Enhanced Student Achievement in a Restorative Practices School Culture

Lyn Doppler  Rozelle Public School
International Conference - 'The Next Step - Developing Restorative Communities' Bethlehem Pennsylvania 2006
School Journey.....

- Diverse mainstream primary school in the inner west of Sydney, Australia
- Restorative journey as principal with all stakeholders for 5 years
- Change in culture has occurred
- Restorative Practices embedded as a way of being, teaching and learning
- Director General’s Award for Outstanding Achievement in Being & Learning Together
- Community connectedness-increased enrolments & high parent participation
## A Change in Culture

### Pre & Post Data from school self-evaluation process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of Students Encouraged to Achieve &amp; Learn</th>
<th>% of Parents Recognising Achievements</th>
<th>% of New Membership Valued</th>
<th>% of Parents &amp; Students Sometimes Supporting the School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>15% &amp; 23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5% &amp; 14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 66% of students surveyed felt that they were encouraged to achieve & learn.
- 57% of parents felt that the school almost always recognises achievements along with 76% of students and 66% of staff.
- 53% of parents felt that new membership to the school is almost always valued.
- 15% of parents and 23% of students felt that they only sometimes supported the school.
- 81% felt that way.
- 78% of parents, 81% of students and 93% of staff felt that way.
- 95% of parents felt that way.
- 5% parents & 14% of students felt that way.
Student Engagement Matrix
Link between learning & behaviour

2001
- most students were learning but only 25% were engaged in enlightened learning
- Suspension rate up
- Majority of issues referred to office and executive

2005
- 42% of students were engaged in enlightened learning, 39% were learning, 17% were on task and 2% just got to school
- Reduction in incidents, only 1 suspension in 2006
- Staff & students handle issues at their level, repairing harm and rebuilding relationships
State-wide Literacy Assessment

Basic Skills Test Year 3 and Year 5

- 81% of students in Year 3 were in the top 3 bands compared to 74% for the state. 88% of students were in the top 3 bands for the Primary Writing Assessment compared to 83% for the state.

- 76% of Year 5 students were in the top 2 bands compared with 50% for the state. No students were in the lower two bands. 94% of students were in the top 3 bands compared to 79% for the state in the PWA.

Progress over time from Year 3 to Year 5

- 93.8% of Yr 5 students made growth greater than one skill band in literacy. The average growth was 9.0 compared with the state average of 6.5.
Numeracy

Basic Skills Test Year 3 and Year 5

- 86% of Year 3 students were in the top three bands compared to 76% for the state.
- 94% of Year 5 students were in the top three bands compared to 77% for the state. Rozelle had fewer students (6%) in the lower bands compared to the state (16%).

Progress over time

- Year 5 students made gains of 8.4 points on the BST scale which was above the state average of 7.7. 82% of students made a growth greater than one skill band.
See the big picture!

What is your context?
Begin with the end in mind!
Reflecting on the Challenges

What do you do well in your school?
- How does it feel? Climate?
- What do you see, hear, feel?

What would you do differently? Is the change you want significant?
- Are you happy with how you challenge students around inappropriate behaviour and commitment to enlightened learning? Can it be a way of being?

What is the hardest part?
Starting point?

Whole School Approach—not as an ‘add-on’ or only for kids with problems

- Professional Development for all staff, children and parents with (Terry O’Connell) leading to formulation of a shared vision and foundation for the school
- **START!** Have a plan and begin!
- Be passionate—most will jump on board the train if your approach as leader is restorative!
- Work with other schools/clusters—support network
- Keep vision *in focus*
Whole School Strategies

- explicit framework and continuum for building healthy relationships and quality learning amongst all stakeholders
- collaborative planning and assessment
- classes in stages to enable curriculum reform and ensure there are no ‘silos’
- peer and self-assessment
- student-led three-way conferences
- critical thinking
- circles for building relationships & trust
- Transition Initiative-build capacity at grassroots level
How do we see change?

Restorative Practices

......... is ............... ...

Not just another tool in the tool box......BUT
...A different way of seeing things - a way of being and learning together.......
How do we communicate?

