



**RMS Restorative Practices Handbook  
for Parents, Students, and Our School  
Community**



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## **Restorative Practices: An Overview**

Roseville Middle School is proud to be a Restorative Practices school. This concept; in conjunction with RMS's values of Responsibility, Mindfulness, and Safety; drives our daily routines, decision-making, and behavior.

At Roseville Middle School, we believe inclusiveness, relationship-building, and problem-solving are necessary skills for a positive and equitable school community. We have a strong Restorative Team that includes trained specialists who work with students, staff, and guardians on areas that can be problematic for students such as: positive conflict resolution, classroom disruptions, attendance, and mental health well-being. The Restorative Team also works closely together with teachers to ensure the workings of better relationships and problem-solving techniques for the students. As a staff, we all understand the importance of restorative practices in the classroom in order to create a positive, problem-solving climate and environment. We feel that is just as important for the other stakeholders, such as parents and guardians, to have the same strength in understanding of the purpose of restorative practices and how it can provide a safe

and productive school year for your middle school student.

**Purpose:** The purpose of an in-school restorative practices community is to:

- Engage students as leaders
- Build trust among staff and students
- Repair harm
- Build and strengthen classroom community
- Provide a whole school relational approach to traditional school discipline
- Provide students a strong understanding of accountability and responsibility
- The relationship between student engagement and academic performance has been a longstanding topic of research in the United States For many years. There are eight indicators of academic engagement:
  - Participation
  - Pride
  - Proactivity
  - Passion
  - Patience
  - Peace
  - Playfulness
  - Perseverance

At Roseville Middle School we have procedures and processes that the staff and students follow to ensure the success of our values.

### **Hallway Conversations**

In the classroom, when a student gets off task, he/she is given gentle reminders to refocus on the tasks at hand. If the student has a hard time being on task after several attempts, the teacher will then ask the student to step in the hallway for a focused conversation. This time is set apart so that the teacher can privately problem solve with the student to help get the student back on track without the audience of their peers. The students are asked five questions to have them self-reflect and self-correct their actions. The student then returns into the class ready to get back on task.

If the student returns to class back on task for the remainder of class, nothing else happens. If the student continues to have a hard time getting back on task, the following process takes place.

## **Responsibility Room (RR) Process**

As referenced in the previous section, this process begins after a Hallway Conversation, if the situation necessitates it.

- The student is sent to the RR/reports to RR.
- The student completes a reflective form that includes the five restorative questions to reflect on the behavior that resulted in their visit.
- They review the form with a Restorative Aide and prepare for a reentry conversation – a conversation that repairs harm and welcomes the student back into class.
- The Restorative Aide reenters the student into the classroom by escorting them and monitoring the conversation.
- The teacher phones home to the parent/guardian to inform them of incident that transpired that day and to plan for prevention in the future.
- If a student repeatedly visits the RR, a Restorative Aide will contact parents to work on an individual plan for that student.

## Types of Circles

Classroom content and community building circles are ways to ensure the eight indicators of academic engagement are being met. In classroom circles, everyone has a chance to speak and can **participate** in some way. These circles give students a sense of **pride** by allowing them to voice their opinions and have their peers or teacher acknowledge their voice. Circles for content encompass **proactivity** because they allow students to recognize the areas that they need to work on are the same as their peers, and they are able to provide positive solutions for one another. There is **passion** because adding joy to the subject matter really makes students engaged in what they are learning. **Patience** is demonstrated by students having to wait for their turn to speak without interrupting. There is **peace** while waiting as well as a reduction in the opportunity for misbehavior. Getting creative in the circle allows **playfulness** which prompts students to relax, feel comfortable, and become more receptive to the information. Lastly, there is **perseverance** from whole group participation. This allows students an understanding of the content and a willingness to want to work harder.

