North East Independent School District

Ed White Middle School Restorative Discipline Evaluation:

Implementation and Impact, 2013/2014

Sixth & Seventh Grade

Marilyn Armour, PhD
Principle Investigator

The University of Texas at Austin

THE INSTITUTE *for* RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
and RESTORATIVE DIALOGUE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue (IRJRD) wishes to acknowledge a number of individuals who helped make the Year 2 evaluation project possible. Ed White Middle School and the North East Independent School District for their support and ongoing commitment to bringing the Year 2 implementation of Restorative Discipline to completion, for their generosity in allowing other interested schools to learn from their experience and for their assistance in obtaining data for this study. The teachers and administrators at Ed White for their time and willingness to share their experiences through individual interviews and focus groups. Stephanie Frogge for conducting weekly teacher interviews. Sarah Moulton for assisting with focus groups and transcription of the weekly teacher interviews and focus groups. Stephanie Frogge, Jelena Todic and Sarah Moulton for entering participant survey responses. We also thank the school district for their financial support of the Restorative Discipline project, including this evaluation.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Executive Summary

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the second year of a three-year plan to implement Restorative Discipline (RD) at Ed White Middle School in the North East Independent School District (San Antonio). Starting in 2012-2013, the school instituted a school-wide restorative justice intervention called Restorative Discipline to redress bullying, high levels of suspensions, and the disproportionate assignment of discipline consequences and placements among minority students. Restorative Discipline is a relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior that fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment. Using a whole school approach, the plan was to introduce RD sequentially starting at the sixth grade. In 2013-2014, the seventh grade was added. Implementation will be completed in 2014-2015 when RD is introduced at the eighth grade level.

Evaluation questions are:

(1) What is the change in sixth and seventh grade student risk behaviors, e.g. suspension, absenteeism, bullying?
(2) What are the changes in the sixth and seventh grade school climate?
(3) What is the experience of sixth and seventh grade teachers who implement Restorative Discipline for learning in their classrooms and school leaders who use Restorative Discipline for student misconduct?

Methodology

The sample for this evaluation was comprised of all sixth and seventh grade teachers, the school leadership, sixth and seventh grade students and parents/caregivers of these students. Information was collected for three purposes. (1) Information was gathered from school records to assess change in students' behaviors. Records included offense frequencies including bullying, suspensions, office referrals, student tardiness, and student performance on state-mandated tests. (2) Information was gathered from climate surveys to assess change in school climate. The surveys were administered three times to students, parents/caregivers and teachers. (3) Information was gathered from a monthly review of materials to assess the experiences of teachers and school leadership in implementing Restorative Discipline. Materials included data from Restorative Discipline records and forms, transcripts from weekly teacher interviews, and transcripts from focus groups.

In compliance with The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board and The Department of Research and Information Technologies for the North East Independent School District, participation in this study was voluntary. Specific steps were taken to ensure that the participants' identities were protected. Survey data were analyzed primarily using descriptive statistics. Data from Restorative Discipline forms, interviews and focus groups were organized or grouped into properties and later developed into contextual themes. The findings are grounded with the use of direct quotes from participants.

Findings

The second year of the Restorative Discipline program continued the trend of lowering exclusionary discipline procedures from the first year and demonstrated progress in other

indicators of school climate change. This growth occurred within the context of a 68% student mobility rate. The results point to a cumulative effect on students and teachers as they gain proficiency in using RD practices, see changes in students and in their relationships with each other, and function in a calm learning environment. The results compare sixth grade (one year of RD in 2012-2013 vs one year of RD in 2013-2014), seventh grade (0 years of RD in 2012-2013 vs 2 years of RD in 2013-2014) and the RD pilot group (1 year of RD in 2012-2013 vs 2 years of RD in 2013-2014).

- In 2013-2014, in-school suspension (ISS) for conduct violations dropped 65% for sixth grade, 47% for seventh grade, and 52% for the RD pilot group. When compared to baseline (2011-2012) there is a 75% decrease in sixth grade ISS lasting 1-3 days.

- The school had small numerical increases in out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for conduct violations in the sixth grade and the RD pilot group. Total suspensions dropped 57% for the sixth grade, 35% for the seventh grade and 50% for the RD pilot group. If the Partial Day I.S.S., which is the classification for misconduct addressed by the Restorative Discipline program is removed, the percentage change in total suspensions falls to 79% percent for the sixth grade. There is also a 48% decrease in Partial Day ISS (RD program) for the RD pilot group between sixth and seventh grades.

- Tardys are down 48% for sixth grade and 38% for the RD pilot group. Although tardys are down 39% for the whole school, the sixth and seventh grades (RD implemented) were able to retain lower rates in April and May/June over the eighth grade (RD not implemented) whose rates increased substantially.

- There were substantial gains in student school performance as measured by the number of students who passed the STAAR reading and math components. African American students, in particular, showed improvement in passing sixth grade reading and seventh grade math. Special Education reading and math scores for sixth grade rose 42% and 50% respectively. Reading and math scores for seventh grade rose 30% and 25% respectively.

- Ed White received special commendation from Texas Education Agency in its Accountability Rating. The school received stars of distinction for student achievement in English, math and social studies. The school also received a star of distinction for its ranking in the top 25% of Texas schools for improved student progress. Indeed, Ed White ranked second in the state for improved student progress when compared to other middle schools with similar student demographics.

- There was 68% mobility for the year in the student population, which likely influenced, and perhaps overwhelmed, the implementation of RD in classrooms and its use for behaviors. The mobility percentage reached 50% by February, which is the same time pressure related to the STAAR exam begins to build, as reported by school staff.

- There are numerous reports of major changes in students' character and behaviors from Year 1 to Year 2 and after RD encounters. Although there is recognition of exceedingly challenging students, some of whom are unresponsive to RD, teachers are less critical of RD

as non-productive and instead request more intensive RD interventions or view the issues as related to a student's lack of maturity. Teachers report less need for RD interventions because their classrooms are calmer and teachers are able to respond quickly to students whose behavior is becoming disruptive.

- Frequency of student offenses doubled for sixth and seventh grades during the second semester. Absences/Truancy and Walked out of Class were the most frequent offenses during that time. Offenses involving students who are Absent/Tardy or Walk out of Class are noteworthy because these students lose instruction time.

- During the 2013-2014 academic year, student and parent/caregiver scores on School Climate Surveys increased for seventh grade but dropped for sixth grade and the RD pilot group. Parent/caregivers and students feel that students have a voice in determining the consequences for their own and other's misconduct. However, there is growing concern about bullying and the safety of students' possessions. Although bullying is not officially a high frequency offense at Ed White, there is a 23% increase for the whole school (n=53 in 2013-2014 vs 43 in 2012-2013), much of which is happening in the sixth grade.

- There is greater teacher comfort and familiarity with RD processes this year but there are fewer RD circles and conferences for behaviors officially facilitated by sixth and seventh grade teachers and sixth grade administrators. Only the seventh grade administrator is consistently conducting circles and conferences for behaviors and did not conduct any the last full month of school. The reason for low usage is unclear. It could reflect less need or perhaps problems with entering them in the data base when they are conducted.

- The core administrative RD facilitator conducted more circles and conferences for behavior issues in sixth and seventh grade than the sixth and seventh grade teachers and administrators. Although the numbers of students involved in RD doubled in 2013-2014, the frequency of circles and conferences conducted by the core administrative RD facilitator were lower than the first year of implementation.

- Ed White added scheduled community building circles for sixth and seventh grade students. All students participated in weekly check-in, check-up and check-out circles. Teachers gained experience facilitating these circles and their routine use helped establish circles as a normative part of the school environment.

- Teachers and administrators demonstrate growing ease in using RD processes in the classroom for community building and managing behavior problems. They are experimenting with ways to respond more effectively to particular students while maintaining and deepening connections with them.

- Students in some classes are using RD processes with each other, asking for circles for themselves and others, and backing up teachers when they need support in managing their classrooms. With some exceptions, they see circles and conferences as viable options to curtail fighting with each other. They become more conscious of how they impact others and tend to follow through on agreements.

- Teachers have moved from seeing RD as a magic bullet to recognizing the need for perseverance and teaching students prosocial behaviors. They depend more on the opportunity to learn about and understand a student in his or her context than to solely manage a student's behavior. There is growing awareness of a shared community endeavor, fewer naysayers, and enthusiasm about the changes they see in students.

- There continue to be difficulties in constructing meaningful accountability plans and a tendency to rely on ISS as a warning or backup to help students take seriously their impact on others. Teachers and administrators modify RD processes for efficiency, which can decrease their long term effectiveness.

Recommendations

- Develop a plan for evaluating fidelity to best practices. Consider the use of a check list so that teachers and administrators are reminded regularly of the behaviors that constitute best practices.

- Develop strategy to increase teacher and administrator skills in generating action plans that are meaningful, address causative elements and/or underscore students' responsibility for reparative measures.

- Engage students in RD peer-facilitated circles. Provide a mechanism for training that is initially led by a teacher or co-facilitated with a teacher who can serve as an advisor. Selected trainees may be leaders among their peers (whether in positive or negative ways) to increase interest, respect and acceptance of peer-facilitated circles and as an opportunity to instill responsibility and pro social leadership skills in these students. Optionally, use eighth-graders as facilitators or a shared or rotational leadership model in which students themselves select the facilitators.

- Improve data collection including timeliness of administering questionnaires and accuracy in reporting teacher and Leadership Response Team (LRT) activity in conducting or participating in RD circles and conferences.

- Schedule monthly continuing teacher education, both as a support to teachers' use of RD in the classroom and to solidify skill development. Part of the education should include opportunities for sharing experiences so that teachers get and give feedback about their practice.

- Use restorative circles for faculty meetings to further embed RD normatively in the school and give teachers direct experience as participants.

- Develop a plan for more extensive use of RD circles and conferences during peak stress months, namely October, February, April and May. Since these months are problematic for the whole school, buy-in to the plan would likely increase if it were generated collectively among teachers, administrators and students.

- Provide training and consultation to LRT members (administrators) on Tier 3 RD responses to students needing intensive intervention. Training should use role plays, debriefing and discussion specific to preparation, dialogue meeting(s), and action plans for Family Group Conferencing and Circles of Support and Accountability. LRT members should also receive consultation on the management of specific cases over time.

- Create programs using RD philosophy and processes to address areas of need, namely bullying and safety of student possessions as well as integration of new and returning students. If students are re-entering the school following an out-of-school disciplinary sanction, there should be re-entry circles and monitored plans to maximize the student's success in coming back into the school community.

- Target teacher cohort groups who express difficulty with accepting and using RD by using circles to listen to their experiences, explore issues and generate ideas with them to increase comfort and competence.

- Involve parents/caregivers and other community members, e.g. neighborhood residents, local businesses, churches, social service organizations, etc., as a support for the use of RD at Ed White. These stakeholders could participate in Tier 2 and Tier 3 circles as community members when appropriate as well as serve on an advisory council specific to embedding RD in the school.

Background

In the spring of 2012, the administration at Edward H. White Middle School decided to implement Restorative Discipline (RD) as a proactive approach to discipline management. The plan was to build RD into the whole school sequentially over a 3-year period for the school's sixth through eighth grade students. This report describes the formative and summative results from the second year (2013-2014) of operation. For the purposes of this report the sixth and seventh grade will be the focus, as RD has not yet been implemented in the 8th grade.

Ed White is an urban school located in San Antonio, Texas. It is part of the North East Independent School District. Out of 927 students enrolled in 2013-2014, 283 were sixth graders and 328 were seventh graders. The student body was 25.46% African American, 55.56% Hispanic, 10.79% White, 4.32% Asian/Pacific Islander, and .32% American Indian. There were 3.56% of students who belonged to two or more racial/ethnic classifications. Approximately 82.4% of students were economically disadvantaged. Students have historically performed well below the state average in passing the STAAR exam and the school is rated as "Improvement Required."

For 2013-2014, the school employed 74 teachers. Of these there were 13 sixth grade teachers and 12 seventh grade teachers for core subjects, e.g. math, science, English, reading and social studies. There were 11 Special Education teachers who taught mixed grades that included sixth and/or seventh graders. The school's teachers were 20% African American, 32.7% Hispanic, 43.2% White, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander and 2.1% two or more races. They were predominantly female (73%). The largest group of teachers had 1-5 years of experience (38%). 36% of teachers had over 11 years experience, which falls below the percentage for highest employment longevity; 46% for the district. Teachers at Ed White are paid more than the state average.

Ed White experienced high mobility in its student body during 2013-2014. Table 1 shows close to 70% of the student population left or entered the school during the year. Some of the students may have left and re-entered as a result of attending an alternative school or for having spent time during part of the year with a relative in a different school system and then returning to Ed White. Regardless of whether moves in and out were temporary or permanent, the high level of mobility suggests that the school was in constant flux and disruption. When compared to other middle schools in North East ISD, Ed White has the highest level of mobility in the district.

Table 1. Student mobility by month, 2013-2014

	Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec		Jan	
	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change
Entrances	115		32		27		20		44	
Exits	27		38		24		22		29	
Cumulative Total Change	137	**15.96**	212	**24.7**	263	**30.65**	305	**35.54**	378	**44.05**

	Feb		March		April		May		Total Change in Student Body
	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	#	% Change	
Entrances	24		39		21		19		341
Exits	34		27		25		19		245
Cumulative Total Change	436	**50.8**	502	**58.5**	548	**63.86**	586	**68.2**	586

The 2012-2013 evaluation of the sixth grade implementation found large decreases in out-of-school (87%) and in-school (29%) suspensions. Other first-year evaluation findings included

- Small increases in scores on parent/caregiver and student Climate Surveys related to procedural fairness (i.e. how decisions about discipline were made and the inclusion of the bullied student in expressions of what could be done to make things better; increases in conduct offenses and tardiness during October, January and February);
- Spotty use of RD by teachers particularly for community building and classroom management;
- Enthusiastic responses from students with student-generated requests for circles and active engagement in restorative processes;
- Lack of clear procedures about when and how to use RD;
- Delays in executing RD agreements and monitoring plans for conflict and disciplinary issues; and
- Greater regard among teachers of the importance and benefits of building relationships with students.

Recommendations in the evaluation included greater attention to practical application of RD during teacher training; opportunities for ongoing teacher education and discussion; creation of a handbook for teachers to help with application; use of RD in transition zones; greater feedback to teachers about the current use of RD in the school; development of peer-facilitated circles to instill student responsibility and build leadership skills; and involvement of parents/caregivers in restorative processes and on an advisory council.

Review of Literature

The first-year evaluation of RD contextualized the study by describing the national development of and subsequent fallout from punitive school policies for student discipline and the growing use of and evidence for restorative justice in schools including a description of the criteria for ensuring a *successful* implementation. During 2013-2014, several studies emerged that have direct relevance to Ed White due to the predominant racial and ethnic composition of its students, the school's experimental use of RD, and the potential cost savings to Texas if RD is successful in reducing suspensions and expulsions. One group of significant studies focuses attention to the targeting and criminalization of students of color due to the overuse of suspensions and expulsions across the country, while another large national investigation compiled countless resources aimed at preventing student arrests and referrals to the juvenile justice system for minor school-based infractions. A third study investigates the costs to Texas of school retention or non-promotion to the next grade, an issue that correlates highly with drop out rates, juvenile justice involvement and suspensions and expulsions.

Disproportionate Use of Discipline

With growing concern over harsh disciplinary actions, attention has been drawn nationally and in Texas to those students who shoulder much of the disciplinary burden even though the frequency and content of their behaviors are not markedly different from their peers (Skiba, Arredondo, & Rausch, 2014, p. 2). African American students, in particular, are at risk for receiving a disproportionate number of suspensions and expulsions. The differential of 5.5 percentage points between elementary age African American and White students for out-of-school suspension grows to 17 percentage points at the secondary level (Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May, & Tobin, 2011, p. 18). Acceleration in the discipline gap is also evident for office referrals. African American students are twice as likely to be referred to the office at the elementary level and up to four times more likely in middle school (Losen, Hewitt, & Toldson, 2014, p. 7).

Besides the disparity in frequency, severity in punishment also illustrates the lack of equity. A study in Florida found that in addition to suspending 39% of African Americans compared to 22% of Whites and 26% of Hispanics/Latinos, Black students were also suspended for longer periods of time than other students, even after controlling for poverty (Skiba et al., 2014, p. 2). Ironically, survey data from eighth and tenth grade Black, White and Hispanic/Latino students indicate that Black males report similar or lower uses of drugs, alcohol and weapons at school compared to other students (ibid). The importance of this glaring racial disparity is reflected in the simple fact that attending a school with more Black students, regardless of the school's demographics, increases one's risk of out-of-school-suspension, more than engaging in a fight or battery (Skiba, Trachok, Chung, Baker, & Hughes, 2012, p. 19).

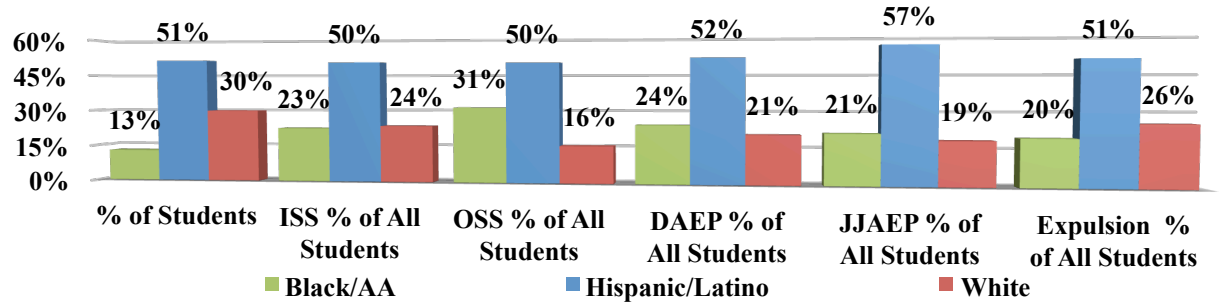
Moreover there is alarming evidence that the racial trend in disproportionate use of punishment starts early. The Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) amassed data on preschool suspensions and expulsions for the first time in 2011-2012. Based on over 1 million students from 99% of schools offering preschool, researchers found that Black children represent 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschool children receiving more than one out-of-school suspension. In comparison, white students represent 43% of preschool enrollment but 26% of preschool

children receiving more than one out-of-school suspension. (Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2014, p. 1).

Although African American students are far more likely to be targets of harsh discipline, several other student populations also experience more than their share of suspensions and expulsions. Male students (Carter, Fine, & Russell, 2014, p. 1) and LGBTQ students (ibid, p. 2) are disciplined at higher rates as well as students with disabilities who tend to be suspended at over twice the rate of their non-disabled peers (Losen, et al., 2014, p. 3). Of all students, however, those who belong to two or more disadvantaged groups show the highest risk of suspension (ibid, p. 4).

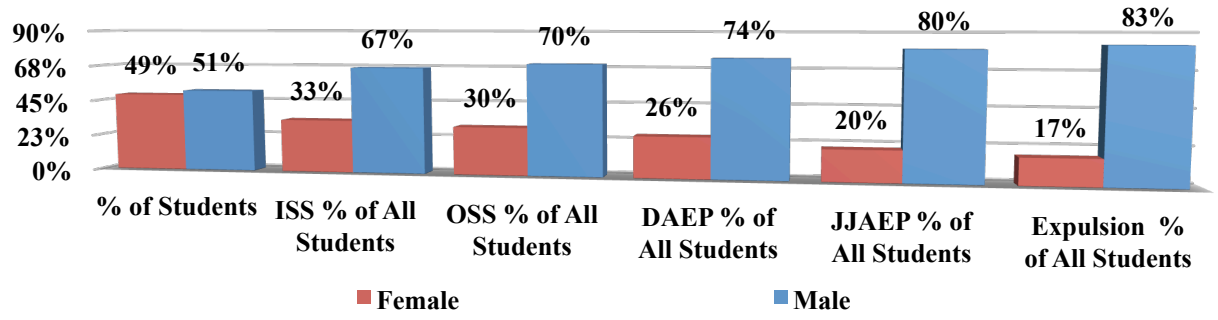
These national-level statistics are highly relevant to Texas and ultimately to schools like Ed White, whose student body reflects the groups most vulnerable to the disproportionate use of punishment. In Texas, African American students comprise 13% of students but are, on average 1.9 times more likely than White and Hispanic/Latino students to receive in-school (ISS) or out-of-school (OSS) suspension, referral to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), or be expelled (see Figure 1). Together, African American and Hispanic/Latino students make up on average 76% of the students who receive these discipline consequences and placements. Similarly, male students are on average 1.5 times more likely to receive these sanctions (see Figure 2). Consequently the disciplinary gap between male and female students based on their almost equal distribution in school enrollment is 66%. These discrepancies are exacerbated when African American male students are also economically disadvantaged and/or in special education. Special education students who comprise 10% of the student population are on average 1.8 times more likely to receive one of the behavioral outcomes than non special education students (see Figure 3). Economically disadvantaged students who make up 52% of the Texas student population are on average 1.5 times more likely to be given these discipline consequences and placements than non-economically disadvantaged students. When these realities are pooled, the outlook in Texas for poor, African American male students who are in special education is indeed bleak. Hispanic male students follow closely behind.

Figure 1. Texas statewide discipline data by race/ethnicity, 2012-2013



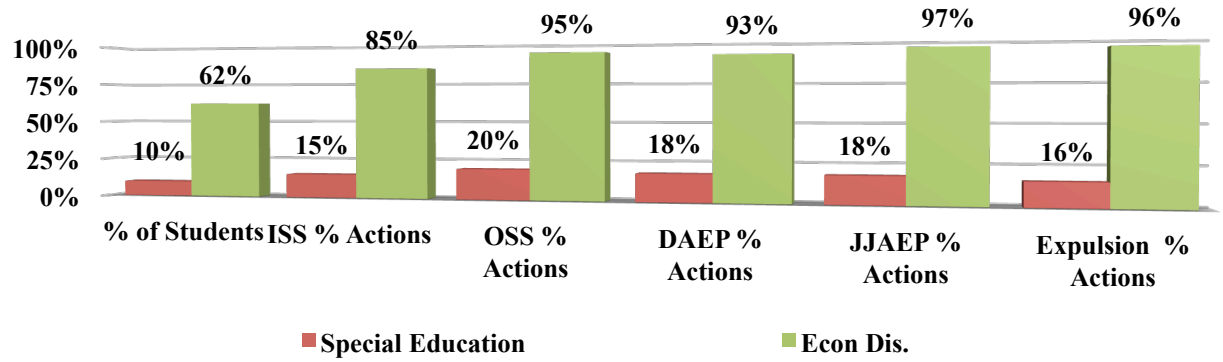
Source: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/Disciplinary_Data_Products/Disciplinary_Data_Products.htm

Figure 2. Texas statewide discipline data by gender, 2012-2013



Source: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/Disciplinary_Data_Products/Disciplinary_Data_Products.html

Figure 3. Texas statewide discipline data by economic disadvantage and special education, 2012-2013



Source: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/adhocrpt/Disciplinary_Data_Products/Disciplinary_Data_Products.html

Recent studies on racial disparities in discipline indicate that school controlled factors are the strongest predictors of both frequency and disproportionate use of suspensions (Skiba et al., 2011, p. 2). These factors include teachers' attitudes and tolerance levels, their skill in managing their classroom, principal attitudes toward discipline, and positive or negative school climate. The significance of school-level characteristics override student demographics and behaviors suggesting that subtle forms of bias can impact educators' perception of problematic conduct, their subjective responses, and the decisions they make about consequences. Indeed, an analysis of disciplinary data from urban middle schools found that White students received office referrals for offenses that appear to be more objective such as smoking, vandalism and obscene language whereas office referrals for African American students were based on behaviors that had more subjective connotations or interactional elements such as disrespect, excessive noise, threat, and loitering (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Similarly, a review of a suspension database from an urban high school found that defiance was the single most common reason for referral to the office and that African Americans were significantly more likely to be referred for that reason (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008).

Because the tone for the culture of the school is set by the administration, the principal's attitude toward discipline warrants close scrutiny. Studies have found that students are less likely to receive out-of-school suspensions or expulsions in schools where principals are more oriented toward preventative alternatives (Skiba et al., 2012, pp. 18-19). Moreover, the racial temperature decidedly influences school climate (Mattison & Aber, 2007) as does academic pressure, student support, and the conveying of warmth between members of the school community. Indeed so-called "indifferent" schools that score the lowest on measures of warmth/support and academic expectations show the highest rates of suspension and the largest Black-White suspension gaps (Mattison & Aber, 2007).

These subtle indices of bias are not necessarily undone by school-wide interventions that are considered effective in improving school discipline or school climate. For example, a nationally representative study of schools who had implemented School Wide Positive Behavioral Support programs (SWPBS) found, when they disaggregated the results, that African American and Latino students were up to five times more likely than White students to receive suspension and expulsion for minor infractions (Skiba, Shure, & Williams, 2011; Skiba, Horner, et al., 2011). Reductions in suspensions and expulsions, therefore, do not necessarily indicate that changes have been made in racial disparities and the disproportionate use of punishment (Skiba, Horner, et al., 2011).

Indeed, studies increasingly suggest that the lack of racial, gender and class parity in student discipline may be rooted in the lack of gender and racial diversity among teachers. Specifically, teachers' unfamiliarity with students' cultures easily manifest as cultural misunderstandings and insensitivities that are exacerbated when teachers use their authority to mete out disciplinary sanctions. The gap between the racial and ethnic makeup of students and the teachers who teach them is profound. Of the more than 6 million teachers in the United States, nearly 80% are White, 9.3 % are African American, 7.4% are Hispanic, 2.3% are Asian and 1.2% are of another race (Losen et al., 2014b). Moreover, 84% of all teachers are female. Although a causal connection is difficult to prove, the impact of implicit or unconscious bias fed by cultural stereotypes is certainly magnified when there is such a pronounced demographic chasm between students and teachers. In support of this hypothesis, The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity recently asserted, "our research suggests that that implicit bias is implicated in every aspect of racial and ethnic inequality and injustice" (Rudd, 2014, p. 3).

