





Restorative Justice Swansfield Elementary

Colleen Morris, President, Howard County Education Association
Laurel Porter, Principal, Swansfield Elementary
Keynora Greenwood, RJ Team Member, Swansfield Elementary



Background

- In year three of a three year Great Public Schools grant from National Education Association. Committed to continuing through SY 22-23
 - Schools include Laurel Woods ES, Longfellow ES, Swansfield ES, Mayfield Woods MS, Long Reach HS, Wilde Lake HS
 - Our cohort schools were selected due to administrator interest and commitment
 - Grant provides access to a full time liaison, technical assistance, and professional learning opportunities
 - Partners include the Restorative Justice Partnership, Restorative Justice Training Institute, Community Justice for Youth Institute, and Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation
- 
- 

Restorative Justice in Education

Restorative Justice is an indigenous philosophy that emphasizes **building relationships**.

After relationships have been established, **if** there is a need to repair harm, restorative justice provides an opportunity for everyone impacted by an incident to come together in a safe space to address their feelings and needs, and reach a resolution that heals and restores.





Swansfield's Journey

Restorative Justice HCEA Cohort School



Building Community

Staff,
Students &
Families



Clear Vision

Clear Vision
and
Expectations



Restorative Justice Team

Voluntary Team
of dedicated
staff




Focus on Language

Daily
Interactions



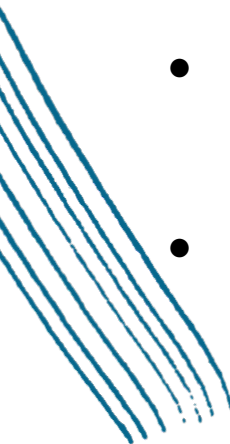
Union Support

Presence at
SES staff
meetings/PL
Opportunities





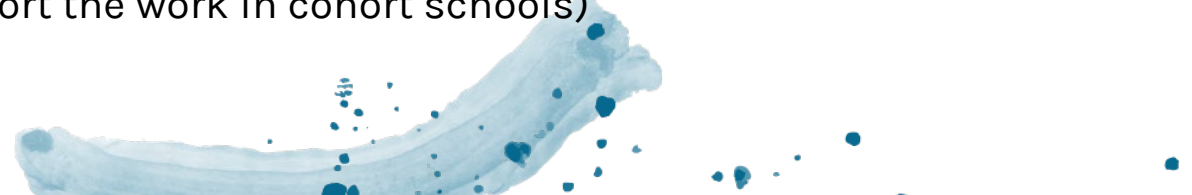
Community Building

- **Staff-Staff**
 - Focus during staff meetings
 - Opportunities for staff to develop relationships across grade levels and areas of focus
 - **Staff-Students**
 - Consistent time for community building in ALL classrooms
 - All staff participated
 - **Staff-Families**
 - PTA meetings focused on building community among families & staff
 - Focus on developing shared values
 - **Students-Students**
 - Increased opportunities for students to build relationships within the classroom community
 - Small group opportunities targeted to specific needs
- 



Clear Vision & Union Support




- RJ is NOT a quick fix. It is a Journey!
 - If EVERYONE is in it together we will see the greatest impact
 - Always returning to our data to support the “why?” as well as our journey
 - An RJ team of dedicated staff to support the work
 - Ongoing opportunities for staff to participate in office hours with Dwanna Nicole from the Restorative Justice Partnership
 - HCEA Leadership supporting and participating in professional learning with our staff
 - Financial support through the grant (including a full time liaison to support the work in cohort schools)
- 



Professional Learning

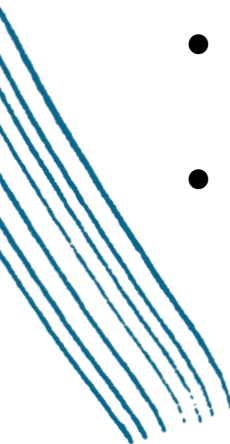


- Introduction to Restorative Justice
 - Select staff attend 4-day peace circle trainings
 - ALL staff participated in circles
 - School-wide Book Study on Little Book of Restorative Justice
 - Focus on RJ for monthly staff meetings throughout the school year
 - Additional trainings for staff on Racism & Adulthood, Restorative Conversations, Non-Violent Communication, community engagement and our role within the community at large
- 



Focus on Language

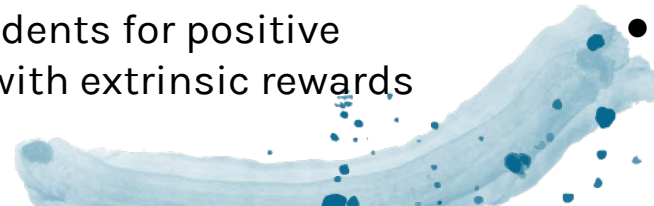


- All staff participated in a reflective process.
 - Staff shared examples of non-restorative language they heard or witnessed at Swansfield.
 - Staff reflected on the impact their words/actions have on others.
 - Staff identified ways to support each other and students to prevent these words/actions in the future.
 - As a result, staff began speaking up when they witnessed or heard something that was non-restorative.
 - Language continues to be a focus each year. This year we have focused on:
 - Non-Violent Communication
 - Using observable language that is non-judgemental
- 



Shifting Staff Mindset & Changing our Practices



- Focus on 3 rules
 - Be Safe
 - Be Responsible
 - Be Respectful
 - Staff addressed an undesired behavior by associating it with breaking one of the three rules.
 - Reinforcing rules
 - Reward students for positive behaviors with extrinsic rewards
- 




- Students, Staff & Families developed Swansfield's six Success Factors
- Focus is on teaching the desired behaviors and processing each individual situation.
- Lessons to teach each specific success factor at all grade levels
- Focus on relationship/community based rewards



HCEA Job Satisfaction Survey



Survey Question	2016-2017	2020-2021
Overall, morale at my school is good.	14.3%	91.7%
There is good teamwork among staff in my school.	51.0%	97.9%
In my school, administrators/supervisors support me in enforcing discipline.	36.2%	87.8%



School Climate Survey

- Surveyed all students in (grades 3-5), all staff and families
- Provided with a detailed report that identifies areas of strength & growth

Optimal performance: Maintain current focus and attention	Scores ≥ 4.5	Green
Approaching optimal performance: Build on current focus and attention	Scores ≥ 3.75 and < 4.5	Light Green
Area of opportunity: Intensify focus and attention	Scores ≥ 3 and < 3.75	Yellow
Area of concern: Commit to intensive effort & focus on improvement	Scores < 3	Red

School Climate Survey

Year 1

Year
4

Someone says something mean about me. (Students)

2.99

3.9

Students trust adults in this school. (Students)

3.54

4.42

Faculty and staff are comfortable discussing difficult or controversial school issues. (Staff)

2.58

3.92

Faculty and staff do a good job helping parents understand what social, emotional and characters skills their child needs to learn.(Staff)

2.9

4.16

Developing a student's character is just as important to teachers and staff as academic learning. (Families)

4.32

4.77

The school involves students in making decisions about things that affect them. (Families)

3.58

3.89



Recommendations



- Continued collaboration between HCEA, HCPSS, and individual schools
- Administrator investment is essential - cannot do this work piecemeal, should be a whole-school approach
- Allow administrators to stay in place long enough to do the work - school climate shifts take time
- Hire additional staff within central office and individual schools to provide support
- Start with staff and focus on community building - restorative justice is not simply an “alternative to discipline/response to harm”
- To learn more about what restorative justice looks like in educational settings, sign up for a school visit to Swansfield ES and/or Long Reach HS. Contact dwanna@rjpartnership.org for more information, including dates