Classroom circles are just one of the many circles we run here at RMS! Other circles include:

- Peace circles
- Teacher/student circles
- Formal restorative conferences
- Responsibility room visit circles
- Positive Intervention circles to address areas such as excessive behaviors, attendance, suspension/expulsion avoidance
- Peer support

### **How Peace Circles Work**

When a student or teacher requests a peace circle, the participants begin to connect with their core self. The values of the restorative practices and RMS become vital for a healthy process and positive outcomes for all. Here is the process:

- After a circle is requested, participants will be asked to fill out a form based on five restorative questions.
- After a thorough discussion of the truth has been conducted, an agreement will



be constructed, and all parties will be asked to sign the plan.

- Parents will be called and debriefed on the outcome of the peace circle.
- For a student that has had excessive circles, a parent circle will be requested to initiate further support.
- The outcome of a peace circle is a commitment to treat everyone with dignity and respect no matter what happens.

### **Pairing Restorative Practices with Traditional Discipline**

At RMS, through our restorative program, we offer alternatives to tradition discipline. We try to use the circle process to provide students with experiences to help them learn from their mistakes in lieu of or in addition to certain consequences. This may involve students having fewer days of suspension in a multiple day suspension. Roseville Police Department has a city ordinance that disciplines physical fighting with tickets that are attached to fines up to \$500. In some situations, students are offered an opportunity to discuss a situation with the people who were directly

involved rather than serve all suspension days or be held responsible for the ticket. The student must agree to a circle, have a parent/advocate present, take ownership for his/her actions by meaningfully participating, develop and hold him/herself to a plan, and write a reflective letter. Additionally, he/she must perform service hours.

### **How Service Hours Work**

Students serving hours will do so in an after-school setting, 3:00-3:50pm. They are supervised by a Restorative Aide. Students are responsible for their transportation home. The hours they serve will be set by the restorative office. Students will complete a combination of reflective conversation and goal setting as well as work that beautifies or repairs the school. The purpose of service hours is to give students a way to give back and make the school a better place when their previous actions hurt or damaged the school community.

### **Restorative Practices at Home: How Parents Can Help**

Restorative Practices are effective in a home setting as well. Teaching/Addressing behavior with

the same language can make our impact as parents and educators stronger for our students. To reinforce expectations at home, the following suggestions may be useful:

- Focus on non-punitive solutions to problems.
- Use the five Restorative Questions with your child when they break a rule:
  1. What happened? What was your part?
  2. What were you thinking of?
  3. Who was impacted by your actions?
  4. How do you think they were affected?
  5. What can you do to repair the harm?
- Your tone of voice is as important as your questions. Try to keep a neutral tone, even if you do not feel it inside. Focus on how the consequences of wrongdoing are connected directly with the behavior and to the people who have been harmed. **For example:**
  - If your child is caught breaking a rule, like stealing, focus on how they harmed others, not how they broke the rule.

- If your child breaks someone's property, ask them how they can "make things right."
- If your child gets into a fight, find creative ways to restore appropriate relationships with those they have harmed.
- **Most importantly:** Always have child take direct responsibility for actions through sincere apologies, financial restitutions, and/or community services.

### **Hallway Heroes**

A Hallway Hero is one example of a restorative practice that is ongoing throughout the school year. The Hero is a student who goes above and beyond to demonstrate the values of RMS: responsibility, mindfulness, and safety. These students are recognized because they have a greater sense of compassion and consider other individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions in a positive way.

Here is the process:

- A student's name gets submitted by a teacher when they have been observed going above and beyond exemplary behavior in the school.
- After a weekly list is compiled, a student's name will be selected and announced as Hero of the Week.
- The weekly Hallway Hero will get his or her picture taken, and it is placed on our Hallway Hero bulletin board.
- After five submissions, a student receives a blue Hallway Hero t-shirt. After ten submissions, a student receives a gold Hallway Hero t-shirt. These are not only tokens of appreciation and encouragement, but a signal of role models and leaders in the school.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Extraordinaire Group**

Our 8<sup>th</sup> grade Extraordinaire Group is a select group of students who need benefit from extra attention in regard to coping mechanisms when it comes to school, home and community rules. The group is

small, only 10-15 students who meet 2-3 times a week to discuss important issues such as motivation, forgiveness, bullying, respecting adults and peers, and most importantly, complying with rules in a positive way. Through discussions led by students and voicing one's opinion in a positive way, students learn to listen to each other and give positive feedback. This group is centered around respecting others' values and beliefs. The goal of this group is to help students develop a sense of an achievable future by taking the responsibility to make the right choices in their everyday life. The group's strongest motto is, "people won't remember what you did or said, but will always remember the way you made them feel."