The importance of familiarity between student and teacher cannot be overstated, both as a critical factor in the disproportionate rates of office referrals and suspensions and as a critical component in assessing how RD changes school climate and may reduce disproportionate rates of exclusion for African American males as well. Research consistently shows that educators who establish supportive relationships with students are not only aware of the events affecting them at school, but are also able to read and understand their responses thereby putting students' behavior in context (e.g. his father is in Afghanistan and he's frightened) and avoiding rigid and global judgments (Gregory, Bell, & Pollock, 2014, p. 3). Knowing students well also reduces the identity gap, making it possible for educators to relate to students whose lived experience differ substantially from their own. Maybe a high noise level reflects norms for self expression. Perhaps behavior that is judged as "defiant" means something else to a targeted group. When students feel closer and more familiar to educators, the students are more likely to be connected

and engaged. Concurrently, educators are more likely to turn to problem solving approaches for conflict and discipline moving schools away from fixed rules. A recent district-wide study of Chicago schools found that the quality of teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships was the strongest predictor of a strong sense of safety in the school building. Indeed, low suspension rates correlated with higher safety ratings after accounting for the demographic differences in the neighborhoods served (Gregory et al., 2014, p. 6).

Although there is no definitive answer as yet for eradicating disparities in school discipline, the rash of governmental policy positions and recent studies attesting to the size of the problem and its foreboding consequences overwhelmingly recommend restorative justice as a viable school policy strategy for reducing racial disparities (e.g. Skiba, Arredondo & Rausch, 2014). Besides using formal and informal practices to proactively build relationships and a sense of community, and to report harm caused by wrongdoing, RD uses a problem solving approach that allows for the 'why' or back story that helps teachers and other students make sense of a disruptive youth's behavior. It also allows for, even necessitates, an environmental scan of what support is available for a youngster, what is his sense of belonging, group membership, academic performance, and sense of safety. In an extensive review of schools using RD, Gonzalez reports that the use of RD coupled with strong school leadership can reduce racial disproportionality in school discipline. She cites a longitudinal study conducted between 2006 and 2013 where the risk for suspensions dropped for all racial groups but the largest decline was for African Americans (Gonzalez, 2014, p. 7). Noted researcher Skiba comments that although the evidence based on RD is not yet expansive, an examination of teacher and student reports of RD found that teachers with better RD implementation had narrower racial gaps. They also had better relationships with their students, were perceived as more respectful by their students from different racial and ethnic groups, and issued fewer exclusionary discipline referrals to African American and Hispanic/Latino students (Skiba et al. 2014, p. 4).

National Examination of Resources to Prevent Juvenile Justice Involvement

Recognition of RD's ability to improve school climate is highlighted in the recent release of *School Discipline Consensus Report*, a 500 page blueprint of consensus-based and field-driven recommendations from more than 100 advisors representing policymakers, school administrators, teachers, behavioral health professionals, police, court leaders, probation officials, juvenile correctional leaders, parents, and youth from across the country (Morgan, Salomon, Plotkin, & Cohen, 2014). The goal of the report through its two dozen policies and 60 recommendations is to improve conditions for learning for students so they can feel safe, welcome and supported. The initial focus of the document highlights the critical role of positive school climate as the underpinning for productive learning environments. In delineating what is meant by school climate, the report repeatedly references Restorative Discipline whole school approach or describes conditions that are embedded in RD philosophy and practices.

For example, in its description of the shared principles that united the leaders in their considerations and recommendations, the report spotlights the need for a relational, tiered approach to interventions; a focus on victimization and harm done; the admonition that changes to discipline must benefit all students, not just those engaged in misconduct; the need to monitor progress by continually using data and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders; the use of a collaborative process over product orientation with diverse voices and transparent decision

making; and the significance of context in developing customized strategies to improve the rationality of school discipline systems that will keep schools safe and engaging (Morgan et al., 2014, p. 4). These same principles have served as the backbone for the implementation and ongoing development of RD at Ed White.

Some of the goals specific to achieving positive climate change again bespeak to the importance given to RD in the report. For example, the restorative justice value of inclusivity is referenced in the reminder that it is not possible to *mandate* school climate change. Rather "[r]eal reform requires support and active involvement of the entire range of individuals affected by school policy as well as those on the front lines of implementing it" (Morgan et al., 2014, p. 34). In an aspirational statement, the report describes what is meant by a whole school relationally oriented approach to discipline. "Many schools are working to build a culture where forming relationships is highly valued and developing mutual understanding and shared behavioral expectations binds students and adults into a community of learners. When such an environment is well established it is easier to respond effectively to misbehavior and enable students and adults to engage in the process of restoring relationships and repairing harm" (ibid, p. 45). Finally, the report advises schools to respond to wrongdoing using a restorative approach. "Consequences for misbehavior in which there has been physical or psychological harm caused to another person should reflect a restorative approach that 1) focuses on repairing the harm caused by the misconduct, 2) encourages students to take responsibility for their actions, and 3) helps students learn to avoid such behavior in the future" (ibid, p. 56).

Similarly, the report advises on procedures to ensure a successful implementation of a whole school approach, procedures that have been followed in implementing RD at Ed White. A major concern is the ability to collect data for assessing school climate change and strategic planning. A strong recommendation, therefore, is the use of a climate survey administered to students, family members and school personnel. The survey needs to include questions related to disciplinary policies, student support and engagement, educator support, integration of prosocial skills into the school day, prevalence of bullying and harassment, and student and teacher victimization. Coupled with the climate survey is the need for data on the specific offenses for which students are being suspended most often and when, including days, times or locations, and what are the trends by grade level.

Another procedural concern is the need for oversight through a school improvement or leadership team who can direct and prioritize the school climate work, monitor progress, report data and engage the broader school community in these efforts. Ed White has a strongly engaged LRT comprised of representation from all grade levels that collectively administer the RD program and are in constant contact about events and trends that impact school climate.

A final procedural component to ensure solid application of RD principles is the training of educators. The report clearly emphasizes that school personnel must be educated on how to integrate a restorative approach into their everyday instruction and interaction with students. Moreover, the training must be more than a one-shot or superficial overview but rather reinforced through coaching and group discussions and buttressed through embedded supports and performance feedback. The authors of the report recognize the sea-change involved in the paradigm shift to a relational model like RD and therefore stress the importance of process over

performance by advising that educators need multiple opportunities to learn and practice new strategies for creating positive learning environments and effectively supporting and managing student behavior to keep students in the classroom. All teachers at Ed White receive a two-day training in RD, are expected to use specific restorative practices weekly so that RD becomes a part of the classroom environment, and are given personnel backup from the LRT if they need to leave the classroom to conduct restorative circles or conferences with students. They also have access to the RD on-site consultant who provides feedback based on meetings with teachers or regular visits to classrooms and is available to advise on or lead classroom circles or small group meetings with students.

The *School Discipline Consensus Report* is a long awaited and far reaching document that foretells the direction of the country in responding to school discipline. Its focus on RD as the most probable way to influence school climate both supports and reflects Ed White's achievement and pioneering spirit in undertaking a three-year experiment to shift the school's culture. Indeed when the report was released in June, 2014, an editorial on its publication appeared in the *Austin American Statesman* co-authored by John Whitmire, chairman of the Texas Senate Criminal Justice Committee and chair of the national consensus project and Michael Williams, Texas Commissioner of Education and head of the Texas Education Agency. The editorial admonished Texas stating that it should be doing more to reform school discipline and specifically mentioned Ed White, stating that the school "saw an 84 percent drop in out-of-school suspensions using 'restorative discipline' techniques that bring students together to come up with a mutually agreed-upon resolution to a particular conflict" (Whitmire & Williams, 2014).

Economic Effects of Exclusionary Discipline

Since the Year 1 evaluation of the RD implementation at Ed White, there have been publications reflecting the rising national concern over racial disproportionality and an encyclopedic gathering of resources to help improve the learning environment and turn around the fallout from exclusionary zero tolerance policies. In addition, more attention is being paid to the financial costs related to the use of punitive and exclusionary models for student discipline. In a report on the economic expense of exclusionary discipline in Texas, researchers found that students' history of grade retention, not academic performance, proved to be most predictive of students' risk of leaving school. Moreover, school discipline is associated with approximately 4700 grade retentions per year. Each grade retention costs the state an additional $11,543 per student (Marchbanks et al., 2013, p. 16). The delayed workforce entry has an effect of over $68 million a year for the state, including $5.6 million in lost tax revenue. Moreover, one in-school suspension during the year means that a student is 29.6% more likely to drop out during that year (ibid, p. 17). Collectively, these exclusionary practices result in 29% increase in high school dropouts, which has an economic effect of $711 million per year.

How does this pattern work? Students who are excluded from class or placed in alternative education discipline sites have fewer opportunities to obtain necessary classroom instruction and fall further and further behind. These missed opportunities eventually result in limited foundational academic skills for meeting academic demands and passing standardized tests with associated frustration and disengagement from school. Indeed, studies have show that students who receive frequent exclusionary sanctions have greater levels of academic disengagement and

negative perceptions of school compared to their peers (Brown, 2013; Sekayi, 2001; Skiba et al., 2002; Wald, 2003).

Although the consequences may be cumulative and gradual, they create unnecessary and massive hardship for both students and the state. Because Texas has 4.9 million students enrolled, which represents approximately 10% of all public school students in the country, the financial impact on the state is profound (Marchbanks, Blake, Booth, Carmichael, Seibert, & Fabelo 2013, p. 15). In a recent study of economic costs associated with dropouts from a single Texas cohort (Alvarez, Brennan, Carter, Dong, Eldridge, Fratto, & Taylor, 2009), researchers found that the social costs totaled between $5.4 billion and $9.6 billion (Marchbanks et al., 2013, p. 18). The study concluded that if the state could reduce the likelihood of dropping out by 13%, which is the level associated with school discipline, the total savings to Texas would be between $711 million and $1.3 billion (Marchbanks et al., 2013, p. 17).

This timely study begins to document the hardship that exclusionary discipline places on society. By association it also mandates attention to changing school climate by emphasizing belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment. These are the components of the relational approach embodied by RD.

The publication, of or attention given in the media this year to studies on racial and ethnic disproportionality, recommendations for creating more productive school learning environments, and growing awareness of the cost of exclusionary practices to the entire society have immediate relevance to Ed White Middle School. Not only does the school exemplify the recommendations made by the *School Discipline Consensus Report* to institute RD, its student demographics also embody the populations most directly affected by racial and ethnic disproportionality (e.g. poor, African American and Hispanic/Latino males and special education) as well as those students where the negative fallout from their educational experience is most likely to generate financial hardships for themselves and the state.

Second-Year Implementation of Restorative Discipline at Ed White Middle School

In Year 2 Ed White expanded the RD program to include seventh grade students. It added a new assistant principal to the sixth grade. The assistant principal from the 2012-2013 sixth grade moved up with the students in 2013-2014 to seventh grade. The incoming assistant principal assigned to the sixth grade also became a part of the school's Leadership Response Team (LRT). The LRT for Year 2 consisted of the Principal, two assistant principals and a core administrative RD facilitator. The outside consultant for the second year was Stephanie Frogge, the assistant director of the Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue. Her role was to provide consultation and mentoring to sixth and seventh grade teachers as well as members of the LRT to ensure correct and consistent application of restorative processes, identify and help overcome obstacles, and communicate successes and lessons learned among participants. She also assisted with the evaluation efforts. The assistant principal for the seventh grade continued to administer the RD program and direct the LRT. The Institute for Restorative Justice and Restorative Dialogue (IRJRD) at The University of Texas at Austin continued to coordinate teacher training, provide consultation to the external consultant, and evaluate Year 2 of implementation.

In August 2013, all seventh grade teachers and new sixth grade teachers received a two-day training in RD and conducting restorative circles in the classroom. The training was again done by Nancy Riestenberg, School Climate Specialist with the Minnesota Department of Education and national expert on RD in schools. Teachers who could not attend the initial training received a one-day training early in the academic year provided by the external consultant and IRJRD. The teachers and LRT received a one-day booster training in February from Eric Butler, noted RD coordinator with the Oakland Schools in California.

During Year 2, all sixth and seventh grade teachers were charged with developing respect agreements with their students in all classes. These agreements grew out of conducting a circle with students in each class to arrive at an agreed upon set of values that would guide the conduct of that class for the year. The agreements could be revisited when necessary or values added or modified. Also sixth and seventh grade students participated in circles three times a week. Specifically "check-in" circles were held on Monday during 1st (6th grade) and 2nd (7th grade) periods. "Check-up" circles for were held on Wednesday during 4th (6th grade) and 5th (7th grade) periods. "Check out" circles were held for both 6th and 7th grade during eighth period on Friday. This weekly three-circle practice established circles as a norm in the school, embedded a mechanism for community building in the class, and provided a means for students to communicate with their peers and teacher those events that might be impacting their learning.

The external consultant visited the school two times a week providing consultation to the LRT, visiting classrooms and co-facilitating circles with teachers, arranging for special projects such as an anti-bullying campaign, conducting specialty circles such as a circle with a group of unruly boys or a group of students with high absenteeism, and conducting weekly interviews with teachers for the research evaluation. IRJRD provided the external consultant as well as help with managing the project. They did direct consultation with members of the LRT, arranged for the teacher training in August and at mid-year, supervised the external consultant and collected data throughout the year for the 2013-2014 evaluation.

Similar to Year 1, IRJRD collected the following information for the evaluation: (1) data on school climate; 2) implementation data on the use of restorative circles and conferences, attitudes toward punishment and restorative practices, leadership support, and changes in classroom disruption, problem solving, relational skills and social discipline; and (3) impact data on offenses, disciplinary actions, school performance, positive indicators of successful learning environments, and effective conflict resolution among students. The intent of the Year 2 evaluation was to collect information that would be helpful in the subsequent implementation of RD at the eighth grade level, as well the ongoing application in the sixth and seventh grades.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to evaluate Year 2 of the Restorative Discipline program for the sixth and seventh grades at Ed White Middle School. The evaluation consisted of two parts: the impact of the program on students' behaviors and examination of the change process for the school. The evaluation was guided by three broad questions:

(1) What is the impact of the program on sixth and seventh grade student risk behaviors, (e.g. suspension, absenteeism, bullying, academic achievement)?
(2) What is the impact of the program on the sixth and seventh grade school climate?
(3) What is the experience of the sixth and seventh grade teachers who implement the program in their classroom and school administrators who use the program for student misconduct?

Description of Participants

Participants represented three distinct groups: (1) sixth and seventh grade teachers and administrative staff, (2) sixth and seventh grade students, and (3) parents/caregivers of sixth and seventh grade students. Participant demographics were collected through the Climate Survey that was administered three times during the academic year. The time period with the highest number of participants was used as the basis for the demographic profile.

The majority of teachers/staff were White (56%) and female (35%). Nineteen out of 48 teachers/staff or 40% did not identify their gender on the Climate Survey. Because a substantial number of teachers elected not to designate their gender, it is difficult to obtain an accurate demographic profile. Similarly, a sizable number of teachers/staff did not identify their ethnicity (31%) or race (23%). The majority of sixth grade students (52%) and seventh grade students (54%) identified as Hispanic as did their parents/caregivers followed by percentages of students and parents/caregivers in both grades that identified fairy equally as Black or White. Because a substantial number of students and parents/caregivers elected not to designate their ethnicity or race, it is difficult to obtain an accurate demographic profile. Moreover, the number of seventh-grade parents/caregivers who responded to the Climate Survey was small and may not be representative of this population. Tables 2-4 provide information on the gender and race/ethnicity of each group.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of teachers/staff for 6th and 7th grades[1]

Teachers/Staff	N=48[2]	
	Frequency	Percentage
6th Grade Teacher	14	29%
7th Grade Teacher	11	23%
Mixed Grade	17	35%
School Leader/Staff	0	0%
Unknown[3]	2	4%
Female	17	35.4
Male	12	25
Unknown[3]	19	40%
Hispanic	15	31%
Non-Hispanic	18	38%
Unknown ethncity[3]	15	31%
Black	9	18.8
AIAN	0	0%
Pacific	0	0%
White	27	56%
Asian	1	2%
More than one race	0	9%
Unknown race[3]	11	23%

[1] Frequencies and percentages are based on the Climate Survey time period with greatest number of respondents.

[2] Includes teachers in core subjects and teachers with 6th, 7th and 8th grade students combined.

[3] Unknown represents missing demographic information on grade level and/or position, gender, and race/ethnicity

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of students[1]

Students	6th Grade N=243		7th Grade N=248	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Female	103	42%	123	50%
Male	127	52%	113	46%
Unknown[2]	13	5%	12	4.8%
Hispanic	127	52%	135	54%
Non-Hispanic	67	28%	51	22%
Unknown[2]	49	20%	62	24%
Black	63	26%	45.8	31%
AIAN	4	2%	3	1%
Pacific	78	0%	0	0%
White	78	32%	55	22%
Asian	10	4%	11	4%
More than one race	13	5%	17	7%
Unknown[2]	75	31%	82	33%

[1] Frequencies and percentages are based on the Climate Survey time period with greatest number of respondents.

[2] Unknown represents missing demographic information.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of parents/caregivers[1]

Parents	6th Grade N=119		7th Grade N=28	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Female	67	55%	16	57%
Male	52	43%	12	43%
Unknown[2]	2	2%	0	0%
Hispanic	59	54%	14	50%
Non-Hispanic	26	19%	9	32%
Unknown[2]	36	27%	5	18%
Black	31	26%	7	25%
AIAN	1	.8%	0	0%
Pacific	0	0%	0	0%
White	44	36%	8	29%
Asian	7	6%	3	11%
More than one race	5	4%	0	0%
Unknown[2]	33	27%	10	36%

[1] Frequencies and percentages are based on the Climate Survey time period with greatest number of respondents.
[2] Unknown represents missing demographic information.

Data Collection
Data were obtained between August 2013 and June 2014 from a number of sources.

- School records were used to collect data on student tardiness, student and teacher/staff absenteeism, disciplinary incidents and referrals, circle/conference frequencies done by the assistant principals, the core administrative RD facilitator, and teachers, and school performance.

- A School Climate Survey (SCS) was used to collect data on teacher/staff, student, and parent/caregiver attitudes about the school environment. The survey was administered in September, 2013, December 2013 and January 2014,[1] and May 2014. The parent/caregiver survey was translated and available either in English or Spanish. The SCS was developed by SACRO (Safeguarding Communities Reducing Offending) in Edinburgh, Scotland (http://www.sacro.org.uk). No information is available on psychometrics. Copies of the SCS for teachers, parents/caregivers and students can be found in Appendix A.

Climate survey-parent or caregiver. This 10 item 6-point Likert-style scale measures quality of communication, input into decision making, dignity and worth of the student, and safety and inclusivity from the perspective of the parent or caregiver.

Climate survey-teacher or staff. This 17 item 4-point Likert-style scale measures attitudes and beliefs about interpersonal harm and conflict, communication, input into decision making, dignity and worth of the individual, and inclusivity from the perspective of school personnel. It also includes two open-ended questions about the RD program and its impact on the school.

Climate survey-student. This 12 item 4-point Likert-style scale measures attitudes about the student's direct experience at the school specific to how the school manages interpersonal harm and conflict, communication, input into decision making, dignity and worth of the individual, and inclusivity.

- Circle-It incident records were used to collect data on the frequency and outcomes of out-of-classroom restorative conferences (2-3 persons) and restorative circles (4+ persons) conducted solely by the core administrative LRT RD facilitator. A copy of the form can be found in Appendix B.

- A monthly log was kept by the external RD consultant on her activities and the critical events in classrooms or at the school where personnel used circles and conferences.

[1] Climate surveys should have been administered in December before semester break. Some surveys were administered late.

- Teacher interviews were conducted weekly during January-May with five teachers from each grade. Data were collected on teachers' experiences and needs in using RD in their classrooms. Interviews lasted up to 15 minutes and were digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. Stephanie Frogge, external consultant to the RD program, facilitated the interviews. As teachers described their challenges, the external consultant could provide suggestions to improve their classroom management. Interviews also gave IRJRD feedback about teacher attitudes and the implementation process specific to problem solving, classroom management and community building in the classroom. A copy of the Weekly Teacher Interview Guide can be found in Appendix D.

- Focus groups were conducted by IRJRD with teachers and the LRT in December and May to collect data on their experiences of using restorative practices in their classrooms and for student misconduct. The focus groups lasted 40 minutes and were digitally recorded and transcribed. In December, twelve teachers were interviewed in five focus groups. The LRT focus group consisted of five staff and the external consultant. In May 30 teachers were divided and interviewed in seven focus groups. The LRT focus group consisted of five staff and the external consultant. Copies of the Focus Group Questions for the teachers and the LRT can be found in Appendix E and F.

Protection of human subjects. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The University of Texas at Austin reviewed and approved this study. Written informed consent was obtained for this study from teachers and staff. Parents were sent a cover letter in English and Spanish with the SCS inviting them to participate in the study. Participants were assured, when being recruited and in letters and consent forms that they were not asked for their names and no identifier code was assigned on the SCS. Participants were told as well that they need not answer any questions that they were not comfortable answering. A separate informed consent statement was used for the teachers who participated in the weekly interviews and teachers and staff who participated in the focus groups because only their confidentiality could be assured. The individual and focus group participants were told during recruitment and prior to the beginning of the interviews that they could control the extent, timing and circumstances of what they shared in the interviews.

The Department of Research and Information Technologies for the North East Independent School District reviewed the proposal approved by the IRB at The University of Texas at Austin and approved the research as well. They also approved the administering of the SCS to the sixth and seventh grade students under the same condition of anonymity given to the teachers/staff and parents/caregivers.

Data Analysis

School records on behavior sanctions for 2013-2014 were compared to 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 and the percentage change was calculated. Records on behavior sanctions included breakdowns by race/ethnicity and by referral source. Records on student offense categories and frequencies including bullying were reviewed by month. Student tardy records were compared by month for 2012-2013 and 2013-2013 and the percentage change was calculated. Student scores on The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness STAAR were recorded for 2013-2014 and compared to 2012-2013. Chi-square statistical test was performed on the number

of students who passed the exam in reading and math. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed on mean scale scores for reading and math. Responses on the SCS were summed and compared for teachers/staff, parents/caregivers and students over three time points. The percentage change was calculated for each group and compared to 2012-2013. There was also an analysis of survey items to ascertain progress and areas for school improvement. School records were used to calculate the monthly frequency of restorative conferences and circles used for behavioral interventions by assistant principals and teachers. Comments on the outcomes and agreed-upon plans to address harm were analyzed for content and recurring themes. Twenty-five percent of theCircle-It incident forms for restorative conferences and circles were reviewed for each month and analyzed for content and outcome. Circle-It conferences and circles were conducted by the core administrative RD facilitator.

The external consultant's log and weekly individual teacher interviews were coded and analyzed for content and recurring themes by month and across the academic year. Focus groups were analyzed for contextual themes developed around the evaluation questions. Results were confirmed by reviewing them against the associated quotes from the transcripts and the findings in this report are similarly grounded by direct quotes from participants.

Limitations

Prior to 2012-2013, Ed White did not collect data on some of the risk variables for comparative purposes such as bullying. Consequently it was not possible to compare findings in 2012-2013 with prior years. Findings in 2013-2014, however, were compared to findings in 2012-2013. Because use of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test did not begin until 2012, scores can only be compared between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 leaving 2012-2013 as baseline data. Because participation in this study was voluntary, the return rate from parents/caregivers on the Climate Survey diminishes over the year.

In many instances, therefore, school records gathered in 2012-2013 will provide baselines against which to measure change in the sixth grade in 2012-2014 and change in the seventh grade in 2013-2014 compared to 2012-2013. Because of the lack of comparison data between years, comparisons were made where possible between calendar months over the academic year.

Findings

Findings are organized into four groups: (1) results from school records; (2) monthly review of RD program implementation; (3) Results from SCS; and (4) themes from teacher interviews and focus groups.

Outcomes from School Records

School records were reviewed for changes in Ed White's response to student misconduct, student tardys, and student academic performance.

Suspension Rates North East Independent School District collects data in six-week cycles on discipline and suspension. Table 5 compares the use of suspension for conduct violations for sixth grade students in 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. It compares cohorts that had RD for one year.

Table 5. Comparison of sixth grade suspension rates for conduct violations: 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

Suspension Options	6th Grade				
	Baseline 2011-2012	Percent Change 2012-2013		Percent Change 2013-2014	
		Frequency	% Change	Frequency	% Change
Partial day ISS	**75**	**167[1]**	**+123%[1]**	**89**	**47%**
Partial suspension	**12**	**11**	**.8%**	**2**	**82%**
In school suspension	**468**	**329**	**30%**	**115**	**65%**
Off campus suspension	**66**	**11**	**84%**	**16**	**+45%**

[1] Partial Day ISS shows an increase because it is used as the RD classification for 6th grade since 2012-2013 for conferences and circles.

Table 5 shows continued decreases for sixth graders over the past year in suspension rates. Most notable is a 65% drop in in school suspensions lasting 1-3 days for student misconduct. When compared to baseline, there is a drop of 75% over two years. Moreover there is a 47% drop in partial day ISS, which is the classification assigned to restorative discipline conferences and circles. Table 6 compares the use of discipline sanctions for all offenses for sixth grade in 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.

Table 6. Comparison of sixth grade suspension rates for all student discipline: 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

Suspension Options	6th Grade				
	Baseline 2011-2012	Percent Change 2012-2013		Percent Change 2013-2014	
		Frequency	% Change	Frequency	% Change
Partial day ISS	75	167[1]	+123%[1]	89	47%
In-School Suspension – 1 day	286	199	30%	79	60%
In-School Suspension – 2 day	118	86	27%	9	90%
In-School Suspension – 3 day	74	56	24%	27	52%
Partial Day Suspension	12	11	1%	2	82%
Suspensions for 1 day	41	9	78%	5	56%
Suspensions for 2 day	21	1	95%	5	+400%
Suspensions for 3 day	7	1	86%	6	+500%
Overnight Suspensions	41	14	66%	12	14%
Placement in AEP	18	12	33%	7	42%
Total Suspensions	**675**	**544**	**19%**	**234**	**57%**

[1] Partial Day ISS shows an increase because it is used as the RD classification for 6th grade since 2012-2013 for conferences and circles.