Roadblocks
- Listening to respond
- Judging
- Solving the problem for someone
- Avoiding Feelings

Enhancers
- Listening empathically
- Non Judgemental
- Working with others who can solve their own problems
- Maximising Feelings
A Restorative Philosophy is based on the following principles

- Listening
- Skill enhancement
- Explicit framework
- Relationships
- Maximizing affect/emotions
- Accountability
- Empowerment
Restorative Questions 1

When things go wrong

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Terry O’Connell, Real Justice Australia
Restorative Questions 11

When someone has been hurt

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Terry O’Connell, Real Justice Australia
Inclusive School Philosophy-
clear expectations and framework

PEER BASED LEARNING & SUPPORT,
SRC and Leadership for all
Are we explicit?

- Agendas - in every room
- Expectations
- Scaffolds
- Feedback - notice & comment all the time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Praise</th>
<th>vs</th>
<th>Acknowledgement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rivalry</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product &amp; Performance</td>
<td>Effort, Enjoyment, Life-love of learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfishness</td>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Failure</td>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quitters</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Interdependence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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What will we see in the Restorative Practices classroom?

• Happy learners who own their behaviour & learning
• Circles
• Risk-takers, trust
• Problem-solvers
• Socratic questions
• Cooperation
• Feelings
• Reflection

• Movement from the past to the present to the future in academic & social area
Restorative Foundation - a way of being & learning together involving all stakeholders.

Healthy roots

Nutrients

Healthy Fruits

Empowered & resilient community... respectful relationships..... Capacity to make responsible decisions

Restorative teaching/learning: cooperative learning, circles, Philosophy, Buddies, Transition, Risk-taking

Listening Community

Thinking skills

- Restorative Foundation - a way of being & learning together involving all stakeholders.
**Implementation Dip**

- Expect difference of opinion, clarification, some **CHAOS**...(calculated chaos)...
- If it’s very smooth-indicator not much is changing!
- Apply certain pressures of accountability but......**ASSIST WITH CAPACITY-BUILDING and PROBLEM-SOLVING OPPORTUNITIES**
- Culture change first →...Academic gains follow - may be inconsistent before steadily rising-staff training to assist them to not only ‘be’ but ‘teach’ restoratively
Distributed Leadership

- **GOAL:**
  
  *ALL* TEACHERS
  *ALL* CHILDREN
  to be LEADERS

- What are the benefits?
- Why is Leadership crucial?
- Difference between charismatic & sustainable leaders?
- Restorative teaching & learning builds on the *strengths* of individuals & groups working together
- Results: Quality in relationships & learning
Social Control Window

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Firm</th>
<th>High Control</th>
<th>Low Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TO</strong></td>
<td>Punitive</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Stigmatising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOT</strong></td>
<td>Neglectful</td>
<td>Indifferent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOR</strong></td>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>undemanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WITH</strong></td>
<td>Restorative</td>
<td>Authoritative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Reintegrative</td>
</tr>
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McCold & Wachtel 2000
Teaching styles that match the 4 quadrants of the Social Control Window

Terry O’Connell 2005

1. Authoritarian: ‘TO’
   
   Cold/high expectations
   
   - notices inappropriate behaviour more than appropriate
   - often angry
   - uses loud voice
   - often gets immediate compliance and results for short term
   - has high standards
2. Permissive ‘FOR’

Warm/low expectations

- warm and supportive
- don’t set limits
- focus on effort, busy work not quality
- inappropriate behaviour handled through ignoring or with weak demands or pleading
- avoid conflict at all costs
3. Detached-neglectful ‘NOT’

cold/low expectations

- teacher remains at desk
- students do not feel cared for
- teacher does not appear concerned about quality work
- may result from burn-out, stress
- may be lack of skill in how to be warm and still set boundaries

Terry O’Connell 2005
4. Authoritative, restorative ‘WITH’

**Warm/high expectations**  

- positive, kind and supportive relationship with students
- effective discipline plan
- orderly classroom
- sense of hope and optimism
- students feel sense of safety and competence
- view mistakes as opportunities for insight
- high level of quality work/job satisfaction/negotiated learning

Terry O’Connell 2005
Default Strategies

What are they?

Power, manipulation

force, ignore, play off, make deals,

kill the messenger, give in too soon.....

Do they work? What happens to the emotional ‘bank-balance’?

Fullan
Getting Beyond the Wall

How do we keep moving in the change cycle?

