

Pursuing Equitable Restorative Communities (PERC) in Pittsburgh: Partner Relationships and Aligning Restorative Practices with District Priorities

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The Pathway to the Promise.<sup>™</sup>

#### Goals

Understand PERC, its history and objectives

- Review communication structures between Pittsburgh Public
  Schools (PPS) and grant partners
- Discuss alignment between restorative practices and other PPS programs



# Laying the Foundation for Restorative Practices in Pittsburgh

- Strong administrative level buy-in and support of restorative practices
- Community stakeholders excited about and supportive of restorative practices
- District policies becoming more restorative (e.g. eliminating disruptions as a suspendable offense, evaluation rubric focus on building culture and student ownership in the classroom )

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## What is PERC?

- Pursuing Equitable Restorative Communities
- Competitive Grant from Department of Justice through Comprehensive Safe Schools Initiative
  - Awarded October 2014
  - \$3M over 3 years
  - 22 Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS)
- Implementation Partner: International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP)
  - Research Partner: RAND

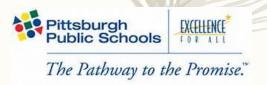
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### **PERC** Objectives

- 1. Improve student and staff perceptions of school safety
- Reduce the incidents of juvenile justice involvement, violence and out-of-school suspensions
- 3. Reduce racial disparities in suspensions
- 4. Reduce gender-specific disparities in suspensions
- 5. Improve peer-to-peer respect and rule adherence
- 6. Improve student attendance



## Looking in on Year 1 Implementation

- The #WeArePPS campaign creates videos and finds media opportunities to highlight the people, places, and things that make the Public Schools the premier place for our city's youth.

- In January 2016, the Office of Communications aired a segment on restorative practices and its implementation.

**#WeArePPS Restorative Practices Segment** 



# Year 1 Highlights

- District staff were trained in Introduction to Restorative Practices and Using Circles Effectively and Leadership: Authority with Grace Training
- Schools creating their own materials
- Decrease in usage through the school year





#### Year 2 and Beyond

- Developing structures for sustainability
- Providing responsive support to schools implementing restorative practices
- Increasing communications around restorative practices



 Preparing for sustaining restorative practices through identifying and training licensed trainers

# IIRP, PPS, and RAND

Communication Structure

Weekly Core Team Meetings Quarterly PERC Advisory Board Meetings Quarterly Data Review Meetings

Coach's Retreat

**Budget Meetings** 

- Consistency
- Support

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## Aligning PERC to District Programs

Initiative fatigue and reluctance to implement anything new

- Aligning PERC and Equity
- Connecting PERC and evaluation rubrics (Research-Based Inclusive System of Evaluation)



 Connecting restorative practices with the District's Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE)

## **PERC** and Equity

- In 2015, the District entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Pennsylvania Human Rights Coalition.
- Having IIRP coaches attend Pacific Education Group's Beyond Diversity training
- During training, participants saw the connection between restorative practices and the District's equity work