Table 6 shows continued reductions in suspension rates in all categories except for slight numerical increases in the numbers of students suspended for 2-3 days. When compared to baseline, there is a drop of 65% in total suspensions. If the Partial Day ISS, which is the classification for misconduct addressed by RD is removed, the percentage change in total suspensions over two years rises to 79%.

Table 7. Comparison of seventh grade suspension rates for conduct violations: 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

Suspension Options	7th Grade		
	Baseline 2012-2013	Percent Change 2013-2014	
		Frequency	% Change
Partial day ISS	**58**	**87[1]**	**+50%**
Partial suspension	**13**	**6**	**54%**
In school suspension	**295**	**157**	**47%**
Off campus suspension	**36**	**20**	**44%**

[1] Partial Day ISS shows an increase because it is used as the RD classification for 7th grade since 2013-2014 for conferences and circles.

Table 7 compares students with no RD in 2012-2013 to students with RD in 2013-2014. The seventh grade cohort for 2013-2014 had participated in RD for two years. Table 8 compares the same seventh grades with and without RD for all student discipline.

Table 8. Comparison of seventh grade suspension rates for all student discipline: 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

Suspension Options	7th Grade		
	Baseline 2012-2013	Percent Change 2013-2014	
		Frequency	% Change
Partial day ISS	58	87[1]	+50%
In-School Suspension – 1 day	136	110	19%
In-School Suspension – 2 day	74	27	64%
In-School Suspension – 3 day	85	20	76%
Partial Day Suspension	13	6	54%
Suspensions for 1 day	24	10	58%
Suspensions for 2 day	5	6	+20%
Suspensions for 3 day	7	4	43%
Overnight Suspensions	21	3	86%
Placement in AEP	8	21	+163%
Total Suspensions	**423**	**273**	**35%**

[1] Partial Day ISS shows an increase because it is used as the RD classification for 7th grade since 2013-2014 for conferences and circles.

There are decreases in 2013-2014 for the seventh grade RD group in all categories except for small increases in frequencies for 2-day suspensions and placement in AEP.

Table 9 and Table 10 compare the pilot RD group in 2012-2013 (sixth grade) during the Year 1 of implementation to 2013-2014 (seventh grade) after Year 2 of implementation.

Table 9. Comparison of RD pilot group suspension rates for conduct violations: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Suspension Options			RD Pilot Group
	2012-2013	2013-2014	Percent Change
Partial day ISS	167[1]	87[1]	48%
Partial suspension	11	6	45%
In school suspension	329	157	52%
Off campus suspension	11	20	+82%

[1] Partial Day ISS is used as the RD classification since 2012-2013 for conferences and circles.

Figure 4. Comparison of decrease in ISS for the 6th grade, 7th grade and RD pilot cohort

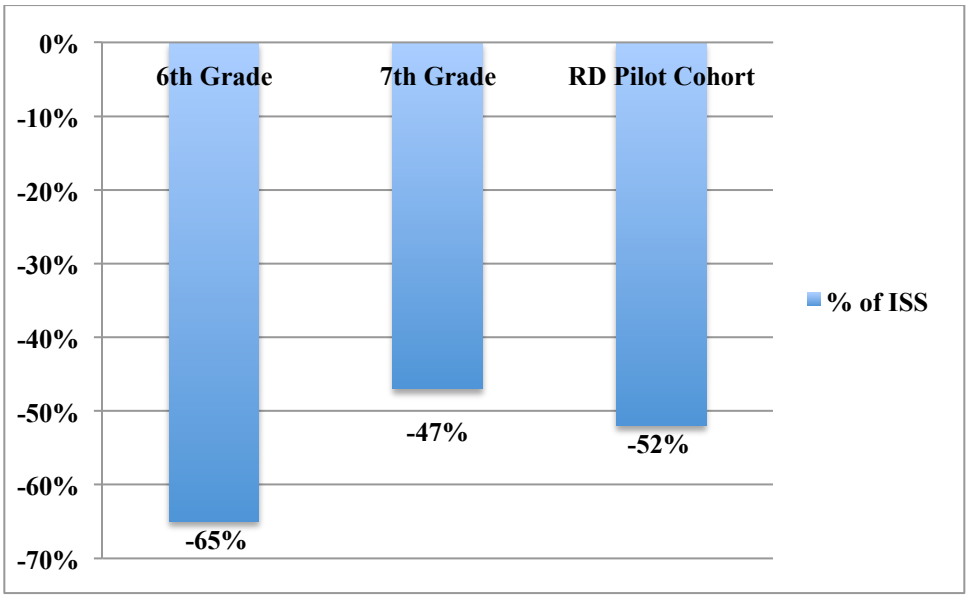


Table 10. Comparison of RD pilot group suspension rates for all student discipline: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Suspension Options			RD Pilot Group
	2012-2013	2013-2014	Percent Change
Partial day ISS	167[1]	87[1]	48%
In-School Suspension – 1 day	199	110	45%
In-School Suspension – 2 day	86	27	69%
In-School Suspension – 3 day	56	20	64%
Partial Day Suspension	11	6	45%
Suspensions for 1 day	9	10	+11%
Suspensions for 2 day	1	6	+500%
Suspensions for 3 day	1	4	+400%
Overnight Suspensions	14	3	79%
Placement in AEP	12	21	+75%
Total Suspensions	**544**	**273**	**50%**

The pilot cohort continues to show a decline in suspension options. Even partial day ISS, which is the category reserved for RD circles and conferences, indicates a drop of 48%.

In addition to the general decrease for in-school suspensions, there are also changes in race and ethnic disproportionality. Table 10 indicates a drop in the percentage of African American students in 2013-2014 who received sanctions for conduct disorders. Figure 4 compares sanctions by race in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 to the school demographics.

Table 11. Distribution of All Incidents by Race/Ethnicity: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Race/Ethnicity	2012-2013		2013-2014	
	#	Percentage	#	Percentage
Asian	15	>1%	10	>1%
Black	1731	51%	1492	46%
Hispanic	1373	40%	1286	40%
American Indian/Alaskan	0	0	13	>1%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	31	1%	19	1%
White	158	5%	291	9%
Two or more races	104	3%	127	4%
Total	**3431**	**100%**	**3238**	**100%**

Figure 5. Discipline referrals by race compared to school demographics, 2013-2014

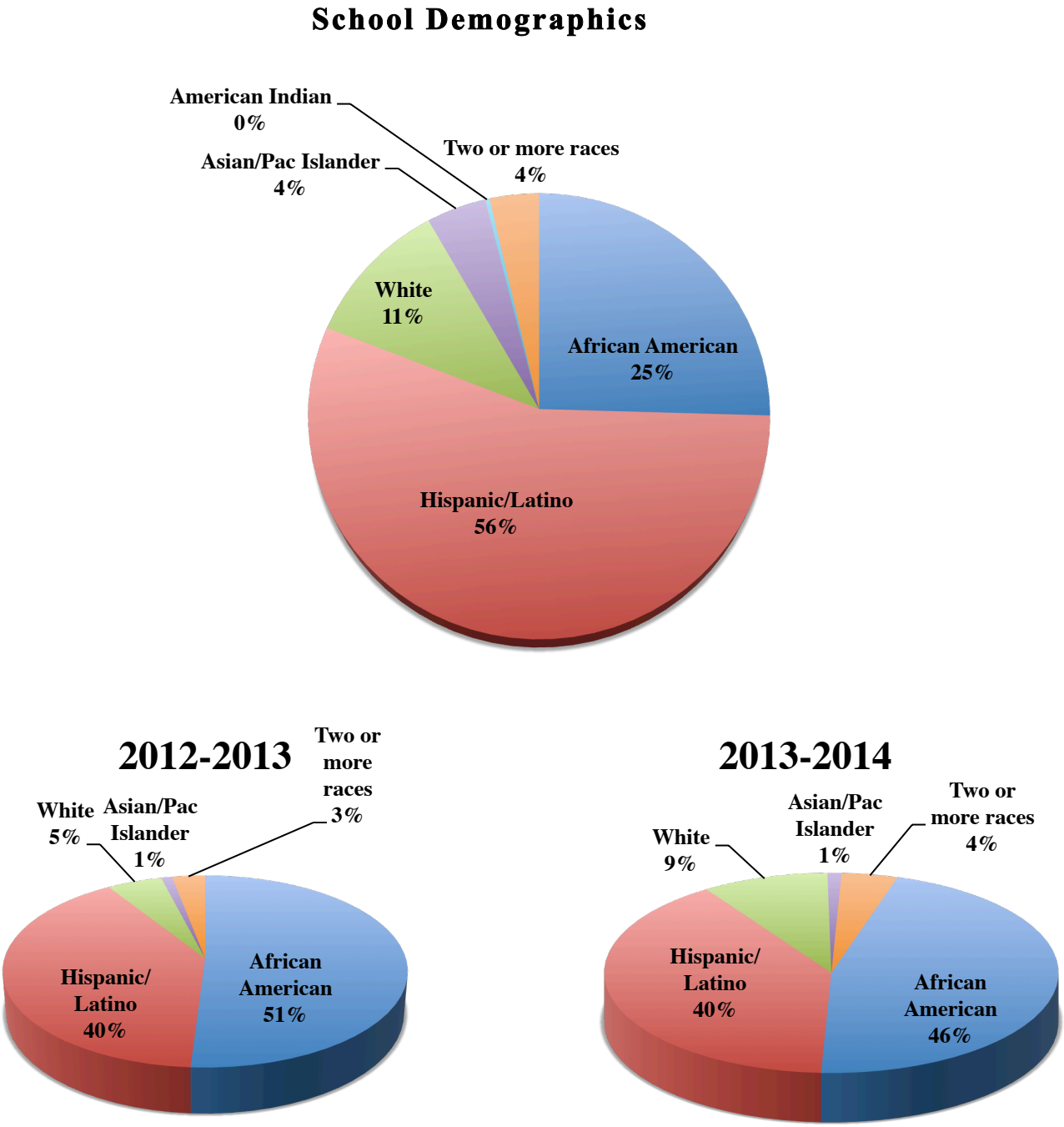


Figure 6. Comparison by quarter of 6th grade office referrals in 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

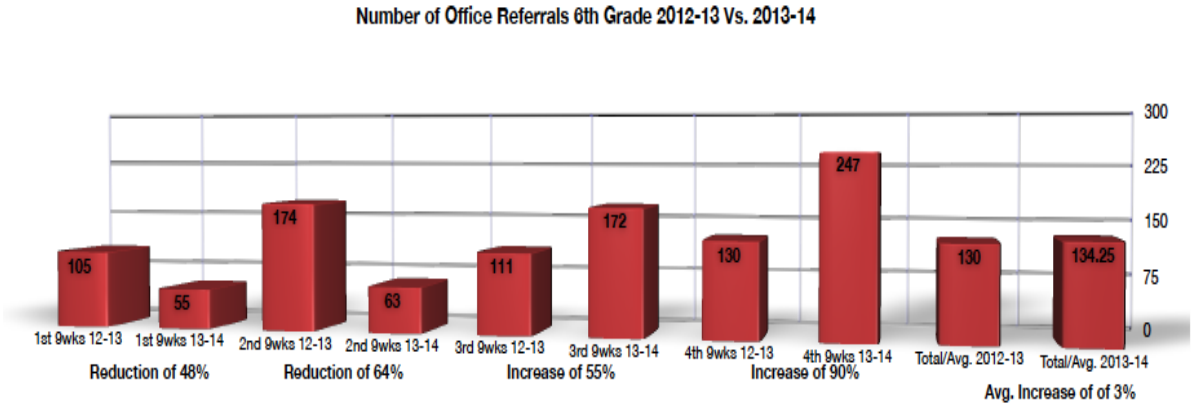


Figure 7. Comparison by quarter of 7th grade office referrals, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

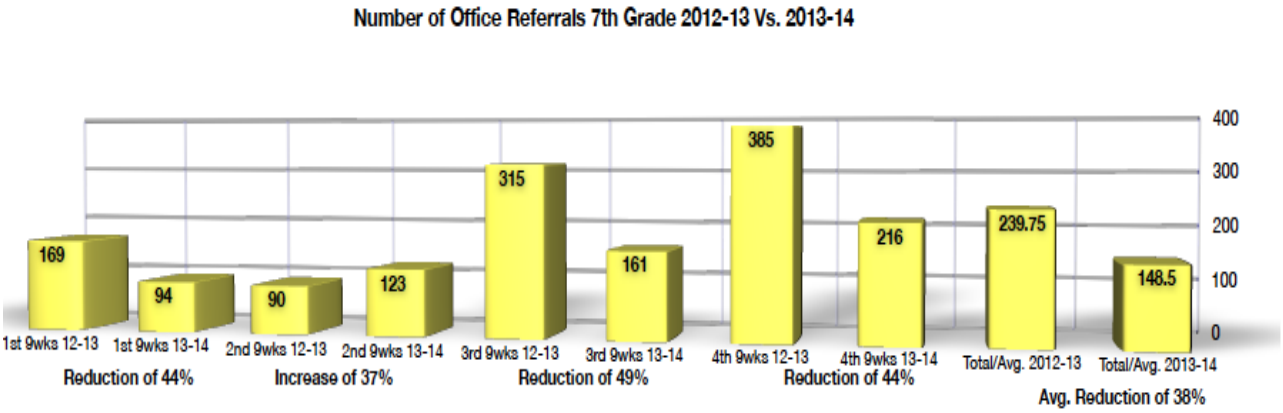
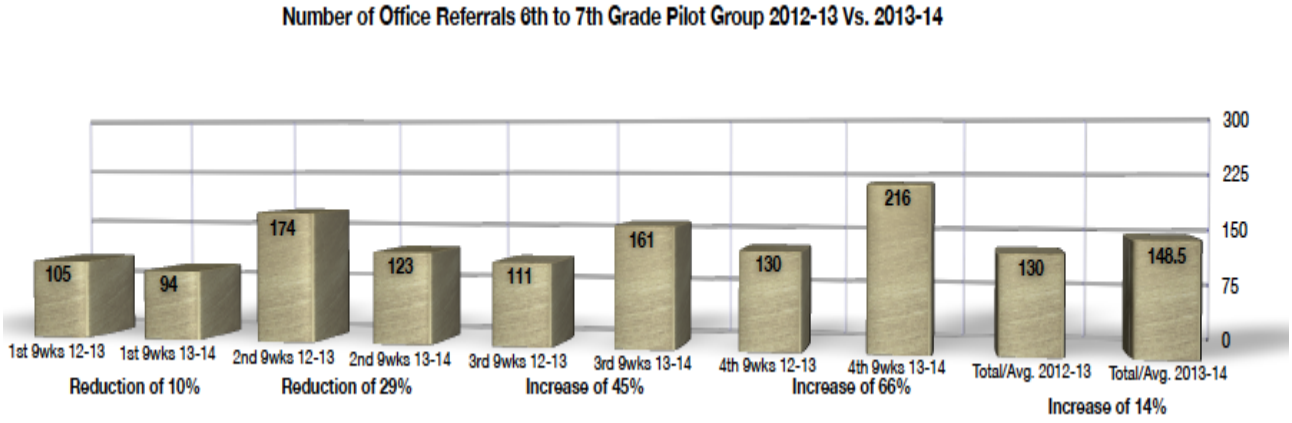


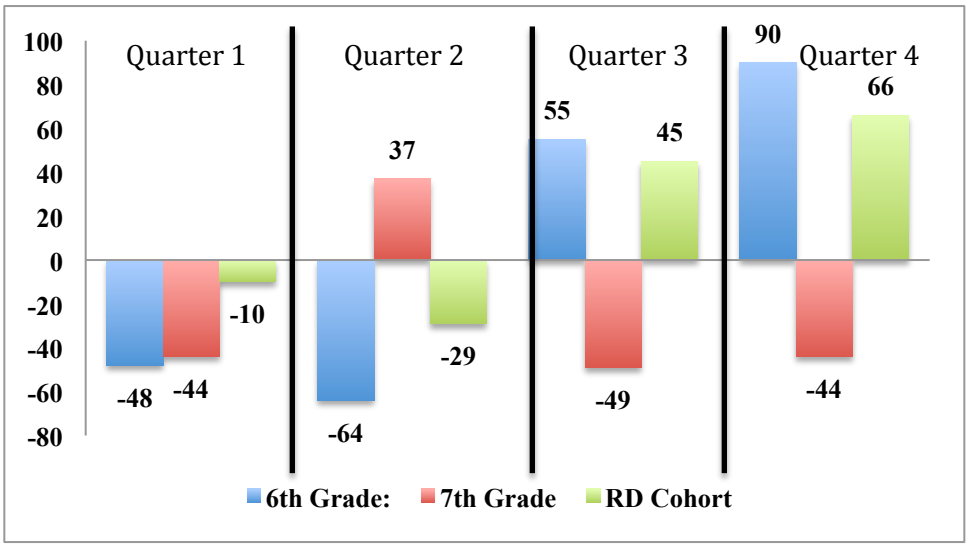
Figure 8. Comparison by quarter of 6th grade to 7th grade office referrals, 2013-2014



Sixth grade students and the pilot RD group had fewer office referrals in 2013-2014 in the 1st and 2nd quarters of the academic year but increased in the 3rd and 4th quarters. Seventh grade students showed reductions in all quarters but the 2nd quarter, averaging a 38% reduction for 2013-2014. Sixth grade students averaged a 14% increase and the pilot RD group averaged a 4% increase for

seventh grade (2013-2014) over sixth grade (2012-2013). The 4th quarter was particularly noteworthy for sizable increases in office referrals for sixth graders and the pilot RD group.

Figure 9. Office referrals over 4 quarters: Percentage decrease or increase



Student Tardys. Tardiness is considered an indicator of school engagement. Students who are frequently tardy have lower grades, lower scores on standardized tests and lower graduation rates. Chronic tardiness in middle school is associated with failure in high school (Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986). Table 12 compares monthly tardy frequency counts for sixth graders, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. Table 13 compares monthly tardy frequency counts for sixth graders, 2012-2013 to seventh graders, 2013-2014. The seventh graders are the pilot RD group. Figure 8 compares the monthly tardy frequency counts for the entire school, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014.

Table 12. Sixth grade comparison of tardy frequencies, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	Total
2012-2013	886	1449	1232	988	1210	1407	1366	1576	574	43	10,731
2013-2014	606	788	564	556	649	860	642	624	333	8	5,630
% Difference	32%	46%	55%	44%	46%	39%	53%	60%	42%	81%	48%

Table 13. Comparison of RD pilot group tardy frequencies in 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

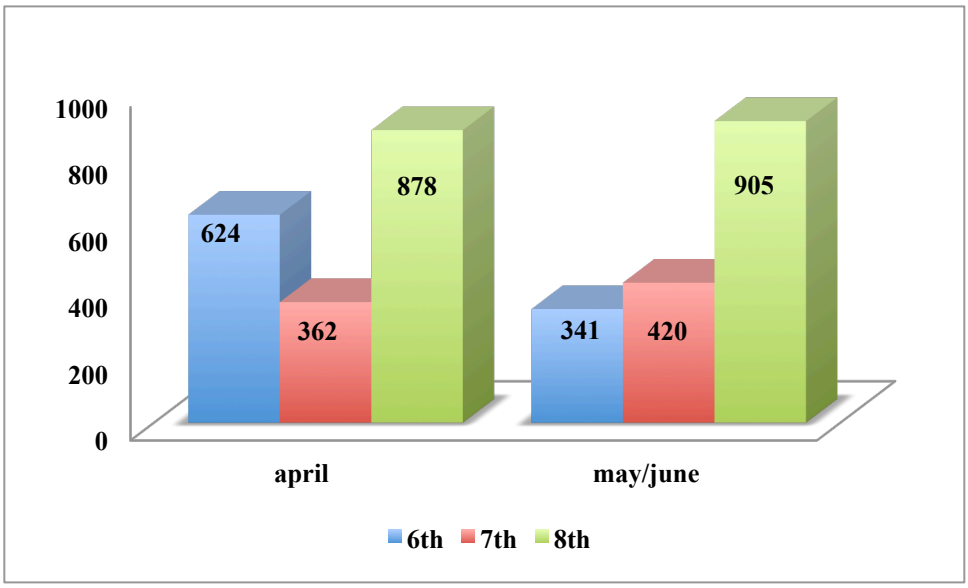
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	Total
2012-2013	886	1449	1232	988	1210	1407	1366	1576	574	43	10,731
2013-2014	614	1140	722	493	694	1135	1078	362	411	9	6,658
% Difference	31%	21%	41%	40%	43%	19%	21%	77%	28%	79%	38%

Table 14. Whole school comparison of tardy frequencies, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Total
2012-2013	2421	3135	3471	3462	4241	3880	3893	4294	3341	342	32480
2013-2014	1658	2792	1939	1550	2088	3280	2818	1864	1603	63	19655
% Difference	32%	11%	44%	55%	51%	15%	28%	57%	52%	82%	39%

There have been substantial decreases in tardys at Ed White in 2013-2014. Total tardys for eighth grade are only slightly more (7,367) than total tardys for sixth (5,630) and seventh grades (6,658). Indeed, the eighth grade monthly totals are close to the sixth and seventh grade levels until the last three months when they more than double. Figure 10 illustrates these differences.

Figure 10. Eighth grade tardy frequencies vs sixth and seventh grades



Tardys increase in October and March-April. This same pattern was evident in the Year 1 evaluation but the fluctuation in frequency was far more pronounced in Year 2 for sixth and seventh grades. Although unsubstantiated, it is possible that the increase in the spring in all grades may be related, in part, to the stress associated with the STAAR exam

Student School Performance. The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) was administered for the first time in 2012-2013. It was not possible, therefore, to compare student progress on the test to previous years. Table 15 a-d compares reading and math scores for sixth and seventh graders, 2013 vs 2014. Tables 15 a-b show the percentage change in sixth grade reading and math scores by race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage, 2013 vs 2014. Tables 15 c-d show the same breakdown for seventh grade. Table 16 shows the percentage change in sixth and seventh grade Special Education reading and math scores, 2013-2014.

Table 15a. Reading and math scores on STAAR, 2013 vs 2014

	READING			MATH		
	# Tested	# Passed	% Passed	# Tested	# Passed	% Passed
6th Grade 2013	288	152	53%	284	151	53%
6th Grade 2014	257	164	64%	259	171	66%
% Change			11%			13%
7th Grade 2013	294	173	59%	285	154	54%
7th Grade 2014	291	178	61%	290	156	54%
% Change			2%			0%

Table 15b. Percent change in 6th grade STAAR pass rate in reading by race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage, 2013 vs 2014

	African American			Hispanic			White			Economically Disadvantaged		
	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%
2013	82	38	46%	162	82	51%	25	18	72%	249	125	50%
2014	57	31	54%	148	95	64%	32	21	66%	221	139	63%
% Change			8%			13%			-6%			13%

Table 15c. Percent change in 7th grade STAAR pass rate in reading by race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage, 2013 vs 2014

	African American			Hispanic			White			Economically Disadvantaged		
	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%
2013	78	41	53%	165	97	59%	23	17	74%	237	135	57%
2014	83	46	55%	164	99	60%	21	17	81%	244	148	61%
% Change			2%			1%			7%			4%

Table 15d. Percent change in 6th grade STAAR pass rate in math by race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage, 2013 vs 2014

	African American			Hispanic			White			Economically Disadvantaged		
	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%
2013	80	36	45%	160	87	54%	25	14	56%	245	124	51%
2014	58	28	48%	147	102	69%	33	23	70%	223	144	65%
% Change			6%			-3%			4%			2%

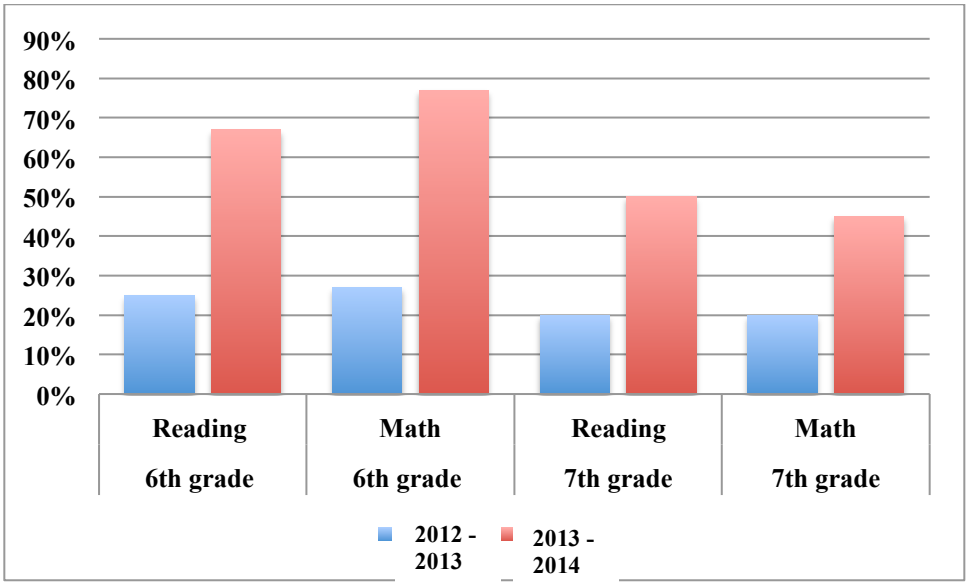
Table 15e. Percent change in 7th grade STAAR pass rate in math by race/ethnicity and economic disadvantage, 2013 vs 2014

	African American			Hispanic			White			Economically Disadvantaged		
	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%
2013	74	31	42%	160	87	54%	25	14	56%	245	124	51%
2014	83	42	51%	164	83	51%	20	12	60%	243	128	53%
% Change			**9%**			**-6%**			**-4%**			**0%**

Table 16. Percent change in 6th and 7th grade pass rate in Special Education reading and math, 2013 vs 2014

	6TH Grade						7TH Grade					
	READING			MATH			READING			MATH		
	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%	Test	Pass	%
2013	64	16	25%	64	17	27%	49	10	20%	50	10	20%
2014	43	29	67%	43	33	77%	40	20	50%	40	18	45%
% Change			**42%**			**50%**			**30%**			**25%**

Figure 11. Percent of change in STAAR testing for special education 2013 vs 2014



Both sixth and seventh grades showed progress in the number of students who passed the reading and math portions of the STAAR exam in 2014. African American students, in particular, made percentage gains in reading and math. The highest growth, however, was in reading and math scores at both grade levels for Special Education students. Sixth and seventh graders in Special Education had a 42% and 30% change respectively in the numbers who passed the reading exam and a 50% and 25% change respectively in the numbers who passed the math exam.