- 1. Listen, MODEL restorative interactions everywhere—corridor, playground, teaching..
- 2. Maintain clear focus
- 3. Embrace resistance
- 4. Respect those devil’s advocates
- 5. Relax!!!!!
- 6. Join with the resistance
- 7. Acknowledge small gains

Consider strategies that use all/most of these points.............. Critical mass
FEAR motivates resisters

......Some teachers would prefer to appear competent in something they know than incompetent in something they know is beneficial and...........

Once they take the risk the gains are limitless!
What they say......

What’s the best thing about being at Rozelle?

‘There’s a lovely calm welcoming feeling, happy feeling in this school-people are having fun and learning’-parent

‘I feel liberated teaching this way-not so lonely, working with colleagues and sharing is the best’-teacher

‘We care for each other, there’s no put-downs, there’s lots of friends’-child
Looking after staff

- Looking after the goose that lays the golden eggs
- How do we maintain, preserve and enhance the resources that produce the desired results?

Covey
VISION

Restorative Practices Embedded

Students, staff, parents & wider community

Inclusive Programs & Policies

Good Discipline Effective Learning Quality Teaching

Ongoing Evaluation

Relationships Listening Effective Communication

Resilient community that feels valued & connected

Building Capacity and Social Capital
Create and Live by a Personal Mission Statement

*Model, model, model*.........................

- Provides focus
- Guides your day-to-day decisions
- Gives you a greater sense of meaning and purpose
- Ensures a consistent message-filters through
- Live and breathe what you believe
- Moral Imperative of leadership (Fullan)
Model, model, model....... 
- Walk the talk 
- Become a transition person 
- Move people from the past to the present to the future socially & academically 
- Look at mistakes as opportunities for reflection and insight 
- Build from grass roots-effective transition program 
- Build social capital and capacity 
- Be brave, don’t give up
Flexible and responsive to the changing needs of all stakeholders

Moving from self discipline to building deep, lasting and highly effective relationships with other people, from the inside out……
What drives us?
The compass or clock?

Mission
Direction
Values

Appointments, schedules and busy activities

Covey
Strong Foundations based on Restorative Practices

Are the foundations in good shape?

Does everything else cement this foundation?
Quality Teaching Model

- Intellectual Quality
- Quality Learning Environment
- Significance

Philosophy with Kids

Philosophers’
Tea Party
Choose a table,
take your seat
and join the
discussion.....

Thinking skills
promote critical
and independent
reflection...
teaching
restoratively!!!!
Build on Strengths
Build capacity
Build an Inclusive Learning Community

- Teams/clusters
- Use expertise of parents
- Funds
- Open & transparent practices
Building Trust

…with staff, children and parents..... How can we promote collegiality as opposed to congeniality?
Initiatives that enhance our Restorative Foundation

- Buddies
- Leadership opportunities for all
- Peer Learning
- Philosophy
- Bounce Back
- HIP
- Seasons for Growth
- Tribes
- Transition Programs
Sharing Circles
How can we use them to build trust and connectedness and enhance wellbeing & learning?
Challenges

- Embed restorative teaching as a critical thinking tool that fits with:
  Bloom’s, Multiple Intelligences, Habits of Mind, de Bono’s Hats, Philosophy etc.
- A way of being & learning that challenges students to move from the past to the present to the future in academia as well-to tell their story!

  Eg What were you thinking when you did the Maths problem that way? What are you thinking now? What will you do next time you are faced with this kind of problem?
Challenges continued

- Big rocks first
- Scaffolds-check direction when at times of stress some can slip back to previous ways of behaving
- Acknowledgement
- Empowerment of individuals & teams
- Systemic Change, Undergraduate exposure
Linking Theory to Practice

Do initiatives that are proactive and sustainable take longer....... QUALITY (with)

........ than reactive and quick-fix ‘interventions’ MEDIOCRITY (to, for)?
Heading in the right direction?

Danger in *assuming* our version of change is right—how can we look for transformation, continual exchange of ideas with others?
Where to from here?
It’s hard… new levels of collective commitment…..

- 1. Making a difference as individuals
- 2. Making a difference in the school
- 3. Making a difference beyond the school
- 4. Making a difference in Society……… the world???
HOPE
Not the same thing as optimism

- It’s not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless, of how it turns out. It is hope, above all, that gives us strength to live and to continually try new things, even in conditions that seem hopeless.

Havel, 1990
Celebrating the Journey