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Restorative Justice

All Berkeley schools work to implement a system of [Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports](#) (PBIS) to improve school climate, increase student engagement, and improve academic outcomes for all students. Teachers, principals, and school staff explicitly teach the skills students need to be safe, responsible, and respectful at school and how to be an ally. This includes modeling high expectations for student behavior and building trusting relationships with students.

In 2014, the district's first [Local Control & Accountability Plan](#) (LCAP) directed new funding from the state to continue to improve school climate. Actions in the plan included the adoption of the social-emotional "[Toolbox](#)" curriculum to be taught in all Berkeley classrooms in grades K-6, as well as the expansion of restorative justice practices.

Berkeley Unified is expanding its relationship with SEEDS Community Resolution Center, a local leader in Restorative Justice programs in schools, to expand pilot programming at the elementary and middle school levels. The Berkeley High School principal is also directing school resources and building the capacity of teachers, staff and students to work together in the use of restorative circles and other restorative practices that help reduce conflict and repair harm when it has occurred.

What is Restorative Justice in Schools?

Restorative justice fosters an environment of care, encourages accountability and responsibility, and addresses misbehavior and harm in an inclusive manner that strengthens relationships.

Restorative Justice in schools is a set of principles and practices that build community and involve processes that restore relationships when harm has occurred. Restorative Justice practices are used to support and complement PBIS and other current school climate initiatives to positively impact school culture, discipline, and academic needs.

Why Restorative Justice?

Research indicates that restorative practices decrease suspensions, increase attendance, improve school climate, and increase academic achievement.

The practice of "zero tolerance" that has been used across the nation to set and enforce rules and expectations in schools has failed to provide positive results in student outcomes. In fact, we know from research that a student who is suspended from school is twice as likely to later drop out. Suspending a student from school has the unintended consequence of pushing students away, and sending them the message that they do not belong in school.

In pursuit of Berkeley's 2015-16 LCAP goals, more resources are being directed for training teachers and using restorative practices with students to ease and resolve conflict.

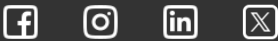
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Jasmina Viteskic, Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer
2020 Bonar Street Room 116, Berkeley, CA 94702
Phone: 510.486.9338 Email: nondiscrimination@berkeley.net

More information is available at www.berkeleyschools.net/non-discrimination/.

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