A Chi-square test was used to determine if there were significant differences over three years (2012-2014) in the number of students in sixth and seventh grades that passed the STAAR math and STAAR reading exams. The only significant differences between grade/subject/years were present in sixth grade math 2012-2014 X^2 (2, N=877) = 8.42, $p = .015$. An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine any significant differences between mean scales scores of each of the assessments across three administrations, 2012-2014. There were varied results based on grade levels and subjects. There were significant differences between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 for sixth grade STAAR reading scale scores ($p=.031$). Mean scores rose from 1521.92 (2012-2013) to 1547.09 (2013-2014). There were also significant differences between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 for 7th grade STAAR math scale scores ($p=.007$). Mean scores rose from 1577.06 (2012-2013) to 1589.35 (2013-2014). This analysis did not measure the impact of RD on STAAR performance. It only determined that there were differences in means for the years being investigated.

Ed White received special commendation in Year 2 from the Texas Education Agency in its Accountability Rating. The school received distinction for student achievement in English, math and social studies. Distinction is given if students perform at higher than the expected standard for the subject matter. The school also scored in the top 25% of Texas schools for improved student progress. Moreover, they ranked second in the state for improved student progress when compared to other middle schools with similar student demographics. The 2014 Accountability Summary can be located in Appendix G.

Summary. The outcome indicators, namely suspensions, office referrals, tardys and academic performance show similar trends. Suspension rates for conduct violations continue to decline including the use of restorative circles and conferences for such behavior. There are decreases in tardys, which suggests that students may be more positively engaged in the school. The improvement in academic performance and student progress as rated by the Texas Education Agency is particularly noteworthy because the school, in the past, has fallen below state and federal expectations in student achievement and traditionally performed below other schools in the district. Indeed, there was no expectation that improvements in tardys and academic performance would be seen this quickly. The shift in frequencies for office referrals is somewhat confusing. Except for the seventh grade comparison for 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014, office referrals decline for the first semester but climb upwards for the second semester. It appears the decrease in suspensions after Year 1 continues in Year 2. This ongoing drop indicates that the school is sustaining its results after Year 1 and poses the possibility of an additive effect with more time and/or a greater percentage of the school's population using RD.

Outcomes from Monthly Reviews of RD Program Implementation

Evaluation of the implementation of RD is based on a review of monthly classification counts of student offenses, Circle-It incident forms, and teacher interviews.

Classification of Student Offenses. Tables 17a and 17b list the eight most common student offenses for sixth grade by month and the number of incidents for each category. Tables 18a and 18b provide the same information for seventh grade. Totals of offenses in the most common offense categories are contrasted to total monthly offenses in all categories. Offenses are

reviewed by month to evaluate differences in frequencies and changes in classification over the academic calendar year and to compare sixth and seventh grades.

Table 17a. 6th grade student offense categories and frequencies: First semester

Sept	#	Oct	#	Nov	#	Dec	#
Disruption Class	12	Failure to follow directions	14	3 Strikes	8	Disruption Class	10
Failure to follow directions	8	3 Strikes	6	Failure to follow directions	8	PMB[4]	7
3 Strikes	4	Disruption Class	5	Disruption Class	7	Failure to follow directions	6
Walked out of Class[1]	4	Dress Code	5	Absences Truancy[2]	4	Slap/Hit[3]	5
TOTALS	28/52		30/64		27/53		28/70

[1] Frequency of offenses was the same for Horseplay
[2] Frequency of offenses was the same for Profanity
[3] Frequency of offenses was the same for Walked out of Class and Horseplay
[4] PMB is Persistent Misbehavior

Table 17b. Student offense categories and frequencies: Second semester[1]

Jan	#	Feb	#	March	#	April	#	May/June[1]	#
Failure follow directions	23	Disruption Class	29	Walked out of Class	20	Disruption Class	27	Absences Truancy	63
Absences Truancy	17	Walked out of Class	28	Disruption Class	14	Walked out of Class	26	Walked out of Class	47
Dress Code	12	Failure follow directions	20	Failure follow directions	10	Failure follow directions	23	Disruption Class	40
Disruption Class	9	Absences Truancy	14	Absences Truancy	10	Absences Truancy	12	Failure follow directions	27
TOTALS	61/112		91/214		54/124		88/162		177/274

[1] Includes 10 incidents in June

Frequency of offenses in the sixth grade was relatively low during the first semester but then doubled during the second semester. The four most common offenses were minor. However, Absences/Truancy and Walked out of Class moved from 4th place in frequency of offense the first semester to 1st and 2nd place in the second semester. Numbers for these offenses increased as well from 20 to 237. Offenses involving students who are Absent/Tardy or Walk out of Class are noteworthy because these students miss instruction time.

Table 18a. Sixth grade student offense categories and frequencies: First semester

Sept	#	Oct	#	Nov	#	Dec	#
Walked out of Class	21	Walked out of Class	26	Walked out of Class	17	Absences Truancy	24
Disruption Class	9	Failure to follow directions	25	VP-RW[1]	16	Failure to follow directions	8
Dress Code	8	Disruption Class	22	Disruption Class	15	Disruption Class	7
3 Strikes	8	Absences Truancy	21	Absences Truancy	13	Inappropriate Remarks	6
TOTALS	46/87		94/147		61/120		45/80

[1] VP-RW is tardies

[2] VP-RK is in-school suspension, unsuccessful

Table 18b. Student offense categories and frequencies: Second semester[1]

Jan	#	Feb	#	March	#	April	#	May/June[1]	#
Absences Truancy	22	Absences Truancy	19	Walked out of Class	27	Absences Truancy	40	Absences Truancy	66
Walked out of Class	15	Walked out of Class	15	Absences Truancy	19	Walked out of Class	27	Walked out of Class	27
Disruption Class	11	Disruption Class	14	Failure follow directions	10	Failure follow directions	25	Profanity Staff	9
Failure follow directions	9	3 Strikes	11	3 Strikes	6	Disruption Class	9	PMB	7
TOTALS	57/106		59/130		62/88		101/154		109/143

[1] Includes 4 incidents in June

[2] PMB is Persistent Misbehavior

[3] VP-FA is Flagrant Deviance

[4] Frequency of offenses was the same for PBM

Frequencies of the most common offenses were higher in the seventh grade. The total number of these offenses was similar in the first and second semesters. During the first semester, Absences/Tardys and Walking out of Class fell into 1st and 4th place. In the second semester, however, these classifications took 1st or 2nd place every month. Frequencies of these offenses increased as well from 122 to 277.

For both sixth and seventh grades, Confrontation-Physical and Bullying were not high frequency categories. Aside from Absences/Truancy and Walking out of Class, the top frequencies were for minor infractions where the specific behavior associated with Disruption of Class or Failure to Follow Directions is not specified. Numbers of total frequencies and offenses of greatest

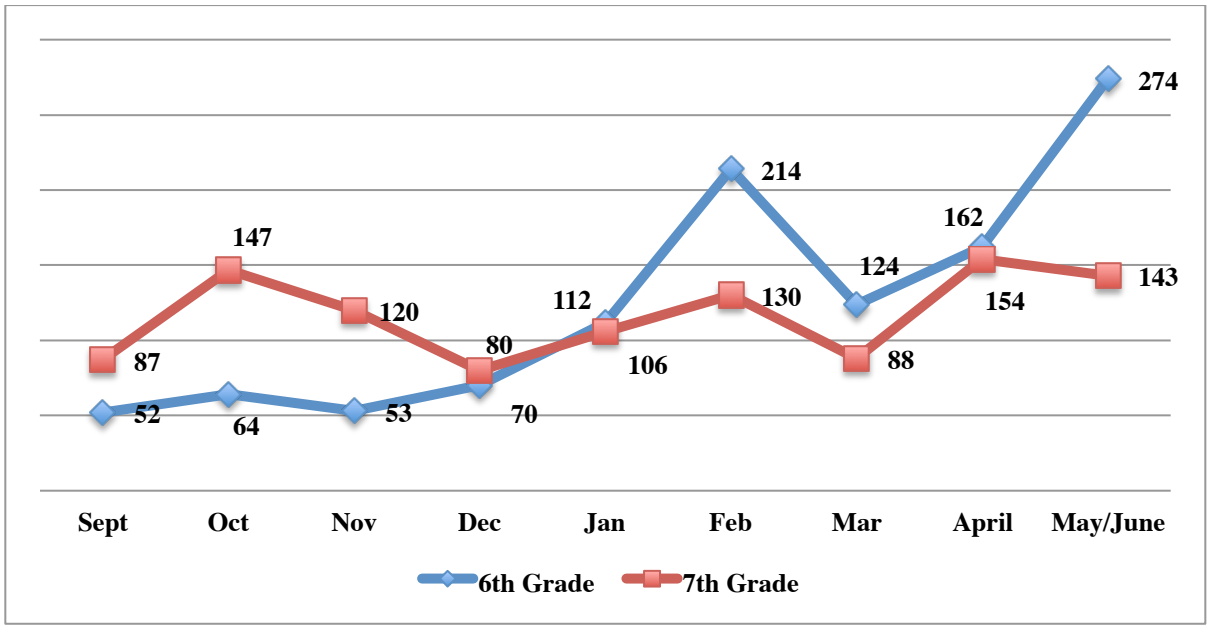
frequency are highest in October for seventh grade and February and May/June for sixth and seventh grades.

Table 19 compares total offense frequencies by month for sixth and seventh graders. Regardless of the offense type, there were increases in February, April and May for both grades.

Table 19. 6th and 7th grade total offense frequencies by month

Month	Sixth grade 2013- 2014	Seventh grade 2013- 2014
Sept.	52	87
Oct.	64	147
Nov.	53	120
Dec.	70	80
Jan.	112	106
Feb.	214	130
March	124	88
April	162	154
May	274	143
TOTAL	**1,125**	**1,055**

Figure 12. 6th and 7th grade total offense frequencies by month



Bullying is not reported as a high frequency offense at Ed White. Out of 3,268 recorded behavior incidents for 2013-2014, 53 or 2% were classified as "bullying." Table 20 shows a 33% increase in bullying for the sixth grade between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Table 21 shows a 70% decrease in bullying for the RD pilot group between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Table 22 shows a 23% increase in bullying for the whole school between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Most of the increase in bullying occurred in the sixth grade. The monthly frequencies suggest that February through May are predictably higher risk months.

Table 20. Sixth grade bullying behavior frequencies: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014
Sept.	2	1	Dec.	0	2	March	6	8
Oct.	1	0	Jan.	0	3	April	6	2
Nov.	5	2	Feb.	4	10	May	6	12
Total Bullying Incidents								
2012-2013: 30								
2013-2014: 40								

Table 21. RD pilot group bullying behavior frequencies: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014
Sept.	2	2	Dec.	0	1	March	6	0
Oct.	1	1	Jan.	0	0	April	6	1
Nov.	5	2	Feb.	4	1	May	6	1
Total Bullying Incidents								
2012-2013: 30								
2013-2014: 9								

Table 22. Whole School bullying behavior incidents: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

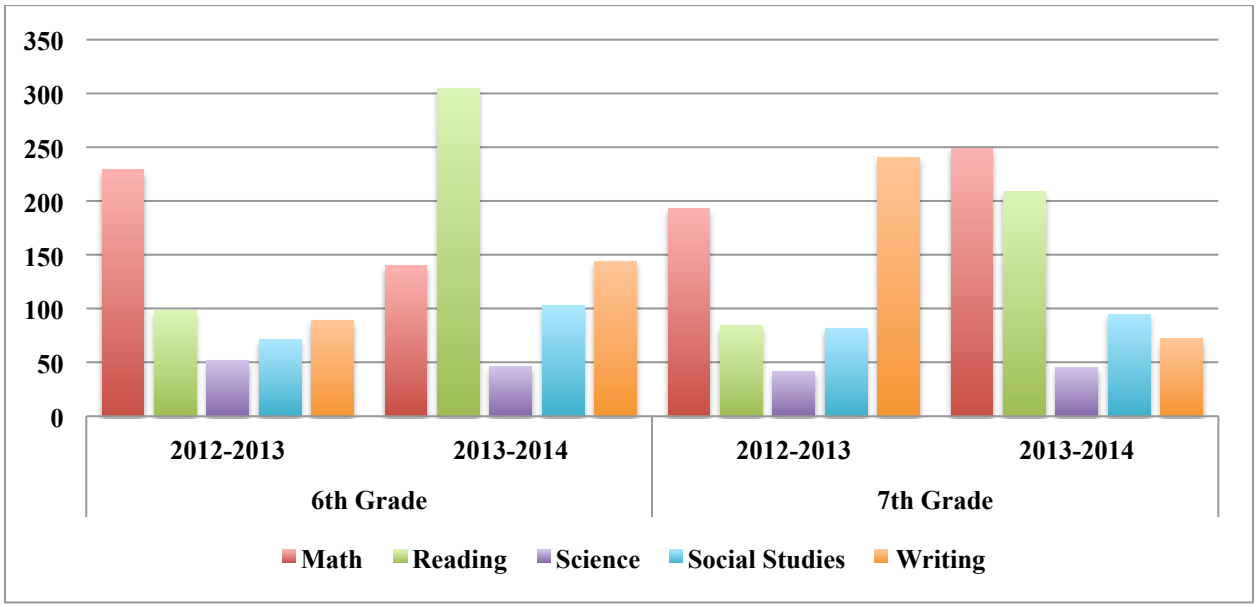
Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014	Month	2012-2013	2013-2014
Sept.	9	4	Dec.	0	3	March	6	8
Oct.	3	3	Jan.	1	3	April	7	3
Nov.	6	4	Feb.	5	12	May	6	13
Total Bullying Incidents								
2012-2013: 43								
2013-2014: 53								

Academic content areas vary as the source of referrals for student offenses. Table 23 shows the distribution of referrals from core curriculum areas for sixth and seventh grades in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.

Table 23. 6th and 7th grade offense referral sources, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014

Content Area	6th Grade		7th Grade		TOTALS	
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014	#	%
Math	229	140	193	249	811	31%
Reading	98	305	84	209	696	27%
Science	52	46	42	45	185	7%
Social Studies	71	103	82	95	351	14%
Writing	89	144	241	72	546	21%
TOTALS	539	738	642	670	2,589	100%

Figure 13. 6th and 7th grade offense referral sources, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014



Of the different content areas, most offense referrals over the first two years of the RD implementation came from teachers in math, reading and writing. In terms of the whole school, out of 69 teachers, aides and guidance counselors who referred students for offenses, seven personnel made between 40-69 referrals, seven personnel made between 70-99 student referrals, and five personnel made over 100 student referrals. Three of the teachers who referred over 100 students taught at the eighth grade level. The five teachers taught different subjects including writing, social studies, math and reading.

Restorative Conferences and Circles. RD is used proactively in the classroom to build community and address peer and adult-student conflict and student offenses. Restorative discipline is classified as "restorative conferences" when it involves 3 persons (usually the teacher and two students). Restorative discipline is classified as "restorative circles" (might include any combination of teachers and administrators and more than two students). Restorative conferences and circles can be teacher or administrator facilitated. Table 24 compares the sixth grade monthly frequencies of incidents by individual students in 2012-2013 to 2013-2014 where restorative conferences, circles or other restorative discipline practice[1] were facilitated either by teachers or administration. Table 25 shows the monthly frequencies for the seventh grade, 2013-2014. If three students were involved in an event of misconduct, Ed White records an RD classification for each student even though all three students may have been part of one circle or conference held about the event.[2]

[1] Frequencies of Circle-It conferences and circles are not included in these totals.

Table 24. 6th grade monthly frequencies of individual student incidents: Restorative conferences and circles, 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Month	Teacher Facilitated		Administration Facilitated	
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014
August	3	1	0	0
September	30	0	24	14
October	33	0	23	3
November	20	0	6	0
December	54	0	3	2
January	18	1	7	1
February	17	2	4	0
March	18	2	3	0
April	4	1	3	3
May	6	3	6	0
June	0	0	0	0
TOTAL STUDENT INCIDENTS	**203**	**10**	**79**	**23**

Table 25. 7th grade monthly frequencies of individual student incidents: Restorative conferences and circles, 2013-2014

Month	Teacher Facilitated	Admin Facilitated
	2013-2014	2013-2014
August	0	2
September	0	18
October	3	26
November	2	16
December	0	4
January	1	19
February	0	43
March	0	12
April	0	50
May	0	0
June	0	0
TOTAL STUDENT INCIDENTS	**6**	**190**

The use of restorative circles and conferences for offenses varied considerably between years, grades and facilitator type. Teacher use was generally low in Year 2 implementation (2013-2014) for both sixth and seventh grade incidents. There was more use by teachers and administrators of these processes for sixth grade incidents in Year 1 (2012-2013) than in Year 2 implementation (2013-2014). There was also greater use of RD processes by administrators for seventh grade than for sixth grade incidents in 2013-2014. Differences between grade levels may reflect differences in cohorts, including behavioral issues and levels of need. Although speculative, the differences between grade levels could also reflect differences in the assistant principal assigned to each grade. Ed White hired a new sixth grade assistant principal in 2013-2014. The assistant principal assigned to the sixth grade or RD pilot group in 2012-2013 moved

with the cohort becoming the seventh grade assistant principal in 2013-2014. It is noteworthy that during high frequency incident months, i.e. February, April, May, administrators for sixth grade incidents facilitated almost no restorative circles and conferences.

A review of actions taken in response to RD-specific incidents shows trends in how Ed White is using circles and conferences for disciplinary issues. In the following examples pseudonyms are used in place of real names and dates. Accounts of "action" taken focus primarily on apology making by the student responsible to other students or to teachers. Another common outcome are the making of agreements not to do certain behaviors again. In some instances, the agreements are between students and include staying away from each other. For example, "Marissa says she and Tanika got into an argument because she thought Tanika called her a name. Tanika says she wasn't talking to Marissa. Marissa is understanding she is not to say anything to Tanika while in Science class." The accounts frequently begin with noting that the offending student took responsibility for his or her behavior. "Clanita admitted to leaving the classroom."

Many of the accounts also include explanations as to why the behavior occurred. In an incident about a threatening remark made by a student to the teacher, the account reads, "The teacher was blowing the whistle. She was right by Jose's ear and blew the whistle. It was loud and it hurt his ears." This inclusion of explanations indicates that students are being given a chance to describe what happened and the reason for their behavior is given consideration. For example, an account about a student who was late to class reads, "Student said he was on the phone with his Mom confirming where he was to go after school." An account of a student who walked out of class reads, "Brita says she was upset about something that happened at home, and needs time by herself, so she went to Mrs. Davidow."

There are changes in the accounts of actions taken as the year progresses. After November there is a gradual increase in warnings to students that if their behavior continues they will receive suspensions. For example, one account notes, "Vanessa admits she did leave class without permission with another student. She understands that if she does this again she will get ISS" Another account states, "Micky says he went to the "1" station. No one was there. He then went to the Computer lab. There was no "1" station there so he then says he was past the 5 minute truant period so he decided he was late after all, so he just walked around that period. Micky was reminded that the school needed to know where he was at all times. The next time this happens Micky will receive 1 day ISS" By March, accounts indicate that students are being assigned to ISS with little description of what else happened as a result of the RD process. This trend continues through the rest of the year. There are no comments on action plans or monitoring of those plans.

Circle-It Forms. Circle-It Forms were created in Year 1 as an early warning mechanism for students to alert the LRT (administrators) when they were in conflict with each other and/or felt a transgression had or was about to occur. The form and its use were modified for 2013-2014. In Year 2 it was used by the core administrative RD facilitator as an intake form for the circles/conferences she conducted between students and between students and teachers. The monthly number of circles/conferences facilitated by her are in addition to the circles/conferences led by the assistant principals and/or teachers. The form itself includes a

description of the incident, who is involved, the urgency of the need for intervention, and the outcome of the circle or conference. There is space for the signatures of the participants and for a monitoring plan. A copy of the Circle-It Form is in Appendix B. Twenty-five percent of the total forms for each month were reviewed as indicators of the yearly implementation process. Table 26 shows the frequency of Circle-It Forms per month. In the review below, pseudonyms are used in place of real names and dates.

Table 26. Frequency of circle-it forms by month: 2012-2013 vs 2013-2014

Month	2012-2013	2013-2014
	6th Grade	6th & 7th Grade
August	0	5
September	11	30
October	107	37
November	47	23
December	34	19
January	39	39
February	21	24
March	25	12
April	14	12
May	35	13
TOTAL	330	213

August. There were 5 Circle-It forms filled out in August. Circle-It forms include an agreement to repair form to be signed by the participants. There is no separate section to indicate a monitoring plan. The form sampled indicates that a conference was held involving two boys who pulled each other's pants down during a class. Both boys apologized and promised not to do it again. "Benjy says he understands why Marcus was upset because others saw what he did and he will never do it again." It is recorded that both boys understand that ISS is an option if this behavior happens again. There is also mention of community service but no clear indication if it was assigned.

September. There are 30 Circle-It Forms filled out in September. During the month the form is changed to include who was involved and where and when the incident happened. Most of the incidents involve physical altercations between students but there are some incidents between teacher and student. The incidents are fully described by the facilitator. For example, "Mrs. Bennett requested a circle with Kendrick. He had asked to go to the bathroom and was gone for quite a while. He was caught in the hallway kissing his girlfriend. She (Mrs. Bennett) is also having problems with him in the classroom not focusing on his work and disrupting [the class]." Most of the forms indicate a specific outcome or plan. "Mrs. Bennett and Kendrick agreed that if he becomes agitated in the class and needs 2 min. out, they formed a secret hand signal for him to go outside of the classroom. Mrs. Bennett said she is willing to try this if it will help him get back on track." In addition to Circle-It Forms, students are completing a Student Statement about what happened. Participants are signing an agreement form whether or not there is anything formally agreed to.

October. There are 37 Circle-It Forms filled out in October. The packet of circle and agreement forms is used to document incidents. Because the core administrative RD facilitator

completes them all with no student statements attached, it is difficult to know how many of the circles/conferences are initiated by students. Students may be verbally reporting incidents and staff may be completing the forms. There is often a summary of the incident written on the agreement form. Forms indicate student-to-student issues but some teachers and staff are requesting conferences with students including a bus driver. "Deloras came to Mr. Grove to let him know that Byran had been bothering her on the bus asking for her lunch and eating it. Deloras gives Byran her lunch because she does not want him to be mad at her. After she give Byran her lunch she goes all day without eating." Agreements usually consist of an apology if the students were previously friends or a decision by students to stay away from each other. Check-ins with staff are part of the agreement but without a specific plan. Students appear to be responsible for reporting continuing problems. "Deloras said she just wants Byran to stop asking for her food. Byran said he would never do it again. Deloras will let Mr. Grove know if this continues to happen."

November. There are 23 Circle-It Forms filled out in November. Forms continue to be completed by the core administrative RD facilitator with few student statements attached. The bulk of the incidents can be categorized as misunderstandings between friends, horseplay that escalates or animosities between individuals. Many, if not most, involve physical contact such as punches in the face, bumping in the hall, etc. Amends-making consists of apologies with limited additional reparation. Action plans consist of person harmed reporting to an adult if behavior continues, the threat of ISS in the future, and a report to parent because behavior is escalating. There is a pattern of some students having multiple circles/conferences.

December. There are 19 Circle-it Forms completed in December. More Student Statements are included. There are several agreements signed by students and teachers. In some instances students declined to participate or to complete the circle. Action plans occasionally include the contacting of parents or other teachers about the outcome of a circle/conference. Incidents continue to reflect physical altercations including assaulting another student, physical fighting about a past issue, throwing of a chair in class. Outcomes consist principally of efforts to behave differently.

> *"Donny says he just wants Eric to just stop asking to use his phone. He feels he has taken advantage of him. Eric understands that he shouldn't have gotten mad at Donny. He apologized to him for using his phone and promised he will not bother him or ask to use his phone in the future."*

January. There are 39 Circle-it Forms completed in December. Although the core administrative RD facilitator continues to complete the forms, some are filled out by students. There are more student completed circle forms but the agreement form is not usually attached. It is unknown if the circles are student or staff initiated. Apologies continue to be the primary accountability tool. Monitoring plans are limited to asking that the person harmed report additional behaviors. In some situations, students are signing agreement forms stating, for example, that "there will be no talking behind each other's backs, no listening to messengers, and a willingness to treat each other respectfully."

February. There are 24 Circle-it Forms filled out in February. There continues to be a slight increase in the number of students filling out forms. There are also more student statements attached. For example, "Yesterday, Ashante said when she was on the bus that she wanted a rematch. Then she called me H&Bs. So they told her that she needed to leave me alone. So I said that I am coming to the counselor's office and Ashante is in my 3rd period class and she said that she is going to fight me in Mrs. Carpenter's class." Occasionally there is a student request for an additional circle if the incident is not resolved the first time. ISS is being used as a threat and, in some instances, is assigned in conjunction with RD. "Becky agrees not to talk about Tanisha or spread rumors about her. If she does she will get ISS or possibly AMS. If Becky hears that Tanisha is talking about her, the same applies."

March. There are 12 Circle-it Forms completed in March. Forms are being completed by students and the core administrative RD facilitator. Student Statements are being included but often not attached to the Circle-It Form. There are some more detailed action plans outlined and/or multiple actions listed for both parties to refrain from the same behaviors. Traditional consequences sometimes follow the circle/conference

April. There are 12 Circle-it Forms done in April. Student statements are usually included with forms. There is indication that part of action plans is to make parents or teachers aware that a circle/conference occurred. It appears that the request for a circle is being done at times after a threat was made to physically hurt a student or to prevent something worse from happening. "We have not thrown paper at him at all. But people are throwing paper and saying it is us. So now he wants to fight me and yesterday he says he's going to fight me." In a different situation, a one-day ISS was given after girls did not apologize.