### **Paying Attention to Attendance**

RMS's Restorative Program specifically addresses attendance through a number of processes, circles, and communication with students and families. Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success starting in kindergarten and continuing through high school. Even as children grow older and more independent, families play a key role in making sure students get to school safely every day and understand why

attendance is so important for success in school and on the job.

### **Key Information/Guidelines and How You Can Help**

- Call your student in to the attendance office when they are absent. (586) 445-5610.
- Students should miss no more than 6 days of school each year to stay engaged, successful, and on track to graduation.
- Absences can be a sign that a student is losing interest in school, struggling with schoolwork, dealing with a bully, or facing some other potentially serious difficulty.
- By 6th grade, absenteeism is one of three signs that a student may drop out of high school. The other two are severe disciplinary infractions and reading or mathematics failures, according to Johns Hopkins research.
- By 9th grade, regular and high attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.

- Missing 10 percent, or about 18 days, of the school year can drastically affect a student's academic success.
- Students can be chronically absent even if they only miss a day or two every few weeks.
- Attendance is an important life skill that will help your child graduate from college and keep a job. Make school attendance a priority.
- Talk about the importance of showing up to school every day; make that the expectation.
- Help your child maintain daily routines, such as finishing homework and getting a good night's sleep.
- Try not to schedule dental and medical appointments during the school day.
- Help your teen stay engaged. Complaints of headaches or stomachaches may be signs of anxiety rather than an illness.
- Find out if your child feels engaged by his/her classes and feels safe and welcomed at school. Make sure he/she is not missing class because of behavioral issues and school discipline policies. If any of these are problems, work with your school.



- Encourage meaningful afterschool activities, including sports and clubs. Keep up communication with the school.
- Stay on top of academic progress and seek help from teachers or tutors if necessary. Make sure your contact information is up to date with the RMS office.
- Stay on top of your child's social contacts. Peer pressure can lead to skipping school, while students without many friends can feel isolated.
- Talk to teachers if you notice sudden changes in behavior. These could be tied to something going on at school.
- Check on your child's attendance to be sure absences are not piling up.
  - Ask for help from school officials, afterschool programs, other parents or community agencies if you are having trouble getting your child to school.
- Know the school's attendance policy – incentives and penalties.

### **RMS's Tardy Reduction Practices**

- Targeted tardy sweeps before each class, including homeroom

- Issuing pass restrictions for the students chronically tardy to class
- Attendance circles with parents and students
- Bathroom passes for specific restrooms issued to each classroom
- Weekly data tracking to address students who reach ten or more times tardy
- Monthly data tracking to reward students who have made improvements

### **Student Assistant Specialist (SAS) Program**

As an extension of RMS's Restorative Program, certain students qualify to participate in our Student Assistance Program. Students' disciplinary entries, grades, attendance, and counselor contacts are reviewed, and a high frequency of need in any or all of these areas may identify them to participate in this program. This program is intended to work with students to encourage positive behaviors in and outside of school, and to avoid further issues at school that may be hurting their academic success.

All students have the ability to be a positive influence at RMS, succeed as a student, and have a successful school year. Some benefit of participating in the program include weekly

meetings with the Student Assistance Specialist. The structure of this program ensures that a student receives additional weekly support as well as added communication with the family. Depending on a student's particular situation, the following topics may be a focus:

- Conflict Resolution
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness
- Attendance/Absenteeism





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