restorative Practices/Restorative Justice into our organizational culture across all schools and throughout the central office. This will increase safe and welcoming experiences for students by redefining how we respond to behaviors, while also creating positive school climates.

By creating a Restorative Practices Program and having central office staff dedicated to this work, all schools will be able to learn and implement restorative practices over time. This will also lessen the burden on schools to identify budget and resources for training, consultation, and immediate support when large-scale destabilizing events occur within a school community.

In addition, the City of Seattle awarded five schools a total of \$400,000 to hire staff to support the implementation of Restorative Practices at each school. This partnership will allow individual schools, the district, families, community-based organizations, and the City of Seattle to work in collaboration towards a unified vision for Restorative Practices within Seattle Public Schools.

Budget and Staffing Summary

Adopted Budget*	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 913,797
Staffing FTE	-	-	3.5

Positions Staffed	FTE	FTE	FTE
Restorative Practices Program Manager	-	-	1.0
Student Support Services Consultants	-	-	2.5

*Total does not include the funds schools use from their building budgets on restorative justice.