May. There are 13 Circle-it Forms filled out in May. There appears to be a mix of student and staff initiated circles/conferences. Circles/conferences are being done with both students and teachers. ISS is being used as a deterrent. In one instance, a student walked out of the circle/conference.

Summary. There are fewer Circle-it Forms being completed in 2013-2014. This reduction is particularly evident during the last three months of school (March-May). The forms are now standardized with little variation in the form itself. In 2012-2013 there were few action plans or monitoring arrangements for those plans. Apologies seemed to be the primary result of the circle/conference. Apologies continue to dominate in 2013-2014, as do decisions by students to not engage with those persons who trigger them. However, the plan to prevent future occurrences is not clearly laid out. When signing of agreements does occur, it likely formalizes them, which may make them more potent.

There are few monitoring plans other than for the person harmed to alert an adult if the behavior continues. ISS seems to be used as a deterrent warning the student about what is coming if the behavior continues. Although a number of incidents involve interactions that get out of hand, e.g. rumors, horseplay, many of the incidents involve some sort of physical altercation or threat of getting hurt. The inclusion of telling parents or other teachers about the circle/conference may be one of the ways to instill an informal monitoring arrangement for an individual who is at risk for trouble in the future.

In contrast to last year, there are instances where students are refusing to participate, either by not acknowledging their responsibility, walking out, or declining to be a part of a circle/conference. This development raises questions about what kind of preparation is occurring before participants are brought together. The success of the RD process, rests, in part, on voluntariness. Moreover, the contagion effect of students refusing to participate can be as powerful as when a circle/conference goes well.

Weekly Teacher Interviews. In Year 1, brief weekly audiotaped interviews were held with five sixth grade teachers. In Year 2, interviews were held with five sixth- grade and five seventh grade teachers but the interviews did not start until January. The RD consultant, however, kept a log of her activities and observations throughout the year. This data was analyzed by month and is used to report indirectly on the teacher's experiences from September –December. Teachers' involvement in the interviews was voluntary and many of them did not participate weekly.

The following section summarizes teachers' experiences by month. Five of the teachers were familiar with RD processes because they had been a part of the Year 1 implementation in 2012-2013. Five of the teachers were introduced to RD processes in 2013-2014. Areas analyzed by month include teachers' verbal reports, their core attitudes, challenges, evidence of attitude shifts, assists from the external consultant and others, and questions. Recurring themes are described in the final section of this report labeled "Themes From Teacher Interviews and Focus Groups."

September. In the first week of this initial month, all teachers in sixth and seventh grades are creating Respect Agreements with students in every class. Respect Agreements are classroom circles where students determine through consensus the values that will guide their behavior in the classroom. All agreements are displayed prominently in the classroom. This purpose of this process is to set the tone for the year and how students will be with each other in class. Everyone is feeling upbeat and amazed by the difference in student attitudes and behaviors between last year and this year. They constantly contrast what was before with what is now. "Huge, huge, huge difference." One teacher sent an email stating,

> *My introverts are being accepted and drawn out by the ring leaders. It has been a beautiful experience this year because I feel like I have helped empower them to be who they aspire to be. They believe in themselves now, and I love watching them struggle with maturity and responsibility and experiencing their emotional growth in my class… I had a ringleader hug me today, and he hugged me like he needed a mama and he didn't let go. He did it in front of his hallway peers and classmates. One of my former students said, "See, I told you, you was our mama." I was very touched by it and I won't forget it.*

Teachers who are new to the process are trying circles and conferring with the external consultant, Stephanie Frogge, who is visiting classrooms to get familiar with the teachers, students in their classes, and their teaching styles. The new sixth grade assistant principal (AP) has some trepidation about only using RD for behavioral incidents and has coined the term "restor-additional" to suggest that it is appropriate to use ISS or a traditional response in conjunction with restorative measures.

October. Lots of student fights and more extreme behavior this month. Efforts are being made to use circles to address even the more serious concerns, e.g. breaking into vending machine and stealing money. Teachers in one of the core subjects have asked for a teacher circle because of their issues as a cohort. Overall teachers seem willing to use circles with less hesitancy for a variety of issues and with greater experimentation. Teachers generally are not following circle protocols. They are talking too much as facilitators, sending the talking piece up and down aisles with desks rather than "circling it," and not using a talking piece. The climate is calmer by the end of the month.

The external consultant is experimenting with developing meaningful accountability agreements with circle participants. She conducted a circle with students and other teachers after an incident to demonstrate how this might be done and spent time on what kind of amends-making was needed in the aftermath of the wrongdoing. The plan consisted of the following acts: "Jeremiah is a basketball player and he's going to parlay the other players into making a presentation to the 6th graders about fighting. He's already written a short essay about that and read it to the basketball team. Maurice is going to give up one of his lunch periods to help Ms. Pierce with some work. Stephanie will do the follow up."

November. The school is pretty chaotic this month. Sixth graders in particular are struggling but it is not clear if circles are being used in the classroom for incidents. There are many external events occurring such as greater use of substitute teachers, serious incidents at neighboring schools including a homicide (not an NEISD school), a mother verbally attacking an assistant principal at a sports event, the principal out on paternity leave, a substitute principal for the rest of the semester, etc. that may be impacting students and teachers. The core administrative RD facilitator is patrolling the halls. Teachers are asking the external consultant for help.

December. No entries from external consultant.

January. (includes teacher interviews) This has been a quieter month following the semester break. Teachers are asking for assistance with their classes and doing circles. Students show evidence of beginning to handle some things themselves. "There was a big fight two days ago behind the science building. But when the students emerged and got hauled in to see the assistant principal they assured him that all was well and they'd 'squashed' the issue. There have been no subsequent problems and the assistant principal thinks they have used some RD tools that helped them." Teachers who were part of Year 1 are feeling quite comfortable with the circle process and enjoying using it in a variety of ways. "I just have my own way of doing things, but then I started it last year, so they [the students] know the drill." Teachers are more aware of what doing circles gives the students, e.g. down time to just let it out, helps kids come out of their shell, kids feel more accountable for what happens in the classroom, as well as themselves, e.g. I can see why the behaviors are happening, kids are more open to say "I didn't get this" so it gives the teacher more knowledge about why they did not do so well on a test.

Some teachers who were introduced to RD in Year 2 are more tentative and confused. "I mean, I understand it. I went to the classes but as you go along with it [it gets clearer]." Some have

never seen a circle and are hesitant to try things themselves. Students, however, are requesting them. "My kids even ask for the circles. 'I've got something I want to talk about sir.'" Regardless of their familiarity with the process, teachers have clearly adopted the need to form more personal and meaningful relationships with students. "I have a little boy that talks and talks and talks and he was out for a week and I tell the kids, 'I miss Jerome.' They go, 'Really? He talks.' I said, 'Well I don't miss his mouth but I miss him.' So when he came in today he said, 'Ms, I heard you say you miss me.' He was so happy. I always do that when they're absent because they miss a lot. Even the kids that are hard to get along with I say, 'Sumpter, where have you been all week?'"

February. There is growing tension during the month. Many teachers are not doing circles because they do not feel secure enough. There is concern that teachers need more help particularly in classes that "spin out of control" but there is no time for booster sessions. The external consultant is being asked by the principal to sit in on more classes that have problems. One of the teachers who began using RD this year is using circles in a variety to ways, i.e. to teach math content, as a way to take a break from hard concentration, as an incentive, as a tool for modeling how to acknowledge having made a mistake, etc. "Discipline wise I really haven't used it. I think that if you used it very often they will know how to be a better speaker and a better listener which helps curriculum wise when I do have to teach in front of the class they kind of know how to listen."

Other teachers also are commenting on how they are using RD processes. One uses it to take the emotional temperature she senses in the room. "I turn off the lights, pass the frog around and ask what they are feeling right then." Another described a conference she did with two students and after the student responsible for the harm apologized, the student harmed said she needed to talk to him privately so I told her to go ahead and then reconciled it between the two of them." Yet another told about how she helped a student who was in trouble with another teacher to write a note and apologize. "Then she felt okay going back to class because before she didn't want to go back." A teacher who was new to RD decided to use a circle prompt "What was the last good advice you gave someone" that resulted in discussion about differentiating between good and bad advice. Another teacher, cognizant of the stress building about the upcoming STAAR test, used circles to calm the class after a hard drilling. "Look the first 40 minutes are gonna be crazy but if we can do that we'll have a circle the last 10 minutes. It's almost like I don't have to give candy anymore."

March. Teachers have dropped doing classroom community building circles because of being overwhelmed with test taking. Students, too, have shut down. They are sick of hearing about STAAR. Students, however, are asking for circles. Even though RD processes have been somewhat suspended teachers report doing modified practices, e.g. "we went around and talked about things"; "I'm doing one-on-one chats in the hallway"; "I asked how they are feeling about the test coming up and they all had something to say."

A number of classes seem out of control and the teachers are feeling helpless but are not using RD. There is more awareness that the school is dealing with high mobility in student population. It is difficult to integrate new students at this point in the year and few teachers are doing it actively.

April. External consultant is doing a wide variety of tasks quickly jumping from one to the next—helping a student find a cell phone, sitting in on classes, doing circles in classes where there are issues, etc. It appears that many things seem to be coming to a head—assistant principal got upset with a belligerent student and did not respond in a restorative way, student expelled finally after many attempts to help her, etc. Teachers are thinking hard about RD and issues they regularly confront—classes too large to do circles well, same students causing problems over and over regardless of RD processes. There is little mention of community building circles and teachers are having difficulty re-instituting circles after not doing them in March. "Kids feel school is over because STAAR is over. Kids are wandering all over the place. Some connections I do have with the kids but some connections I've lost. You develop those relationships but then they break because you have to keep them on track, get after them because they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing." Teachers, however, continue to comment on what they are doing to keep the focus on relationship building central. "I try not to be obvious but sometimes you can't help it if they're sad. Different times I just go like this to them (demonstrates a hug). It's a good thing and it builds an everlasting relationship. Just a tap."

May. There is some re-emergence of doing classroom circles. At the same time, teachers are evaluating what does and does not work. "When I try to address things in a large circle I still get a lot of discomfort but I haven't done one in a while so I probably need to do one at the end of the year." Another teacher commented "I did one 1st and 5th period but they are not benefitting and it's making the situation worse. Last year's circles weren't good and so for these students it's considered not a good thing and they don't take it seriously." Some teachers note the significance of particular students on other students' participation. "We had a new student come into class and she's like a straight up leader in here. Anytime we have circle, she opens up and brings things out and everyone else, the whole level just goes up." Another relayed that one of my students had reported to him about a new student. He said, "Sir, we had a 10 minute conversation during lunch because he just kept asking more questions about it. I'm like 'it's just a circle. We do circles all the time.' I told him, 'We're the only school that does this.'"

Summary. The monthly review suggests that teachers vary considerably in their comfort level and use of RD processes, particularly classroom community building circles. Teachers in their first year of using RD are quite hesitant and do not feel competent. However they have prioritized the importance of their relationships with students and tell stories about those students when asked in interviews about circles and conferences. Teachers in their second year seem quite comfortable and enjoy experimenting with using circles in many ways. This flexibility suggests that they are tailoring the process to themselves, the ethos of a particular classroom, and what they want to accomplish. Many teachers are using restorative chats with students in the hallway outside the classroom. They recognize the significance of understanding what the student is coping with outside the school and how that impacts their behavior.

Teachers started off strong in September and were impressed by the growth in students from the year before. Starting in October teachers reported more extreme incidents occurring and by November the campus seemed more reactive and managing lots of change. January seemed somewhat calmer but from February forward, teachers seem tense and under pressure. However, teachers also reported using circles in a fluid way experimenting with what all they could be used

for. In March most circles stopped, as the entire school was focused centrally on STAAR. It was difficult to re-establish norms involving circles after such a push and it wasn't until May that some regularity began to re-emerge. With student behaviors escalating some of the teachers who had not been using circles considered implementing them. However, they generally opted out of processes, preferring to do one-on-ones with these youth rather than classroom circles.

Teachers made active use of the external consultant both for ideas and for help when they encountered challenging situations. The principal in particular used the external consultant to observe and give feedback in classrooms where teachers felt they were losing control of the classroom. The outcome of these crisis circles is mixed. Very little preparation was done with students and teachers prior to bringing everyone together which negatively impacts the outcome. Teaches, however, seemed highly committed to finding ways to make things work and invested in sorting out why things were not successful.

One teacher in particular stood out for his unusual aptitude and understanding of the vast array of applications possible with circles. In every interview he described in detail a high level of successful experimentation. Even extreme challenges such as large class sizes or an abundance of new students become opportunities to try doing new things with circles in the class. For example he instituted that each student would get just two minutes to talk to ensure everyone would have a turn. "It was almost like they taught the new student how to do the circle because they kind of held that two minutes sacred. It was almost like you see in the movies and the counselor, this is your circle of trust." The impromptu nature of how he used circles shows in his comment, "Circles work for me because it helps me know my students better and even if it's a little tid bit of what I didn't know before it just helps." A student will say, 'I like to dance' and I say, "Okay, stand up. Do a little dance and then answer a question."

Outcomes from School Climate Surveys (SCS)

Teachers, parents/caregivers, and students in the first and second year cohorts filled out climate surveys to assess changes in the school's climate. Following the procedure used during Year 1, these three stakeholder groups were assessed three times: September, December/ January, and May. Numbers of participants responding to the SCS vary because filling out the survey is a voluntary process. Individuals complete the survey without identification by name or code. Individual scores, therefore, cannot be compared over time. Rather each stakeholder group's scores are summed and averaged and then compared to their cohorts' scores in December /January and May.

The SCS is used both to evaluate change in school climate but also to assess areas that stand out indicating improvement or slippage. Areas are assessed by calculating percent change in individual survey items. Survey items vary between stakeholder groups. Copies of the SCS for teachers, parents/caregivers, and students are in Appendix A. Tables 27 a-b compare teachers' scores from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. They also show the percent change in survey items. Tables 28 a-d compare students' scores in the sixth grade (2012-2013 vs 2013-2014) and scores from the RD pilot group when students were in sixth grade (2012-2013) to being in seventh grade (2013-2014). It also shows percent change in survey items across two years. Tables 29 a-d compare parent/caregiver scores whose children were in sixth grade (2012-2013 vs 2013-2014) and scores from the RD pilot group when their children were in sixth grade (2012-2013) to being

in seventh grade (2013-2014). Again they also show percent change in survey items across two years.

Table 27a. Comparison of staff SCS scores, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

2012-2013	September (n=31)	December (n=10)	June (n=10)
	M=2.32	M=2.74	M=2.47
2013-2014	September (n=37)	December (n=26)	June (n=48)
	M=2.88	M=3.16	M=3.04

Figure 14. SCS mean scores for staff from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

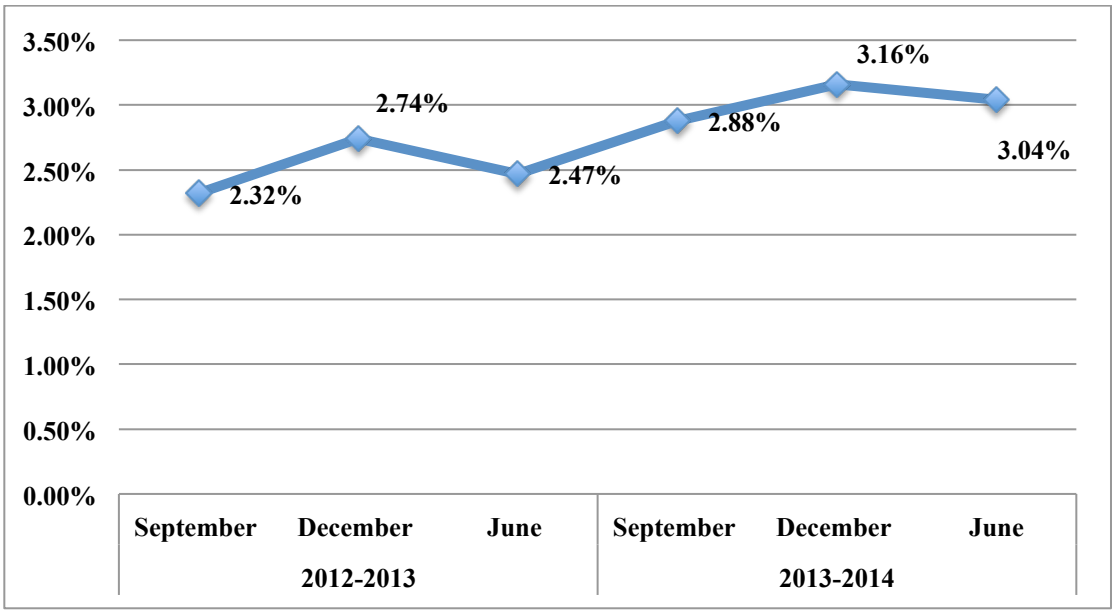


Table 27b. Staff SCS item scores, 2013-2014

Questions	Sept. (n=37)	Dec. (n=26)	% Change	May (n=48)	% Change
#1	3.5	3.33	-0.17	3.37	0.04
#2	3.32	3.26	-0.06	3.26	0
#3	2.51	2.54	0.03	2.44	-0.1
#4	3.08	3.13	0.05	3.15	0.02
#5	2.26	2.28	0.02	2.29	0.01
#6	3.33	3.31	-0.02	3.51	0.2
#7	3.35	3.36	0.01	3.47	0.11
#1a	3.06	3.08	0.02	2.7	-0.38
#2a	3.21	3.32	0.11	3.17	-0.15
#3a	3.22	3.24	0.02	3.07	-0.17
#4a	3.06	3.04	-0.02	2.93	-0.11
#5a	3.09	2.85	-0.24	2.7	-0.15
#6a	3.19	3.24	0.05	2.8	-0.44
#7a	3.25	3.16	-0.09	3.06	-0.1
#8a	2.17	2.21	0.04	2.41	0.2
#9a	3.08	3.21	0.13	3.13	-0.08
#10a	3.15	2.94	-0.21	3.09	0.15

Mean SCS staff scores show a gradual rise over two years. There is a slight decrease in June, 2014 in Question 1a ("Students and staff communicate to each other in a respectful way") and Question 6a ("When students, staff and /or parents are in conflict, everyone's views are listened to"). Staff comments are generally favorable over the three times. In June, however, staff describe new skills such as "I am more willing to reach out to different kids;' "I think of restoring (respect, making amends, etc.);" "I've learned to better recognize where there is an unseen/unheard problem in some students." They also share growing concerns such as "It is split on campus. There is not a whole lot of buy-in from the teachers;" "The atmosphere for the students is that they can do what they want, then "circle" it;" "It seems that since [students'] brains are not fully developed to make decisions, they are learning to manipulate the RD process. In other words, we are grooming manipulators and not successful decision-makers."

Table 28a. Comparison of 6th grade student SCS scores, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

	September (n=255)	December (n=252)	June (n=215)
2012-2013	**M=2.40**	**M=2.30**	**M=2.33**
	September (n=222)	**December (n=243)**	**June (n=230)**
2013-2014	**M=3.00**	**M=2.86**	**M=2.83**

Table 28b. Comparison of pilot RD cohort SCS scores, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

2012-2013	**September (n=255)**	**December (n=252)**	**June (n=215)**
6th Grade	**M=2.40**	**M=2.30**	**M=2.33**
2013-2014	**September (n=140)**	**December (n=243)**	**June (n=179)**
7th Grade	**M=2.71**	**M=2.70**	**M=2.79**

Table 28c. 6th grade student SCS item scores, 2013-2014

Questions	Sept. (n=222)	Dec. (n=243)	% Change	May (n=179)	% Change
#1	3.34	3.25	-0.09	3.17	-0.08
#2	3.23	3.23	0	3.00	-0.23
#3	2.54	2.32	-0.32	2.48	0.16
#4	2.91	2.65	-0.26	2.78	0.13
#5	2.75	2.7	-0-05	2.66	-0.04
#6	2.76	2.74	-0.02	2.79	0.05
#7	3.09	2.98	-0.11	2.93	-0.05
#8	2.99	2.75	-0.24	2.77	0.02
#9	2.91	2.89	-0.02	2.84	-0.05
#10	3.13	2.97	-0.16	2.87	-0.10
#11	3.04	2.9	-0.14	2.81	-0.09
#12	3.19	2.99	-0.2	3.05	0.06
#13	3.08	2.78	-0.3	2.58	-0.20

Table 28d. 7th grade student SCS scores, 2013-2014

Questions	Sept. (n=140)	Dec. (n=243)	% Change	May (n=179)	% Change
#1	3.46	3.17	-0.29	3.31	0.14
#2	3.08	2.93	-0.15	3.08	0.15
#3	2.24	2.35	0.11	2.43	0.08
#4	2.68	2.71	0.03	2.63	-0.08
#5	2.75	2.56	-0.19	2.57	0.01
#6	2.5	2.53	0.03	2.64	0.11
#7	2.99	2.85	-0.14	2.81	-0.04
#8	2.8	2.61	-0.19	2.92	0.31
#9	2.7	2.55	-0.15	2.8	0.25
#10	2.68	2.7	0.02	2.82	0.12
#11	2.73	2.64	-0.09	2.76	0.12
#12	1.87	2.01	0.14	2.13	0.12
#13	2.62	2.5	-0.12	2.43	-0.07

There is a gradual downturn in sixth grade student SCS scores in 2013-2014. The lowest item score is Question 13 ("My possessions are safe at school."). Student comments are limited and positive about the school. However, there is a growing concern about the extent of bullying. In June, 7 out of 52 comments were about bullying.

In contrast, there is a gradual increase in seventh grade student SCS scores and in the pilot RD cohort over two years. Similar to sixth grade, the lowest item score is Question 13 in June about safety of possessions. There are large positive increases in item scores for Question 8 ("If someone harms me at this school, I am able to say how thing can be made better") and Question 9 ("At this school, when someone does something wrong or harms others all involved help decide how things can be made better). In their comments seventh grade students talk about loving the school but also indicate concerns about bullying: "Even though we do circles it doesn't stop the bullies from being mean. They still do it."

Table 29a. Comparison of 6th grade parent SCS scores, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

	September (n=107)	December (n=64)	June (n=22)
2012-2013	M=2.45	M=2.53	M=2.75
	September (n=111)	December (n=68)	June (n=41)
2013-2014	M=3.41	M=3.19	M=3.18

Table 29b. Comparison of pilot RD parent cohort SCS scores, 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

2012-2013	September (n=107)	December (n=64)	June (n=22)
6th Grade	M=2.45	M=2.53	M=2.75
2013-2014	September (n=2)	December (n=21)	June (n=28)
7th Grade	M=3.6	M=3.03	M=3.00

Table 29c. 6th grade parent SCS item scores, 2013-2014

Questions	Sept. (n=111)	Dec. (n=68)	% Change	May (n=41)	% Change
#1	3.56	3.37	-0.19	3.15	-0.22
#2	3.67	3.64	-0.03	3.55	-0.09
#3	3.35	3.33	-0.02	3.55	-0.22
#4	3.51	3.34	-0.17	3.24	-o.1
#5	3.41	3.19	-0.22	3.19	0
#6	3.32	3.17	-0.15	3.03	-0.14
#7	3.51	3.32	-0.19	3.31	-0.01
#8	3.29	2.98	-0.31	3.30	0.32
#9	3.27	3.13	-0.14	3.16	0.03
#10	3.01	2.83	-0.18	2.77	-0.06

Table 29d. 7th grade parent SCS scores, 2013-2014

Questions	Sept. (n=2)	Dec. (n=21)	% Change	May (n=27)	% Change
#1	4.00	2.90	-1.10	3.04	0.14
#2	4.00	3.15	-0.85	3.41	0.25
#3	3.50	2.94	-0.56	2.87	-0.07
#4	3.00	2.94	-0.06	3.04	0.1
#5	3.00	3.07	0.07	3.14	0.07
#6	3.50	2.78	-0.72	2.82	0.04
#7	4.00	2.67	-1.33	3.04	0.37
#8	4.00	2.68	-1.32	2.91	0.23
#9	3.00	2.69	-0.31	2.86	0.17
#10	2.00	2.67	0.67	1.87	-0.80

Figure 15. SCS mean scores for 6th grade students and parents from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014

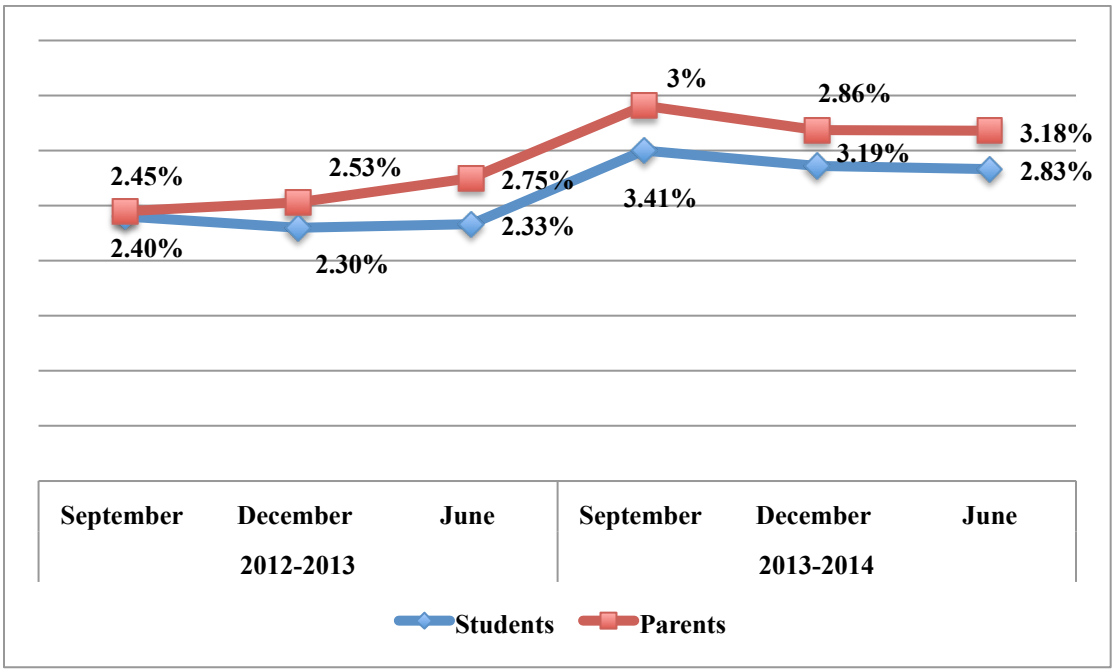
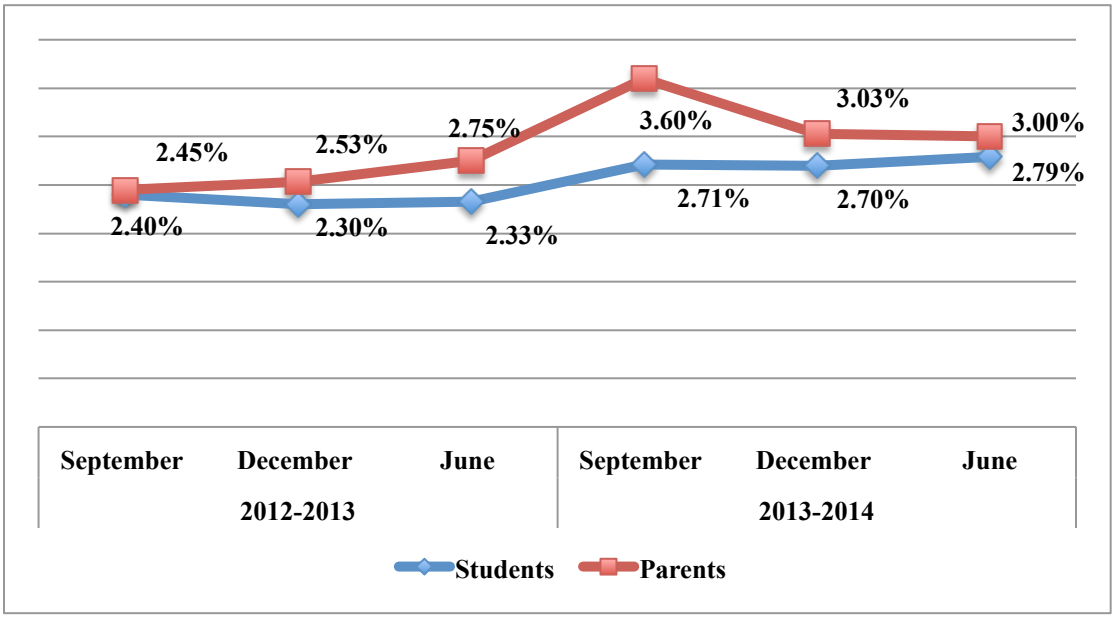


Figure 16. SCS mean scores for RD pilot cohort students and parents from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014



Both sixth and seventh grade parents in 2013-2014 show a gradual decrease in mean scores over the year (Tables 20 a-b). Although the seventh grade or pilot RD parent cohort appears to be more positive than when RD was first implemented, the low number of responses in September, 2013 (n=2) make it difficult to infer a consistent direction. Item responses from sixth grade

parents show improvement only for Question 3 ("The students are invited to contribute to resolving problems that affect them") and Question 8 ("In cases of bullying, the person harmed is asked what could be done to make things better"). Otherwise, item scores stay the same or decrease. There is a considerable drop in item scores for sixth grade parents for Question 10 ("A student's possessions are safe at this school"). Likewise in seventh grade, there is a decrease in item scores for Question 10. Excluding the September item scores based on the low return rate (n=2), the seventh grade or RD pilot parent cohort show increases in the item scores particularly for Question 7 ("When a student does something wrong, they are given a chance to put things right"). There are few comments from either sixth or seventh grade parents.

Summary. Although mean scores for staff, students and parents show a gradual rise over the two years of RD implementation, there is a decrease in scores for sixth graders and sixth and seventh grade parents during May or the third survey cycle of Year 2 implementation. Teachers indicate concerns about respect between student and teacher and listening by students. Parents and students uniformly report issues with safety of students' possessions and increased bullying. They also indicate that students feel they have a voice when they are negatively impacted by another students behavior and have input into the resolution.

Outcomes from Teacher Interviews and Focus Groups

Focus group outcomes. Focus groups with teachers and members of the LRT were held in December and in May. In December, 14 teachers were interviewed as well as the 4 members of the LRT and the School Resource Officer (SRO) who was new to the school in 2013. There was nothing from the December groups that required a change in how Ed White was instituting RD in Year 2. Teachers seemed interested in sharing how they were using RD in the classroom, the enormity of the changes in the students from the previous year, and the significance that the program holds for the school. Issues raised in the December focus groups include the following:

- Not enough time for circles given large class size
- Need for advanced training to manage more challenging students
- Some seventh graders tend to shut down because of negative experiences in Year 1.
- Some students take advantage of RD processes to get out of class.
- Need more follow through on monitoring of agreements.
- Teachers need more resources to draw on in conducting circles as well as booster shots to remain mindful of RD principles.
- Teachers' lose control over how much students talk in circles.

In May, 30 teachers were interviewed as well as 4 members of the LRT and the SRO. The increase in participants and the interaction between them during the focus group made the interviews more substantive. Teachers and members of the LRT were highly engaged and seemed quite invested in sharing the experiences they had had in their classrooms and with students as well as their opinions about changes that are necessary for Year 3. They noted the high turnover in students and test-related pressure that dominated the school beginning in February and climaxing in March. Many teachers stopped using RD processes at all and then had difficulty reinstituting them in April and May. Feedback and issues raised in the focus groups include the following:

- Fewer issues this year so less need for circles. Use of circles intermittent.
- Challenging students need more intensive interventions than classroom circles.

- Teachers persevere but feel out of options with students who are "repeaters."
- Teachers are engaging with students on a "real" and personal level. Investment and commitment active and high.
- Greater experimentation and agility with RD processes.
- Active use of restorative chats in hallway to prevent problems and strengthen relationships.
- Greater acceptance by teachers of worth of circles.
- Students are beginning to use RD processes with each other and in support of teachers.
- More engagement of outsiders, e.g. parents, SRO, other teachers as assistants in discipline processes.
- Teachers use circles to obtain information that might explain student behavior and help them connect.
- Response from students and teachers to scheduled classroom circles (set times for weekly check in, check up and check out circles) is mixed.
- Teachers more transparent and owning mistakes and problems with students.

Themes from interviews and focus groups. The external consultant's notes, individual teacher interviews and focus groups were analyzed for content and recurring themes. There were four core themes: (1) familiarity, (2) keeping it real, (3) we're all in it together, and (4) it's a fluid process.

Familiarity. This year two-thirds of the teachers and administrators in the school had received the RD training and were implementing processes in their classrooms and at the administrative level. Because over half the sixth grade teachers had left and been replaced, there were many changes in personnel and grade level assignments. Consequently some of the teachers who taught sixth grade during Year 1 were assigned to seventh grade in Year 2 such that those who were experienced and inexperienced in RD were spread through both the sixth and seventh grades.

For teachers, the sense of familiarity with RD processes was prominent. Although a few indicated they had not yet been trained and were hesitant to move forward, most teachers were actively applying RD principles whether or not they actually conducted formal conferences and circles, e.g. how they engaged and listened to students. Part of feeling conversant and knowledgeable about RD may have come from the scheduled classroom community building circles that occurred for all students early on in the year. Specifically every class held a values-building circle to develop consensus-based classroom agreements about student behavior. These agreements were posted in each classroom. Also students met every Monday (check in circle), Wednesday (check up circle) and Friday (check out circle) for brief community-building circles. Many teachers held these circles regularly until the end of the first semester when they began to schedule them based on student request or for a specific issue. By that point, students and teachers were well versed in the process and could rally readily when a circle was called. As one teacher said, "When something comes up then [the students] want to use it…everyone knows that is the process we use…They understand the process and how it works."

Innovation. Teacher's growing ease is evident in their descriptions of the innovative ways they have tailored processes to fit specific situations. One teacher described the strategy she's developed. "I pick out my kid who I think is the biggest leader and the most influential and I'm

like, 'I've got to get to that kid first.' That's who I start my relationship with…because everybody looks up to that kid and so that's made my classes easier to function and it's made it easier to communicate with my kids." Another one shared what she did during the preparation for the STAAR test. "I used it a lot before STAAR…Sometimes class was tense because we were pushing curriculum and sometimes circles were only 5 or 10 minutes but at the end it was, 'Let's have a circle real quick.' And we'd have it to get off [steam]." Some teachers were versatile in using circles as both a behavioral and academic tool. A math teacher explained, "We just circle and start with a couple of questions. Like one question will be, 'What do you understand about radius? What do you not understand about circumference?' They go like, 'I understand this.' And they can articulate themselves."

Teachers' freedom to be more innovative was particularly evident in their use of impromptu circles. Rather than focusing on the scheduled or more formal classroom circles, teachers frequently stopped behaviors quickly by holding small conferences outside the class or drawing a few students together. In contrast to last year, these spontaneous discussions focused not just on the student's behavior but also on the teachers' concern for the student or on what lay behind the student's challenging behavior. "Mine is kind of informal circles. My problem kids, I can see who they are and depending on how their days are going I'll pull them out and we'll talk about what's going on, what's the problem today, just to kind of find out the root problem, why they're coming to class mad, just to kind of prevent them from escalating in the room."

Although staff were sparse in their understanding and use of meaningful accountability plans, their willingness to experiment was also evident in how they used sanctions. The term "restor-additional" is coined to show that staff have found ways to combine restorative and traditional discipline. In part, this trend reflects the fact that teachers in Year 1 felt there were limited consequences given for students' misconduct and something more was needed. Its use in Year 2, however, shows that staff were not using traditional discipline punitively but rather as an opportunity to deepen student's learning. The following story describes how an assistant principal used it to help students be more thoughtful in the apologies made to their class.

> *I had two kids horse playing, falling off their chairs onto the floor. They got upset with each other and they just went at it right there on the floor. The class was disrupted so we finally got them sitting down and talking. After they agreed they were good with each other and I could trust that, I gave them two sheets of paper and said, "I need you to come up with a plan on how you're going to talk to the class about fixing it." I left them in the cafeteria for 45 minutes, which was my suspension. They finished the afternoon in ISS drafting a letter of apology to the class and what they needed to do to be re-entered into the class. Then they went home and practiced it because I wanted them to say it [to the class] without reading.*

Greater agility. The agility with which teachers moved in on students further demonstrates their mounting competence. In some instances, teachers refused to do circles when students asked for them because students used the request to bypass more serious sanctions. However, they maintained the connection by using a term of endearment, e.g. "Oh, baby girl. No, no, no." For many that agility was produced by the regularity of doing circles. "If I don't do [circles] they're either gonna shut down on me completely, not do anything or walk out and become angry. I know it takes up some class time…but I'm more productive in the 30 minutes

that we actually have than I would be if I weren't to do it." For others it comes with constantly addressing issues as they happen. "If we come in and there's been an issue with the students or something in the hallway that upsets somebody we talk about it right away."

Self observation. Teachers' knowledgeable observations included themselves. They reminded themselves to depersonalize students' responses and restrain from being vindictive. "I had worked for months to build the relationship with [this student] and it got shattered in that one instance. I'm really mad right now, like really mad but I'm having to die to that and realize she could have had something going on this weekend. It wasn't a personal attack. There's a bigger picture here." Other changes include how teachers engaged with students now as better listeners and partners rather than persons in power. "It's not just what I want and how I want it done. They have their feelings and that matters in how our relationship is gonna progress… Now I'm more focused on…actually hearing what they are telling me about."

Student familiarity. Students shared the know-how associated with RD. Teachers frequently cited instances where students were correcting their peers' behavior, settling differences without adult assistance, and asking for circles because students trusted that they could get what they needed. A teacher remarked, "Students that had problems earlier in the year, some of them are now seeing it in other students and are able to break up fights or arguments. Last week, one of the boys got another boy out of an English classroom and said, 'Look, just calm down. Let's not argue. Let's not fight. It's not worth it.'" In another instance a girl took a student out of a math class who was disrupting the class. "They were friends and the girl just let him have it. 'You're arguing with the teacher. You're disruptive and you need to be quiet. You're interfering with my learning.' " The ease with which students were integrating RD is demonstrated in this teacher's account of a student's request for a circle because he was so angry. "He said, 'I'd really like to circle. I need to share with the class and I know it's a safe zone.' So I said, 'Absolutely.' So he shared what was going on and some of the kids chimed in when it was their turn [in the circle] and afterwards he said, 'It was helpful. Thank you.' "

Keeping it real. Findings from Year 1 of the RD implementation indicate that teachers struggled with appropriate expectations for what RD could accomplish. When teachers did not see lasting change in students, they questioned RD's efficacy and lack of focus on hard consequences even though the majority of sixth graders responded positively to RD. In Year 2 teachers began building more authentic connections with their students. "I feel like [RD] is just a part of our life now. The breakdown of what's really the problem, the opening up of the feelings and the realness of talking about it. It's a real factor, just what is going on, and it makes it easier when you can get to that side and get down to it."

Preserving the integrity of RD. By Year 2, teachers were actively invested in finding ways to make relationships productive. They accepted the power of circles and conferences in their classrooms and with particular students but were mindful of limitations including the ability of students to misuse and trivialize the process. Rather than arguing for or against RD, many of them were, in effect, advocating for not using circles and conferences until students were more mature or "ready" to engage more authentically and thoughtfully. One teacher explained,

> *I thought [RD] was a really cool outlet for building relationships with my kids in my classroom [but] I couldn't hold a circle to save their lives because they were talking over*

> *one another, being disrespectful. It wasn't getting anywhere and I think the big missing piece is maturity level. They don't take ownership for their actions… And that's the missing piece. I even have kids who [the core administrative RD facilitator] will buzz in and call them out [for a circle] and as they're going down to the conference room [say], "Hey, mention my name so I get called out"*

Instead of condemning the student or championing the need for traditional discipline, teachers in Year 2 were searching for more understanding as to why RD did not work for some. "I had an conversation that I've had 3 or 4 or 5 times with the same kid because he doesn't understand. And again it could be a maturity level because at this point their brains aren't necessarily developed enough to understand the idea of taking responsibility for their own actions all the time…I think for us to rely on circles as heavily as we do as a campus there's a piece missing."

Some teachers also discussed their problems with classes who were resistant to scheduled circles. In some cases, this was because of negative experiences students had had with circles when they were in the sixth grade. Other times, it was because students were not engaged. "I'll do 'check-in' [circles] and the kids just go around and say, 'Pass' because there's nothing going on…This went on most of the year so I kinda stopped it." Rather than condemning the program, however, these teachers determined to respect the students' experience, not diminish RD by forcing it, and instead searched for other ways to accommodate these realities while establishing genuine bonds. "If the student and teacher understand what's going on it works really well and if it's including people who don't really understand the issues in the room maybe they don't need to be in the circle."

Authentic engagement. The impetus to keep RD real was evident in the many stories teachers and administrators shared about the level at which they engaged with students. Rather than keeping themselves separate, professionally formal, and somewhat disengaged, teachers shared openly with students' personal experiences and emotions in ways that demonstrated to students how deeply they were fighting for them.

> *There was a fight in the cafeteria when I couldn't get the first kid off of the other kid and he beat him up so badly that he broke his ear drum and his nose. A lot of the kids witnessed that fight. They saw me get upset and figured I was hurt. [In class] I opened up the time to talk about it but it got really emotional between the students and me because they saw how visibly upset I was. What shocked me was that they cried with me. It was a very solemn moment. Even the most unruly students understood in that moment what being connected to other people felt like. I told them, "I'm heart broken over this thing. To have to see [a child I cared about get beat] and to know that you guys do that to each other just saddens me to my core and I can't fix that. And that's why I'm so upset." That's when they opened up and the flood gates opened because they realized the caring, like they just need someone to care like that. They opened up and…told me a lot.*

This authenticity of teachers' commitment was not unusual and likely deepened the trustworthiness generally between students and teachers. Indeed, there were numerous accounts about students and what was happening in response to how teachers engaged with them. "One of the teachers left and one of her students kept coming and looking for her. One day he finally asked, 'Do you know where Ms. Miller go?' When I said she went to a different school, his face just went straight because he wanted to talk to her. I went, "Is there something you wanted to

say?' He wanted to apologize to her because over the summer he realized how much wrong he had done in her class and he really felt the need to make it right. We wrote a note to her and I took a picture of it and sent it to her."

Apologies. Part of determining to keep it real was the increased willingness of teachers to own mistakes and apologize when it was appropriate. "Two weeks up to the STAAR test I was crazy and mad and I told them, 'I apologize. I'm stressed out. Y'all are stressed out.' I just wanted to get everything in last minute before the test." In some instances, staff's apologies are followed by more personal information. An administrator spoke to a student after he blew up at him in class. "I'm really sorry I tore you up like that earlier but you understand why I did that? He was kind of like, 'No.' I said, 'I did it because I love you and I need you to be successful. Do me a favor, look at me.' I said, 'Who's told you this week that I love you?' He's like, 'Nobody.' I said, 'So, here's the person who cares about you the most, these teachers, who you're fighting with.' "

Depth of understanding. The value attached to keeping it real was also evident in the depth of understanding being cultivated in the school. The ability to go beneath the surface with each other seemed to cut through and lessen some of the noise or chaos otherwise attached to students' behavior. Indeed, teachers who realized the significance of students' backstories actively pursued students to attach at a more authentic level and found they responded with heartfelt compassion, tenderness and concern about what could be done to make things better. These reactions kept pushing the process between teachers and students deeper. A teacher described what happened to him after he fully understood what was driving a student's behavior.

> *The student was really disrespectful. So we circled with him and [the core administrative RD facilitator]. The student started sobbing, bawling about problems at home. His father was super strict, punishing him, making him go to bed at 7 at night and wake up early and cook. He was having to be a dad at home. So he said, "I act like [this at school] because I can't act like that at home. I'm not allowed to be a kid at home." He was just sobbing. "I'm sorry, I shouldn't do that and I won't do it anymore." That gave me insight that calling his Dad was probably not something I need to do. It's gonna amplify it at home. So I haven't had a problem with the kid ever since. He's quiet, on time, he never skips my class. He saw my eyes open and that I was showing empathy. I had no idea. It's not right [his home life] but it makes sense. He lost his glasses and for a week he was kind of pushing the limits a little bit but he was anxious about his dad finding out and he came to me and said, "I need you to know this is why I'm struggling."*

Meaningful accountability. The drive for authenticity between students and between student and teacher also affected the issue of accountability and what was done to ensure that students take seriously how their behavior impacts others and that any amends making must be done wholeheartedly and with integrity. Indeed, when students respond inauthentically, their peers more often moved to correct them. In one instance, classmates determined that a student's formal apology to the class was disingenuous. An administrator commented, "He got so mad he left the classroom." This administrator said [to the class], "I really appreciate your guys' honesty because I wasn't convinced he was for real.' [Afterwards] I said to Keith, 'Now you have to

really do some thinking. You have to come up with your own plan for how you're gonna get past this fake.' He did some things and I helped him through it and we got him back in class ..."

The striving to drive home standards is embodied in how teachers talk to students. Although lecturing still seems to predominate, the quality of talk is clear, personal and believable. Indeed, efforts to hold students accountable were not rule focused but instead grounded in the notion that what matters is how students affect others. As such, restorative chats often had a vibrancy and intensity in tone that forced students to pay attention. A teacher described how she confronted a student about her profanity.

> *The language use-it's not okay to cuss in a classroom or direct it at a teacher but honestly it offends me just hearing it. So I have this beautiful young lady and I've seen her go from a very kind person to a nightmare. I saw her down today and I said, "What's going on? I don't understand the words that are coming out of your mouth. Why? I've talked to your mother many times and you've never heard her say anything like that to me or in front of me. So why do you feel like it's okay to you to do that? Does your mom allow you to talk to her that way or around her? " She said, "No." I said, "I'm your parent 8 to 4. I'm a parent of yours. That's how I see it. You're one of my kids, so I'm gonna respect you like my child and I'm gonna treat you like you're one of my own." I also thought that maybe she doesn't know how much that offends me so I told her. "Let me tell you why [it offends me] because I'm trying very hard right now to get closer to God and when I hear things like that this ugliness comes inside my heart and it feels and sounds ugly and it's almost painful and it makes me feel ugly." She looked at me like, "Really?" And I said, "Yeah, really. So I'm being very honest with you and I'm not sharing this with everybody. I'm sharing with you…You're such a pretty young girl and it makes you look ugly when you say that, trash coming from your mouth looks ugly."*

Keeping it real was a prominent theme that underscored many of the interactions between students and students and teachers. Students often called each other out for behaviors. There was far less concern over the issue of consequences for behavior but more concern over not being able to reach particular students or manage large or challenging classes. Although teachers were clear about their responsibilities as teachers, their engagement with students was less imbued with issues of authority and more focused on connecting in meaningful ways. They fought for the integrity of the connection, the realness of more informal than formal interactions, the sharing of self, the willingness to be personally and emotionally impacted, and the skills to influence students from a moral rather than rule-driven base.

We're all in it together. In Year 1 RD was implemented only in the sixth grade. By Year 2, two-thirds of the school was using RD processes. Moreover, the seventh graders were in their second year of the school implementation as were many of the teachers. The energy that accompanied teachers' and administrators' accounts of the changes in students, the classroom learning environment, and their personal engagement with the process was synergistic and contagious. For example, one student who went from 54 referrals in Year 1 to four in Year 2 became a rallying point for staff about the impact of RD. Whether describing a positive

encounter or the frustration of trying to manage obstinately troublesome classrooms, there was a strong sense that the school was involved in a meaningful experiment to help make things better.

Validation of progress. Teachers commonly described differences in students over time as "day and night." They were encouraged by the changes they saw between sixth and seventh grades or after a particularly powerful RD encounter. Many of them talked with amazement when comparing one year to another.

> *When I was in the middle of it, I couldn't really see that it was making a difference but like looking back on it and seeing where they are versus where they were, it really has made a huge difference. Like some of the kids that I had really big problems with last year, I can't get out of my room during passing period. They're coming in to visit me and they're wanting to talk and they're wanting to have that relationship that I worked so hard to build with them last year. They're now seeing, "Oh, I messed up. I need to make that right."*

Others commented on changes in their own behavior and reactions to students based on the strength of their relationships and a newfound confidence in just expecting and believing in students' ability to follow the rules. "Where it used to be my big concern was writing discipline referrals and that it took forever but now I just don't [write referrals]. It's just, we don't do it guys. These are the rules. This is how it's gonna function and we simply don't do it so I don't write referrals." Teachers also talked about their discoveries after working with RD for a while. "Last year I let them say whatever they wanted to say. I learned some limits. 'You have 30 words or less. Just give me 1-3 words to describe'…You have too. It doesn't become so routine and we can do it more often if we control it a little bit more." They also shared how they determined that a shift had occurred after an RD intervention. "[I'm] seeing restored friendships, or seeing restored natural happy behavior that they were displaying before the incident. They come back to themselves and now we're a happy functioning family again in that period."

Pulling for each other. The synergistic energy that accompanied these changes was palpable to others who knew about the historically problematic reputation of the school. The School Resource Officer (SRO), for example, was new to Ed White in Year 2. After a 22 year career working with hard core youth, he was transferred to Ed White. He shared what he saw and how moving the transformation was to him.

> *Before I came onto this campus, no one wanted to come to this campus. Seeing this coming in here and seeing this with one year working…this school is in one of the worst neighborhoods in San Antonio...these kids are surviving day by day and they come to school with the same mentality that they grow up on the streets. 'We got to survive.' And with this program I'm actually seeing these kids dropping that as they walk into the school. Okay, living in two worlds… It gets to me because I see a lot of kids that…[deteriorate]…in that environment…[this program] isn't just to stop kids from fighting. It gives them something to be aware of at home and that's self esteem.*

The validation and groundswell produced by observations like these generated a bonding and ethos that we are all in this together. It also produced the hope off of which staff pulled students

forward. The SRO, for example, encourages students to value the opportunity they have at the school. He explained that

> *They're not coming to get education. They're coming here because they have to come otherwise they're gonna go to jail and until you break into them…I told the kids here, "This is your comfort zone. This is where you come to educate yourself not to sell your drugs, not to beat the hell out of your kids, not to push your drugs"…the gang activity (and we do have it here) the dope stuff, it's being kept off campus because of this program…We've got some veteran officers who need to go through this and I think if they did, it would help a whole bunch. I just turned down a $3000 a year more job to stay here.*

An sssistant principal relayed what he does to reinforce a troubled student's growth and the bonding between them. "I go in and check on him periodically, just to say 'High five.' I said, 'Man, you're in the running for the most improved student of the month.' He was always in conflict, always upset with somebody and I would tell him, 'Do you have teeth? Because you never show them, you never smile.' That used to get him smiling. Now I always say, 'I see your teeth today.'"

Additional support. The sense of pulling for each other is demonstrated by staff going outside the boundaries of their assigned duties to assist other teachers. Teachers felt supported by the assistant principals to fill in when they needed to do a restorative chat with students, to be part of a classroom circle or conduct a circle between themselves and a student. "They would take the kids out [for a circle]. They pull them out so it wouldn't disrupt the class and we can still go on and do our stuff." Sometimes teachers would help with circles outside their own classes. "I've lended support when they call me in to sit in. I don't mind doing that."

Special education staff were aware, as well, that they offered respite by allowing students who had walked out of the teacher's class to be in their classes for brief periods of time. "I get kids all day long in and out of my room. 'Well I got kicked out of such and such a class. Is it okay if I stay' or 'I walked out because I got upset. Can I chill here for a few minutes?' I always check with the teacher. If they agree to [the] stay I will say to [the student], 'You're gonna have to do something for me.' If they say, 'I've got some math in my locker' I'll say, 'Go get it. Bring it back.' I'll try to help if I can. We usually get some stuff done."

Student contributions. Besides these staff examples, teachers observed what students were doing to contribute to a positive learning environment. Sometimes they would handle conflicts themselves instead of bringing them to the adults. "Mateo and another kid got into a conflict over who's better at sports. They came in today and conducted the circle amongst themselves and I just kind of sat back. I just sat and watched them do it." In addition there were numerous instances where students challenged each other to behave better in class by taking them out of class for a "restorative chat," correcting in class how they talked to the teacher, or confronting their denial in circle. In one instance a girl took her friend into the hallway to scold him about how he was disrupting her learning. "The teacher isn't allowed to get anything out of her mouth because [you're] walking around and talking too much." Several months later, this boy took another boy out into the hallway from a different class to help calm him down.

This contagion effect and leaning on each was also evident in how some students contributed to furthering RD processes in the classroom. A teacher reported that "[The kids] came up with the thing that if you say something negative about somebody you have to stand up and say something positive. So they'd call each other out. They're like, 'Ugh, did you hear him? Did you hear what he said? He owe her. He needs to say something nice to her, doesn't he?' That's part of RD and community building and so that helped." In another instance, students educated new students into the circle process while cuing them that the opportunity was unique to Ed White. A student told the teacher, "A new kid asked, 'What is this circle thing?' Sir, we had like a 10 minute conversation during lunch because he just kept asking more questions about it. I'm like, 'It's just a circle. We do circles all the time.' So of course I told him, 'Well you don't realize it but we're the only school that does this.'"

Taking RD to others. The synergism generated by RD was contagious. Others took action to move RD beyond Ed White. A sense of mission accompanied many of the stories as if there was an imperative for others to experience the benefits that teachers and administrators had felt. A teacher advocated for it in her son's school. [There's a] lot of turn over in the afterschool program so less supervision and lots of bullying. I told them about RD on the campus... 'I'm telling you, it's working.' I told my son's teacher about it. I said, 'Just try it.' She does it all the time now. She said she told another teacher about it…she has other teachers doing it now." Another staff member told the mother of a youngster in elementary school, "We do this program about RD. It's such a wonderful program." She subsequently learned that the parent was bragging to others about her plan to send her child to Ed White. A member of the LRT enthusiastically reported that parents were asking for circles for their children. "The kids must be going home and talking and telling their parents that we do RD on campus so that's really helped me because the parents trust us." The SRO announced that "I don't want to leave this campus until they promote me to sergeant because [then] I can try to push this."

Perseverance. Buttressing this enthusiasm is also the awareness that making RD work requires strong perseverance. Whereas last year teachers had to manage their disappointment when a student's change in behavior was not sustained long term, this year staff were more readily accepting of RD as a process with many ups and downs. The ability to proceed with dogged determination was pronounced during the STAAR testing period when the entire school went through high stress and pressure to increase test scores. Both students and teachers seemed to enter a different zone of existence but teachers were forthcoming about the school's needs with students and a number of them used circles as a mechanism to help students verbalize and discharge the stress they were under. "A lot of them were really nervous and scared about getting ready to take the test. Having a circle about it let them know they weren't the only student that was apprehensive. I saw that collective sigh of relief that I'm not the only one. It's okay to be scared about it. So some of them were feeling pretty confident afterwards." Moreover teachers recognized the need to re-establish the use of circles for community building in their classrooms as soon as the testing was finished.

The shared norm to persevere was also evident in teachers' remarks about students who showed little or no change. A student asked a teacher, " 'Why if some people are disrupting the class, why do we all have to pay for it?' I said, 'Well because we're all in this together and it affects all of us. They [the unruly student] need to know that. They need to understand that. It's about

us holding each other accountable as a group, as a family, as a community, and then individually.' " The requirement to 'keep trying' was frustrating to some who saw students taking advantage of the process and pushed for a return to more ISS. However, most teachers looked to trying other solutions such as breaking up a cohort of more wild students into separate classes, using free writes as a calming mechanism for students to express feelings, or receiving additional training on the use of RD interventions for more intensive situations.

The assistant principals in particular shared a bond of fighting for individual students who were hard to reach no matter what and likely conveyed that expectation to the teachers under them. In some ways, these individuals became the exemplars of perseverance through the actions they took to connect with recalcitrant students.

> *I had this disrespectful kid who was cussing me out. I cannot reach this brother. The parent was coming up here and we started talking. The mom was like, "I can't believe you disrespect him that way. He doesn't act that way at home." The mom was forcing him to apologize and he was hesitating. I said, "Listen, I don't want him to apologize. It's not natural right now. I want him to understand how I feel." He had tears in his eyes and his mom said, "Aren't you gonna say something?" The student said, "I don't know what the words are. I don't know what to say. I don't know how to use the words." So I went and hugged him and said, "I don't know what I've ever done to you but if I did something to you I truly apologize to you." He's just crying so I told him, "I don't know how to make it right with you because I don't know what I did wrong but here's the deal. I need you to truly understand how you are impacting my day. I don't like coming to work and feeling like this so I need something different from you. Can we do this?" And he just shook his head [yes] and left."*

Commonly shared endeavor. Administrators, teachers and students had a variety of ways they expressed the notion that bringing RD to the school and doing it was a commonly shared endeavor. It was through appreciating students' growth, remarking on it to others, feeling the personal return from all of what they had invested, seeing others, including students, go the extra mile, and sharing a sense of wonder, purpose and mission about the work that people pulled themselves and each other along. Even for those new teachers who were more tentative or had strong reservations, they stuck in even though circles went poorly, students did not take the process seriously or took no responsibility, behaviors seemed to be getting worse, or a promising youngster backslid undoing all the gains.

Interestingly those who were naysayers expressed their misgivings passionately and with the same sense of purpose and concern for the school's future that was evident in the comments of others. "My classroom is way worse than last year… I haven't seen the restoration. I haven't seen the justice. I've seen a situation of, 'Okay kids, tell us what you feel.' So they tell us and it's almost like they get justified. Because I feel this way, I'm justified in acting this way." Another teacher from this same cohort shared his worry that "I think some of the kids might be losing confidence in the circles themselves...Some of our more vocal kids say, 'I just hate this class. I just hate being here. Can you take me outside somewhere.'"

Despite these objections, teachers who were more cynical were anything but passive and had taken action to ensure the productivity of their classrooms.

It's a fluid process. One of the primary features of RD at Ed White Middle Schools in Year 2 was the realization that its implementation was in constant motion and had to be adapted to any number of changing circumstances. Efforts to standardize or lock procedures or applications into place were undone regularly. This shifting or inability to tie things down likely gave RD its vitality, authenticity and organic quality but it required teachers and administrators to be flexible, experimental and responsive to swings and alterations. The fluidity of the process happened, for the most part, in reaction to endless challenges posed by class size and culture, high student mobility, teacher turnover, wide variations in student maturity and developmental level, differentials in teacher skill level and sense of need, varying objectives for using different restorative practices, and the pursuit of various solutions to determine what makes for productive versus non productive restorative interventions and the interplay between all these factors.

Class size and culture. Class size and culture had a powerful impact on how RD was used. In large classes, the processes were unwieldy particularly in terms of available time. Teachers generally tended to use the scheduled check-in, check-up and check-out circles at the beginning of the year but then used them only intermittently or did circles when there were classroom issues. Teachers were also clear that the culture or cohort of a class was a determining factor. A teacher described the difference, for example, between most of her classes and the 4th period students who were not responsive. "I don't understand about my 4h period. All the other classes we do the same things pretty much. We do the circle. We talk, we share. We laugh. We cry. We get upset at things that we hear. We talk about current events. We talk about things on campus and everyone of them I get a reaction but fourth period it's just kind of like… and I don't understand it." At times changing around who was in the class seemed to shift the culture. "When they change one period they switch it up. It's like "Now who's gotta do this. Who's taking this lead." One teacher commented on the culture in one of her classes and how she's learned to work with it. "I've found sometimes they're uncomfortable doing it as a class. They don't want to say. Like in my 5th period class, the kids will make a comment and then [others] make them feel bad about [it]. I'm like, 'Everybody has a right to their own opinion whatever.' So something I've found is a smaller group or one-to-one… They do better when I talk to them individually, smaller groups."

Student mobility. The need to keep things open to change was particularly evident for teachers who had students new to the school. Suddenly all the norms that had been established around RD processes or appropriate behaviors in a classroom would be undone and teachers had to find ways to integrate new students into the classroom culture. The high mobility went on all year but teachers' comments centered principally on the disruption created at the end of the year. "I had an abundance of kids leave and abundance of kids come in so it's like every circle is a new one. Sometimes we just have circles to introduce the new kid…They don't understand as quickly as I would like because of course we've been doing it all year for the bulk of the kids so they already know."

Teachers made hypotheses about the impact of new students on the rest of the class hypothesizing that some of the emerging problems might be related. "I think a lot of [the emerging problems] has to do with the fact that that class has had a lot of students leave or switch class periods so it's just been a lot of change and so they're not as close now." Even though it meant altering the routine again, they looked for ways to make the transition easier for everyone. "It's hard breaking them in. It's like how do you do that? Next year I want to try to develop something for them, like a little welcome packet of everything. You know it's hard because we go over the rules with the kids the first of school, then we do it over the holidays, then we do it at certain points but when people are coming in [all the time]."

The mobility did not just apply students. Staff commented that "[W]e have like 34 new teachers this year and every year for the last couple years..more than half is new over the last couple of years. Some departments are new within the last two years. So it's hard when you've got new people coming in, that much new people coming in and new kids in and out. We're even getting kids in the last 13 days [of the year]. I just got a new kid in yesterday."

Mobility and developmental level. Comments about student maturity and their developmental level were commonplace. Although teachers used maturity level as a frame of reference for appropriate expectations and understanding of students, they also had to constantly adjust and respond to varying degrees of maturity in their classrooms. The challenges of assessing how to use RD processes such as affective statements were most pronounced in special education. A teacher reflected on the roller coaster ride she experienced daily.

> *My 8th graders generally are about 15ish. I feel like they're more mature and they are more able to understand how I'm feeling, how it's affecting me, plus what they're doing and how it's effecting their life or whatever and they're able to turn it around quicker and maintain it versus me working with the 6th grader who's 11. It's a lot of times hard for this [group] 24 hours later to not go back and do the same thing that they already did. So the struggle has been with the 6th grade versus 8th grade. Sixteen is a big difference from 11. Sixteen is practically an adult so my approach with the 6th graders has to be different. I have to spend more time with them on circle time at the beginning and I may have to do that every single day for the whole year. They need a lot of reinforcement, a lot. Seventh grade I don't know. They're not quite 8th grade not 6th grade. They're kind of lost. My 7th graders this year are great but they have a lot of drama, a lot of drama. I guess I treat them more like 6th graders than 8th graders as far as RD. Seventh grade is just such a weird [time].*

Teachers also commented on students' temperament and how rapidly it could change. "Some will be receptive [to the circle] and some just won't. I don't know what to say. There's one day they're loving me to pieces and one day they won't."

Differential in teacher skills. Teachers feed the variability because they too are at different levels of skill in conducting RD circles and conferences. "I haven't had a whole lot of experience with RD. I came at the end of January. I'm still trying to get used to the

whole idea of it…I was skeptical at first because in the real world you don't get to talk about why you robbed the bank. You go to jail. But then I did see in a few different situations where it does work." In contrast a teacher new to RD reported that "I do it multiple times a week with all my classes. I just teach in circles. I'll ask at the end of a lesson 'What did you not get in the lesson.' It lets me know curriculum wise what they're getting. ...It's like anything else, it's learning how to do it. So now my circles are a whole lot better. It's like if you have the talking piece that's your two minutes. They're respecting their own time because they know if I take 10 seconds out of your time because I was talking it's disrespectful because that's your two minutes to talk."

Challenging students. For some teachers, trying to apply RD to challenging students was like trying to hit a moving target. Moreover, the uncertainty of what to do to make a significant impact was heightened by the fact that a student who was challenging in one class was fine in another. "All of the kids are mad at the kid who is disruptive so no one can do anything when he's in the classroom. Today there was a hip hop song and he was excited about it so it went a whole lot better. Maybe Devon does great in my class but he is having issues in Mr. Peters' class. I haven't seen that side of him yet. Some days he says, 'Oh, just call my mom.'" Another teacher added, "[In] my class behaviors are not too bad but I have my same kids in other classes and they are off the wall."

Variable uses and objectives. Part of learning to go with the flow of the RD process was recognizing and using the practices for a wide variety of objectives. Teachers found, for example, that classroom circles helped give students a voice and provided a way to find out more about events that might be affecting a student's life. "Someone is sick in the family that I don't know [that this] is happening and that's why he is shutting down. Or she looks like she is depressed or she is just not in the mood right now so I'm just gonna back off a little bit." One educator commented on trying to find the line for when a specific action is needed to correct the behavior or respond to the harm done and when the emotional intensity of a students "getting-it" is enough. "The entire process is a compromise. It's how far do you want to go with the compromise. Maybe you just talk to the kid. The kid broke down and there's your compromise. It's done. Or you wanna go another step with it or you don't want to go that far." Others reflected on the problem of sustaining the change that a student had made after a restorative chat or conference. "These things seem to work for a period of time and then they need to be reinforced. You'd like to think we've got an understanding but these kids need reinforcement."

Unpredictability of success. Finally, the fluidity of the process is underscored by the unpredictability of why a particular RD approach worked or did not work. For many, distinguishing between good and bad or productive and unproductive circles was based on whether or not a student took responsibility for his or her behavior or whether students took the circle process seriously. A teacher related, "It didn't seem to phase them. One boy said, 'That don't help. We know what that is. We had it last year. It don't work.' Just negative, negative." Some teachers commented that impromptu circles worked better than planned ones. "It's really on the fly. Some of the best situations or outcomes, just happen. You just seize those moments." Others described the importance of having scheduled times. "Make time for check-ins because they are the easy ones. The [students go] off topic but then just

letting them get used to breaking the ice and then it makes it a lot easier for the serious stuff." Teachers found they could use circles as both a reward and a punishment. A teacher spoke about how he uses circles for joke time. "Tell a joke. Give me a joke you have…My kids have enjoyed circles so I'll used it as an incentive." In contrast a teacher decided to take circles away until students behaved better.

Acceptance of change. The constancy of tailoring and retailoring RD processes did not seem to frustrate teachers or administrators. Rather they saw it as a tool that they could use, with support from others in the school, to respond to the myriad of changes in students, classroom assignments, student-to-student conflicts, challenges in preparation for STAAR, and personal staff and student idiosyncrasies. A teacher reflected on a metaphor she was given to help her understand the culture of a middle school like Ed White.

> *I have kids that have come a long way and they just can go sit with [a difficult student] and help him and "maybe he'll sit down and be quiet?" "Sure do ahead try it". And sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't and I cannot figure out for the life of me how to predict that. It's the way the wind blows or I just want to figure it out. It just changes on a daily basis and that's probably the hardest part. I really think that's the hardest part especially coming into 6th grade. Mr. Curtis said something one time and I was, "Wow, that makes so much sense." It's like a river, flowing into an ocean. We're the ocean and here comes all these different rivers, different walks of life. They've grown up with each other in this river and now they're coming into an ocean with all these other rivers and it just can be disastrous if not orchestrated in a smart way.*

Discussion

In Year 2, RD was introduced to the seventh grade staff although students who were sixth graders the previous year were familiar with it. Seventh grade teachers as well as teachers new to the sixth grade received training and support to implement RD in their classrooms and to use it for behavioral interventions. Many of the recommendations from the Year 1 evaluation were accepted. For example, a RD handbook for teachers was created by IRJRD and made available to teachers early in the academic year. The teacher training was strongly application-oriented and structured according to needs identified by administration. A one-day booster training occurred in February and was done by Eric Butler, lead restorative coordinator for the Oakland School project under Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY). Stephanie Frogge, assistant director of IRJRD was the on-site consultant and she followed the recommendations to visit all teachers' classrooms, supply resources and became a comfortable presence such that teachers readily used her for consultation and assistance in conducting RD circles and conferences. Although there is no specific information, administrators claim that a plan was developed for managing transition zones such as hallways, the lunchroom and the locker room. These recommendations were in place during Year 2.

Year 2 implementation also included brief community building classroom circles (check in, check up and check out) that were scheduled three times a week for all sixth and seventh

grade students. The development of scheduled circles made them a normative part of the students' day and helped teachers gain comfort and skills with the circle process. Students easily adapted to circle procedures and would even remind teachers to do them if they forgot. Teachers report that after embedding them in the weekly routine they stopped doing them with regularity. Some lacked ideas for circle topics while others felt that students were bored or turned off by the routinized nature of the schedule or did not take them seriously. Some teachers tried using circles in the classroom for addressing issues as they arose or challenging student's behavior. Often these circles were done with assistance from the external consultant or the assistant principals. These circles received mixed reviews and were often evaluated as "very good" or "bad" and seemed to depend on whether or not students took responsibility for their behavior and its impact on others.

Although teachers did not use circles consistently, they actively worked at building relationships with students through restorative chats. Teachers recognized that it was vital to learn about students' personal struggles and concerns so that they could make sense out of a students' behavior and respond to it from a more informed place. Many of them shared of themselves affectively and personally with students. This sharing created more substance and depth in student-teacher relationships and a level of authenticity that brought everyone closer and heightened teachers commitment in acceptance of and investment in RD processes. Instead of feeling that RD was something to use with students, there was a shared energy that RD was important to the health and vitality of the overall school because, for the most part, teachers could see it working. Consequently, there was a clear shift this year away from evaluating whether or not RD works to recognizing that RD is a process that takes time and requires perseverance and whole school buy-in even when, at times, there is seemingly little return. Indeed, the genuineness of the endeavor was palpable this year and felt throughout the school.

In contrast to Year 1, procedures and areas of responsibility seemed better defined. The core administrative RD facilitator handled both student requests but also situations that involved pulling students or small groups of students out of class for conferences and circles. Assistant principals also conducted circles and conferences but were available to do them themselves or in concert with teachers in the classroom. The external consultant served as an additional support to teachers and administrators. As a pitch hitter, she floated between classrooms, met individually with teachers to process classroom concerns, co-facilitated circles with the core administrative RD facilitator and carried out special assignments as requested from administration. These added supports gave teachers more backing such that there were fewer complaints this year about how much time circles took. Moreover, teachers' complaints in Year 1 about the lack of consequences in RD were much reduced. It is possible that with greater engagement teachers began to recognize the significance of emotional leverage to influence change and the impact of relationship to influence students' actions.

In Year 2 there continues to be wide variation in the acceptance and use of RD processes. Although the school has formally adopted RD for behavioral management, apart from the scheduled circles, teachers can opt in or out of using it in the classroom. Some teachers talked about a "split" in staff's attitudes toward RD. This "split" was most evident in the

review of offense referral sources: in Years 1 and 2 of the RD implementation, 31% of the sixth and seventh grade referrals came from math teachers and 27% came from reading teachers. Indeed, two teachers referred over 100 students. Some teachers were interested in trying it but had not been trained as yet and felt ill prepared to use it competently. Some teachers were upset about student's manipulation and misuse of circles. Some teachers used circles extensively including for the teaching of content. Some teachers felt that their classrooms ran smoothly, particularly this year, and rarely had the need for circles. Overall, teachers and administrators still tended to see circles and conferences as tools for intervention rather than as mechanisms to proactively lay the foundation for a different level of engagement that might lessen some of the issues between students or between students and teachers or the need to constantly put out brush fires. For example, if a teacher learned, through engaging in a one-on-one restorative chat with a student that he or she was worried about a parent who was hospitalized, the teacher tended to respond in the moment not thinking about the fact that such knowledge could make a difference to the student's peers and how they treated that student which might then impact the learning environment in that classroom and school climate.

There were many successes at Ed White this year that may have been influenced by having RD in the school. Although the drop in ISS and OSS were substantial in Year 1, in-school suspension rates for Year 2 fell another 65% for sixth grade, 47% for seventh grade, and 52% for the RD pilot cohort. Even the frequency of use of RD for conduct disorders (classified as "partial day ISS") decreased 47% for the sixth grade and 48% for the RD pilot cohort. These reductions suggest that teachers are handling student behaviors in the classroom or transition zones effectively *before* they escalate and, based on teachers' reports, that students are behaving differently as well. Descriptions of classrooms as "calm" attest to this difference.

Of major import is the decrease in use of suspensions for African American students. This achievement may likely square with the evidence noted by Skiba et al. (2014, p.4) that teachers with better RD implementation had narrower racial gaps and that teachers who had better relationships with students and were perceived as more respectful issued fewer exclusionary discipline referrals for African American and Hispanic students. A review of grade levels shows that the decrease occurred primarily in the seventh grade where frequencies for African American students dropped from 683 individual student offense incidents in 2012-2013 to 433 in 2013-2014 (54% difference).

Although the relationship between having RD at Ed White and the tardy rate is untested, tardys are generally considered an important indicator of change in school climate. The accepted logic is that if students want to come to school and are more engaged in their classes, there will be less absenteeism and students will be on time to class. When compared to baseline of Year 1, tardys fell 48% in Year 2 for the sixth grade. Tardys fell 38% for the RD pilot group. In Year 2, there was a 39% drop in tardys for the whole school.

When RD is introduced to a campus, it generally takes 4 to 5 years of implementation before there is a noticeable difference in academic achievement. This indicator or climate change requires a level of calm and safety throughout the school such that both teachers and

students can concentrate on learning. In the past, Ed White has fallen below state and federal expectations on standardized achievement tests including STAAR and traditionally performed below the other schools in the district. This year they received special commendation from Texas Education Agency for their gains in English, math and social studies and ranked second in the state for improved student progress among middle schools with similar demographics. These gains were even more remarkable because they reflected increases in passing scores by Special Education and African American students. The effort to achieve these high marks was substantial involving the entire school united in common cause to increase their ratings.

It is difficult to ascertain the impact of RD on the testing or the impact of the testing on RD. It is possible that greater learning occurred this year in calmer classroom and that the zeal and drive to perform well on the test reflected the shifts in student-teacher relationships such that students "wanted" to perform well for their teachers. However, RD processes including the scheduled classroom circles were generally suspended during the extensive preparation for and taking of the test. Moreover, the increases in office referrals and student offenses during the second semester coupled with less reported use in April and May of circles and conferences suggests that the post test reaction may have been strong and impacted the use of RD.

Indeed, there are some contradictions in results that defy explanation. Specifically, there are increases in student offense frequencies and in the Absences/Truancy and Walked out of Class categories during second semester. These particular categories indicate that students are missing valuable instruction time. Except for the seventh grade comparison to 2012-2013, there are large increases in office referrals during this same time. However, with the exception of the seventh grade administrator (January-April), the frequencies for use of RD circles and conferences by teachers, administrators and the core administrative RD facilitator during this time are down. Although it is possible that staff may not have recorded their activity or recorded it accurately,[3] the reason for this discrepancy is not evident.

The students and their parents/caregivers also manifested this drop during the second semester of Year 2 in their mean scores on the SCS. Although there were general decreases in item scores across the board, there was growing concern about bullying and the lack of safety for students' possessions at the school. Based on offense classification frequencies, bullying is not considered a high frequency offense. However, there was a 33% increase of bullying in the sixth grade this year and a 23% increase for the entire school. Teachers commented on students shutting down in some classroom circles due to fears of being bullied and referenced specific students that were intransigent and resistant to change regardless of how many circles had been conducted with that individual. On the other hand, it should be noted that there was a 70% decrease in bullying frequencies for the RD pilot cohort. The RD pilot parent/caregiver cohort showed gains in their item scores on the SCS as well in May, 2014 except for the item specific to safety of student possessions.

[2] The seventh grade administrator indicates that the administrators were not recording their activity or recording it accurately during some of the second semester.

Although speculative, it is possible that the increase during second semester in offense frequencies and office referrals, decreases in SCS mean scores and item frequencies, and concerns about increased bullying behavior and safety of student possessions may reflect the amount of disruption in the school from the high level student mobility rate. In contrast to other schools in North East ISD, 68% of the student body left or entered the school in 2013-2014. When examined monthly, it is evident that the school was adjusting to the fact that by February there had been 436 student exits and entrances, which is 50% of the school's 927 students. These exits and entrances included students who could have transitioned back and forth numerous times. That level of mobility and the ensuing instability would be exceedingly disruptive to any school and might overwhelm the effort to institute processes such as RD that require consistency and constancy in application over time and are tailored, in part, to the culture of the classroom. Indeed, a shifting context with new students unfamiliar with RD processes who bring attitudes and behaviors that violate the merging school climate and enter the school just prior to, during or after a stressful testing time might make it difficult for a school to solidify its behavioral gains and advance forward.

In light of these trends, it is important to give specific attention to some of the problematic blockages so they do not grow and retard the school's noteworthy and demonstrated progress. There are two core areas noted for improvement.

Targeted areas for intervention. The school needs to target specific issues for intervention: (1) bullying and safety of student possessions, (2) students who need more intensive interventions, and (3) teacher cohorts who are struggling with using RD in the classroom. Both bullying and the safety of student possessions impact the safety that students feel at school and in their classrooms for learning. When students fear derisive comments or threats to their physical and emotional wellbeing and feel that teachers are powerless to control it, the RD values and respect agreements created with their peers become a mockery that threatens to undermine the effort being made to change school climate.

Likewise, there are students in the school that need intensive or Tier 3 interventions. Continuing to use classroom community building circles or one-time interventions will likely cause ongoing frustration because teachers, administrators and students will see little change after much effort has been expended. Administrators must be trained and garner more experience in doing Family Group Conferences and Circles of Support and Accountability. Both of these interviews include lengthy preparation and bringing together persons of influence in a student's life for dialogue and a plan for success that is closely monitored and likely will involve a community of support and a number of dialogue sessions over time with circle participants.

There are also teacher cohorts that need specific support and interventions in order to equip them with more skills in using RD in the classroom. Math and reading teachers, for example, have extended class sessions with large numbers of students. The challenges they face to achieve prolonged concentration from students need special attention,

experimentation with RD, and creation of strategies that fit within the RD philosophy but may need to be customized to the subject content and size of the class.

Fidelity to best practices. Although most of the teachers have a basic familiarity with RD practices and, in some cases, are using them in novel and creative ways, there is evidence that these practices are being modified by some personnel in ways that do not support best practices. Likewise, members of the LRT who have more experience with RD practices because they are responsible for RD interventions for student behaviors do not follow some of the core prescriptions for effectiveness. When teachers or the LRT get a positive response from a student, drops in suspension rates, and improvements in academic performance, it is tempting to conclude that their behavior as circle keeper or facilitator is adequate to the job not recognizing that deviating from best practices may impact potential long range outcomes. Such short cuts teach a compromised or abbreviated version of RD to others, and do not establish a solid base for long-term whole school growth. Clearly it is difficult to implement RD given the time restrictions in a school day, but the school could do more to help teachers to keep RD on the front burner, and to provide and encourage the practice of procedures that would make circles and conferences more effective.

For example, circles need to be done in circle rather than from behind a table or by passing a talking piece up and down class rows to save time. The circle shape has symbolic significance and keeps students and teachers more exposed and vulnerable to listening and being impacted by each other than when they are physically blocked/protected by the object in front of them. Moreover, adults must respect the talking piece, which is used to structure circle and conference interaction. When they are facilitating, they are supposed to ask open and probing questions to bring out the important aspects of a situation, e.g. what happened, who was affected by what happened, what have you thought about since, what has been the hardest part of this for you, and what have you thought you could do to repair the harm. There is a natural tendency to lecture when talking to students. However, when facilitators do not respect the talking piece, resort to lecturing, often because it is expedient, they undermine the students' voice, the need to model listening skills, and may actually reinforce one of the main problems for students which is impulse control, lack of listening and interrupting others or talking over them. Finally, problem solving and circles and conferences for intensive behaviors (Tier 2 and Tier 3) often require preparation of participants so that the intervention or coming together can be effective. If teachers or the LRT attempt such meetings without preparation the likelihood of stand offs, not taking responsibility or non productive interaction is heightened. Moreover, without preparation, the facilitator is ill equipped to deal with these blockages when they emerge in the circle or conference.

Teachers need a regular time with their cohorts to discuss their difficulties with implementation in their classrooms and to receive extra help. Another way to infuse knowledge is for teachers and administrators to become participants and use circles to conduct their business with each other. Members of the LRT need a similar process for learning along with more training on facilitation, preparation, and conducting Family Group Conference (FGC) and Circles of Support and Accountability.

Finally, there remains a deficiency in the development of action plans related to deeper learning and underlying student issues. The use of apology, avoiding problematic interactions, and reporting to an adult are important outcomes when a student feels at risk but relying on them only creates problems because the adults do not learn how to explore creative possibilities or elicit meaningful options from others and are more likely to use ISS as a warning or as a "restoradditional" alternative when nothing else is on the plate. A handbook of actions that are both meaningful and ensure accountability is clearly a desirable and time-efficient solution. However, the field of Restorative Practices in education has resisted this idea for several reasons. Most importantly, the action plan needs to be contextually oriented to be effective. A handbook of possible choices is not contextually driven and reduces outcomes to solutions rather than a focus on the process of how the action plan was developed and executed. Since research shows that the success of a plan rests on the perception of procedural fairness by those harmed and those responsible for the harm, bypassing that process actually undermines the success of the plan. The development of action plans requires trial and error learning, working with a variety of participant ideas to reach consensus, and space for exploration. Teachers and the LRT need to concentrate on cultivating these skills during the year.

In summary, Year 2 has been highly rewarding to the school. Teachers are deeply engaged with the changes in the school, circles and conferences have become normative processes, students advocate for and have a stake in furthering RD in the school, and there is a qualitative shift in the attention given to the relationships in building school climate. Ongoing decreases in suspensions, drops in tardys and increases in performance scores indicate that the school, with two-thirds of the students and staff using RD processes, is moving forward in notable ways. Concurrently, there is some indication of blockages to progress marked by increased bullying and lack of safety for student possessions, increases in the second semester in student offenses and office referrals, and less use of RD processes.

Ed White has been richly rewarded because of its promising drops in suspensions after RD was introduced to the sixth grade. Media attention has been extensive and resulted in state-wide recommendations by attorneys specializing in education to use RD, presentations to overflow audiences at state educator conferences, and support from the Texas Education Agency to take RD to scale. This attention happened early in the three-year implementation plan and before RD practices were fully learned and embedded in the school. Ed White needs to reinforce the initial learning so that its future prospects are as promising as the outcomes achieved in Year 2.

Conclusions

The following are recommendations to put into action in Year 3 of the implementation, 2014-2015. The monthly analysis provides an important timetable for buttressing challenging months to see if the gains obtained early in the academic year can be maintained. Some of the recommendations made in the Year 1 report were not instituted in 2013-2014 and are repeated, therefore, as well.

- Develop a plan for evaluating fidelity to best practices. Consider the use of a check list so that teachers and members of the LRT are reminded regularly of the behaviors that constitute best practices.

- Develop strategy to increase skills in generating action plans that are meaningful, address causative elements and/or underscore students' responsibility for reparative measures.

- Engage students in RD peer-facilitated circles. Provide a mechanism for training that is initially led by a teacher or co-facilitated with a teacher who can serve as an advisor. Selected trainees may be leaders among their peers (whether in positive or negative ways) to increase interest, respect and acceptance of peer-facilitated circles and as an opportunity to instill responsibility and pro social leadership skills in these students. Optionally, use eighth graders as facilitators or a shared or rotational leadership model in which students themselves select the facilitators.

- Improve data collection including timeliness of administering questionnaires and accuracy in reporting teacher and LRT activity in conducting or participating in RD circles and conferences.

- Schedule monthly continuing teacher education both as a support to teachers' use of RD in the classroom and to solidify skill development. Part of the education should include opportunities for sharing experiences so that teachers get and give feedback about their practice.

- Use restorative circles for faculty meetings to further embed RD normatively in the school and give teachers direct experience as participants.

- Develop a plan for more extensive use of RD circles and conferences during peak months, namely October, February, April and May. Since these months are problematic for the whole school, buy-in to the plan would likely increase if it were generated collectively among teachers, administrators and students.

- Provide training and consultation to LRT members on Tier 3 RD responses to students needing intensive intervention. Training should use role plays, debriefing and discussion specific to preparation, dialogue meeting(s), and action plans for Family Group Conferencing and Circles of Support and Accountability. LRT members should also receive consultation on the management of specific cases over time.

- Create programs using RD philosophy and processes to address areas of need, namely bullying and safety of student possessions as well as integration of new and returning students. If students are re-entering the school following an out-of-school disciplinary sanction, there should be re-entry circles and monitored plans to maximize the student's success in coming back into the school community.

- Target teacher cohort groups who express difficulty with accepting and using RD by using circles to listen to their experiences, explore issues and generate ideas with them to increase comfort and competence.

- Involve parents/caregivers and other community members, e.g. neighborhood residents, local businesses, churches, social service organizations, etc. as a support for the use of RD at Ed White. These stakeholders could participate in Tier 2 and Tier 3 circles as community members when appropriate as well as serve on an advisory council specific to embedding RD in the school.

Year 3 implementation will expand the RD initiative to include the eighth-grade. As such, the concept of a whole school model will be fully operative in 2014-2015. Eighth-grade students and sixth grade teachers will enter their third year of having RD as a part of the school's learning environment. Although the RD initiative will increase in size, students' familiarity with the program and the fact that it is two-years old in the school should help the eighth-grade teachers, who have observed it for some time, to integrate it fairly quickly. The challenge this year is to sustain the gains made in 2013-2014 and strengthen the program by ensuring fidelity to RD best practices. Because Ed White, to date, has the only whole school and middle school program in the state, it is likely to continue to receive public attention and scrutiny. It is important that the school remain cognizant of the fact that the three-year pilot is an experiment in changing school climate. As such, the school must guard against drawing premature conclusions about what works or doesn't work or becoming a showcase or model of performance that doesn't allow for acknowledging mistakes and the learning that comes from them.

References

Alvarez, R., Brennan, S., Carter, N., Dong, H. K., Eldridge, A., Fratto, J., & Taylor, L. (2009). *The ABCD's of Texas education: Assesing the benefits and costs of reducing the dropout rate.* College Station, TX: The Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University.

Brown, A. R. (2013, Jan. 10). Reconsidering school safety policies after Sandy Hood shooting. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/reconsidering-school-safety-policies-after-sandy-hook-shooting/2013/01/10/36b14fa4-5b30-11e2-beee-6e38f5215402_blog.html

Carter, P., Fine, M., & Russell, S. (2014). Discipline disparities series: Overview. *Discipline Disparities Research-to-Practice Collaborative,* (July 20, 2014), 1-7. http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Disparity_Overview_040414.pdf

Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. (2014). Civil rights data collection data snapshot: School discipline. July 21, 2014, from http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-discipline-snapshot.pdf

Ekstrom, R., Goertz, M., Pollack, J., & Rock, D. (1986). Who drops out of high school and why? Findings from a national study. *Teachers College Record, 87*(3), 356-373.

Gonzalez, T.N. (2014). Keeping kids in schools: Restorative justice, punitive discipline, and the school to prison pipeline. *Journal of Law and Education, 41*(2), 281-335.

Gregory, A., Bell, J., & Pollock, M. (2014). How educators can eradicate disparities in school discipline: A briefing paper on school-based interventions. . *Discipline Disparities: A Research-to-Practice Collaborative.* Retrieved July 20, 2014, from http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Disparity_Intervention_Full_040414.pdf

Gregory, A., & Weinstein, R. S. (2008). The discipline gap and African Americans: Defiance or cooperation in the high school classroom. *Journal of School Psychology, 46*(4), 455-475.

Losen, D., Hewitt, D., & Toldson, I. (2014). Eliminating excessive and unfair exclusionary discipline in schools: Policy recommendations for reducing disparities. *Discipline Disparities: A Research-to-Practice Collaborative,* (July 20, 2014), 1-16. http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Disparity_Policy_031214.pdf

Marchbanks, I., M.P., Blake, J. J., Booth, E. A., Carmichael, D., Seibert, A. L., & Fabelo, T. (2013). *The economic effects of exclusionary discipline on grade retention and high school dropout.* Los Angeles, CA: The Civil Rights Project.

Mattison, E., & Aber, M. S. (2007). Closing the achievement gap: The association of racial climate with achievement and behavioral outcomes. *American Journal of Community Psychology in the Schools, 40*(1), 1-12.

Morgan, E., Salomon, N., Plotkin, M., & Cohen, R. (2014). The school discipline consensus report: Strategies from the field to keep students engagd in school and out of the juvenile justice system (pp. 1-436). New York: Council of State Governments.

Rudd, T. (2014). Racial disproportionality in school discipline: Implicit bias is heavily implicated. 4-8. http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/racial-disproportionality-schools-02.pdf

Sekayi, D. N. R. (2001). Intellectual indignation: Getting at the roots of student resistance in an alternative high school program. *Education, 122*(2), 414-422.

Skiba, R. J., Arredondo, M. I., & Rausch, M. K. (2014). New and developing research on disparities in discipline, Discipline Disparities: A Research-to-Research Collaborative. http://www.indiana.edu/~atlantic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Disparity_NewResearch_Full_040414.pdf

Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review, 40*, 85-107.

Skiba, R. J., Michael, R. S., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *Urban Review, 42*, 317-342.

Skiba, R. J., Shure, L., & Williams, N. (2011). *What do we know about racial and ethnic disproportionality in school suspension and expulsion? Briefing paper developed for the Atlantic Philanthropies' race and gender research-to-practice collaborative* (pp. 1-34): The Atlantic Philanthropies.

Skiba, R. J., Trachok, M., Chung, C.-G., Baker, T., & Hughes, R. L. (2012). *Parsing disciplinary disproportionality: Contributions of infraction, student, and school characteristics to out-of-school suspension and expulsion.* . Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, British Columbia, Canada.

Wald, J. (2003). Connected in Seattle? An exploratory study of student perceptions of discipline and attachments to teachers. *New Directions for Youth Development: Theory, Practice and Research, 99* (35-54).

Whitmire, J., & Williams, M. (2014, June 3). Texas should be doing more to reform school discipline. *Austin American Statesman*.

Appendices

APPENDIX A. School Climate Surveys

APPENDIX B. Circle-It Form

APPENDIX C. Circle/Conference Agreement Form

APPENDIX D. Weekly Teacher Interview Guide

APPENDIX E. Focus Group Guide-Teachers

APPENDIX F. Focus Group Guide – LRT

APPENDIX G. 2014 Accountability Summary

APPENDIX A. School Climate Surveys

CLIMATE SURVEY FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Your answers will be used to help find out how effectively Restorative Discipline is being used at Ed White Middle School.

Date:

Gender: M ☐ F ☐

Ethnicity: Hispanic/ Latino Yes ☐ No ☐ **Race:** Black ☐ AIAN ☐ White ☐ Asian ☐ Pac Is ☐

Please check one box for each statement		Nearly always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely/ never	Unsure
1	Students and teachers/staff communicate to each other in a respectful way.					
2	Teachers and staff communicate to me in a respectful way.					
3	The students are invited to contribute to resolving problems that affect them.					
4	I am allowed to contribute to solving problems that affect my child/children					
5	When students, teachers/staff and/or parents are in conflict, everyone's views are listened to.					
6	Disagreements are normally resolved effectively.					
7	When a student does something wrong they are given a chance to put things right.					
8	In cases of bullying, the person harmed is asked what could be done to make things better.					
9	When someone does something harmful, everyone involved helps decide how it can be avoided in the future.					
10	A student's possessions are safe at this school.					

Please add any further comments below.

CLIMATE SURVEY FOR STAFF

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Your answers will be used to help find out how effectively Restorative Discipline is being used at Ed White Middle School.

Date:
Position Teacher ☐ Staff ☐ School Leader ☐ **Gender** M ☐ F ☐

Ethnicity Hispanic/ Latino Yes ☐ No ☐ **Race** Black ☐ AIAN ☐ White ☐ Asian ☐ Pac Is ☐

Your Attitudes and Beliefs

	Please check one box for each statement	Strongly agree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
1	There is no place in meetings with students for emotions and feelings.					
2	The people involved in a conflict need to agree on a way forward.					
3	When someone causes harm you loose respect for that person.					
4	It is best that people who are harmed do not meet the person who harmed them.					
5	People who cause harm should be punished.					
6	It is important that the person who has caused harm is given support to change their behavior.					
7	When someone causes harm they should be allowed to make amends.					

	Please check one box for each statement	Strongly agree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
1	Students and staff communicate to each other in a respectful way.					
2	The parents/caregivers of students relate to me in a respectful way.					
3	The students and their parents/caregivers are invited to contribute to resolving school problems that affect them.					
4	I am allowed to contribute to solving school-based problems that affect me.					
5	Within this school, disagreements are normally resolved effectively					
6	When students, staff and/or parents are in conflict, everyone's views are listened to.					
7	Students are given opportunities to make amends if they are responsible for causing harm.					
8	When a student causes harm the main response by the school is a sanction or punishment.					

9	In cases of bullying, the person harmed is asked to say what could be done to make things better.					
10	When someone does something harmful, those involved help to decide how similar incidents could be avoided in the future.					

Please indicate what level of staff development you have had in Restorative Discipline Practice. Check all that apply.

A. ☐ None
B. ☐ Awareness-raising session(s) and/or conferences
C. ☐ Training in specific Restorative Interventions, e.g. circles, mediation, family group conferencing

Only if you have checked box C above, please complete the first two questions below.
If you checked A or B, go to the last question.

How, if at all, has your experience of Restorative Discipline changed your practice?

How, if at all, has Restorative Discipline changed the atmosphere and in the school as a whole?

CLIMATE SURVEY FOR STUDENTS

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Your answers will be used to help find out how effectively Restorative Discipline is being used at Ed White Middle School.

Date:

Gender: M ☐ F ☐

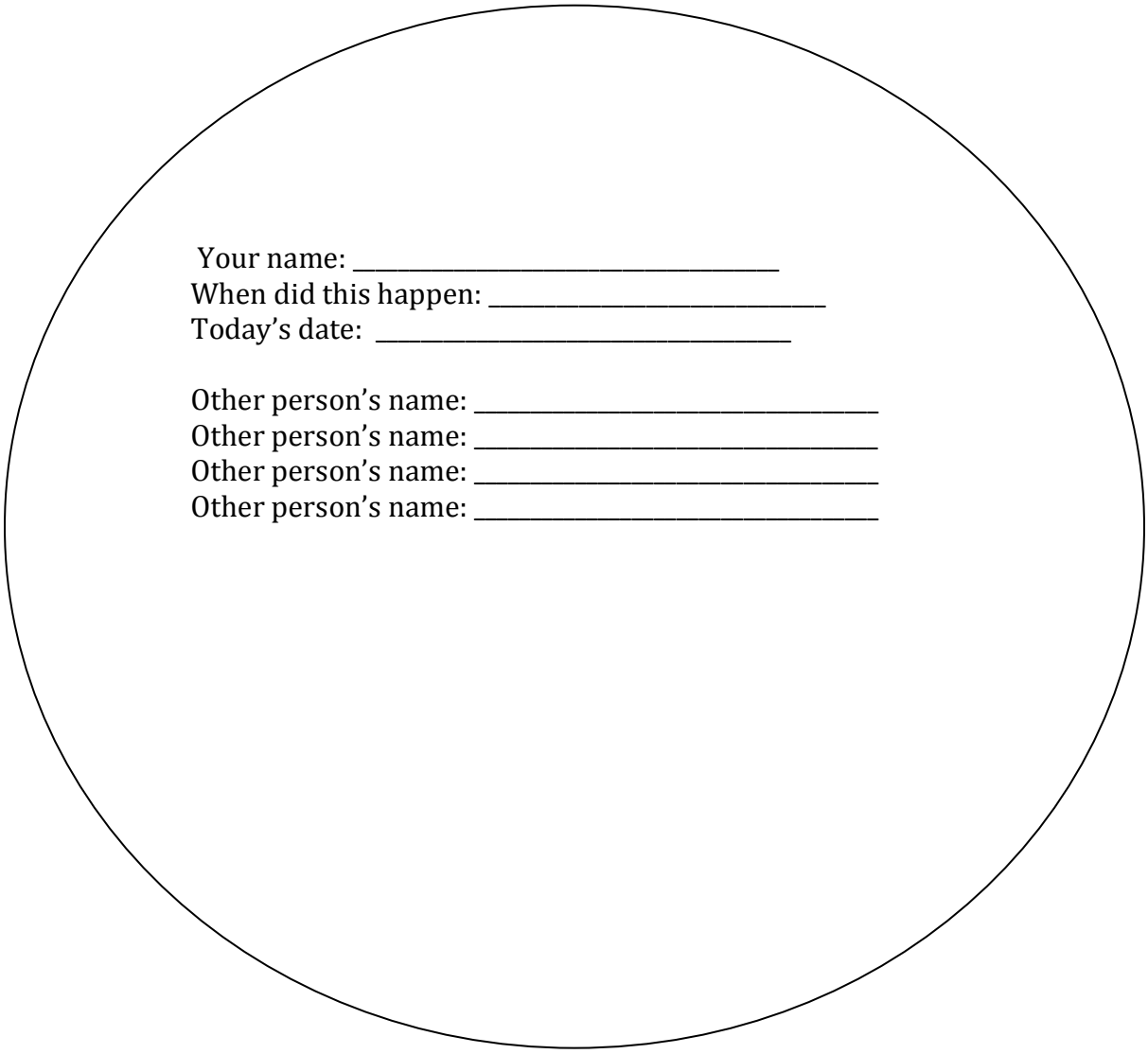
Ethnicity: Hispanic/ Latino Yes ☐ No ☐ **Race:** Black ☐ AIAN ☐ White ☐ Asian ☐ Pac Is ☐

	Please check one box for each statement	Nearly always	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely/ never	Unsure
1	I show respect for the teachers and staff in this school.					
2	The teachers and staff show me respect in this school.					
3	The school asks my parents/caregivers to help sort out my problems at school.					
4	In school I am encouraged to help sort out my own problems.					
5	Disagreements are normally sorted out.					
6	When people (students or adults) are in disagreement in this school, everyone is listened to.					
7	If I harm (e.g., upset), bully or assault someone at this school, I get a chance to change my behavior and put things right.					
8	If someone harms me at this school, I am able to say how things can be made better.					
9	At this school, when someone does something wrong or harms others, all involved help decide how things can be made better.					
10	In cases of bullying, the person harmed is asked to say what could be done to make things better.					
11	When someone does something harmful, those involved help to decide how similar incidents could be avoided in the future.					
12	When a student causes harm the main response by the school is a sanction or punishment.					
13	My possessions are safe at school.					

Please add any further comments below.

APPENDIX B. Circle-It Form

Circle it!



Today Tomorrow

APPENDIX C. Circle/Conference Agreement Form

Circle / Conference Agreement Form

(To be filled out during each circle / conference as agreement is reached.)

1. Background Information

Date:

Participants: (name and grade)

2. Incident or Concern:

3. Agreement Details:

How the harm will be repaired:

How the harm will be avoided in the future:

How the person who did the harm will give back to the community:

What support will be give to the person who was harmed:

4. Monitoring Plan

Tasks (include final check-in as last task) By Who? By When?

5. Additional Notes:

6. Signatures:

I have read the above agreement and understand and agree to all of the terms. I intend to fulfill any obligations detailed above for which I am responsible.

_____/_____ Signature of Person who did the Harm and Signature of Person Harmed

_____/_____ Signature of Circle / Conference Facilitator and Signature of Other Participant

_____/_____ Signature of Other Participants

APPENDIX D. Weekly Teacher Interview Guide

Individual Weekly Teacher Interview Questions

1. Please describe how you used Restorative Discipline practices in your classroom this week?

2. What did you use this week from the last conversation we had? How did it go?

3. How did you build respectful conversations between yourself and students?

4. Were there times when you talked about shared values; took responsibility for something that went wrong; talked about the impact of something on you; truly listened without interrupting?

5. What community building exercises and/or projects did you do with students?

APPENDIX E. Focus Group Guide-Teachers

Focus Group Questions-Teachers

1. Please describe your learning process from (a) the time of the training to the present (b) this Spring semester.*

2. Describe the climate in your classroom? How has it changed? What are critical events that occurred during the semester?

3. What has been the most challenging situations for you? What part of the Restorative Discipline Program has been the hardest to implement? What part has been the most rewarding?

4. Have you used the consultant Robert Rico and if so, how? Are there ways you could use him more? What stands in your way?

5. What support, if any, have you received from the school leadership? How has it helped of hindered your implementation of Restorative Disciplines?

6. If you were advising a seventh grade teacher about implementing Restorative Discipline practices in his/her classroom, what would you tell them?

- (a) to be asked in December; (b) to be asked in May

APPENDIX F. Focus Group Guide - LRT

Focus Group Questions-Leadership Response Team

1. Please describe your learning process from (a) the time of the training to the present (b) this Spring semester.*

2. Describe the range of misconduct incidents you have dealt with this semester using Restorative Discipline practices? What has been the pattern of referrals?

3. What have been the most challenging situations for you? What part of the Restorative Discipline Program has been the hardest to implement? What part has been the most rewarding?

4. Describe the consequences and outcomes of the Restorative Discipline Interventions? How are they monitored?

5. Describe what you have done with the student and what you have done with teachers to give students "a way back" to the classroom? How is it working and what changes have you considered making?

6. How have you used the consultant Stephanie Frogge and if so, how? Are there ways you could use him more? What stands in your way?

7. What support, if any, have you received from upper administration? How has it helped of hindered your implementation of Restorative Disciplines?

8. If you were advising a leadership response tram in a different middle school about implementing Restorative Discipline interventions, what would you tell them?

* (a) to be asked in December; (b) to be asked in May

APPENDIX G. Accountability Summary

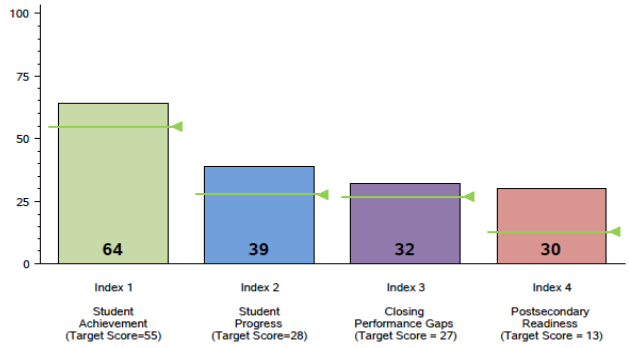
TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
2014 Accountability Summary
WHITE MIDDLE (015910046) - NORTH EAST ISD

Accountability Rating

Met Standard

Met Standards on	Did Not Meet Standards on
- Student Achievement	- NONE
- Student Progress	
- Closing Performance Gaps	
- Postsecondary Readiness	

Performance Index Report



Performance Index Summary

Index	Points Earned	Maximum Points	Index Score
1 - Student Achievement	1,635	2,539	64
2 - Student Progress	1,243	3,200	39
3 - Closing Performance Gaps	959	3,000	32
4 - Postsecondary Readiness			
STAAR Score	29.5		
Graduation Rate Score	N/A		
Graduation Plan Score	N/A		
Postsecondary Indicator Score	N/A		30

Distinction Designation

Academic Achievement in Reading/ELA	DISTINCTION EARNED
Academic Achievement in Mathematics	DISTINCTION EARNED
Academic Achievement in Science	NO DISTINCTION EARNED
Academic Achievement in Social Studies	DISTINCTION EARNED
Top 25 Percent Student Progress	DISTINCTION EARNED
Top 25 Percent Closing Performance Gaps	NO DISTINCTION EARNED
Postsecondary Readiness	NO DISTINCTION EARNED

Campus Demographics

Campus Type	Middle School
Campus Size	927 Students
Grade Span	06 - 08
Percent Economically Disadvantaged	82.4%
Percent English Language Learners	9.7%
Mobility Rate	25.5%

System Safeguards

Number and Percent of Indicators Met	
Performance Rates	26 out of 36 = 72%
Participation Rates	18 out of 18 = 100%
Graduation Rates	N/A
Total	**44 out of 54 = 81%**

For further information about this report, please see the Performance Reporting Division web site at http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2014/index.html