

**IMPROVING SCHOOL
CLIMATE**



EVIDENCE FROM
SCHOOLS
IMPLEMENTING
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES



A REPORT FROM THE

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES A GRADUATE SCHOOL



Restoring Community in a Disconnected World

As the International Institute for Restorative Practices SaferSanerSchools Whole-School Change Program is launched in more and more schools across the country, we are seeing many positive results from restorative practices implementation. The research graphs in this fact sheet show that these outcomes include significant reductions in misbehavior and punitive discipline, in grades K-12. We are also seeing improved teacher-student relationships in classrooms with a high level of restorative practices implementation, and that this improvement tends to narrow the “racial-discipline gap,” a concern in schools nationwide.

What’s more, restorative practices have truly become part of the national education conversation. With the U.S. Federal Government issuing guidelines that explicitly recommend restorative practices as an alternative to harmful, racially biased zero-tolerance policies, school districts from coast to coast have incorporated these practices into their discipline principles.

And restorative practices aren’t just for discipline; they are also essential to high-quality teaching and learning. These restorative principles apply to learners of all ages and abilities: that learning builds social capital and a sense of community; that students feel connected to the group and responsible for each other’s learning; that students feel empowered to come up with their own learning activities.

Restorative practices are the focus of current research in schools nationwide: by Johns Hopkins University and Diplomas Now, supported by the Atlantic Philanthropies; and by RAND Corporation, supported by the National Institutes of Mental Health and the U.S. Department of Justice. These projects are exploring a wide range of outcomes, including restorative practices’ effects on graduation rates, social competency, academic achievement, alcohol abuse and bullying.

Learn more at:

▶ **SaferSaner Schools**
Whole-School Change Through Restorative Practices
www.safersanerschools.org

▶ **International Institute for Restorative Practices**
www.iirp.edu

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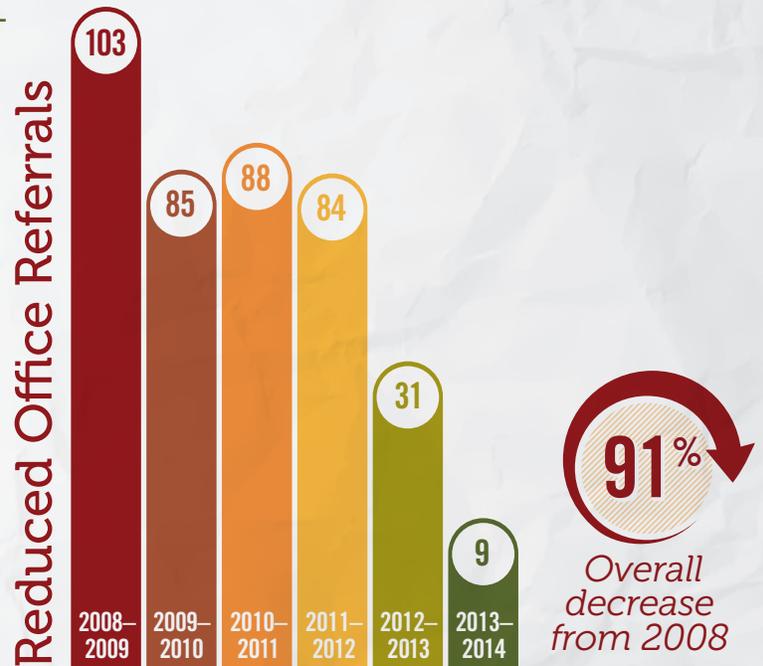
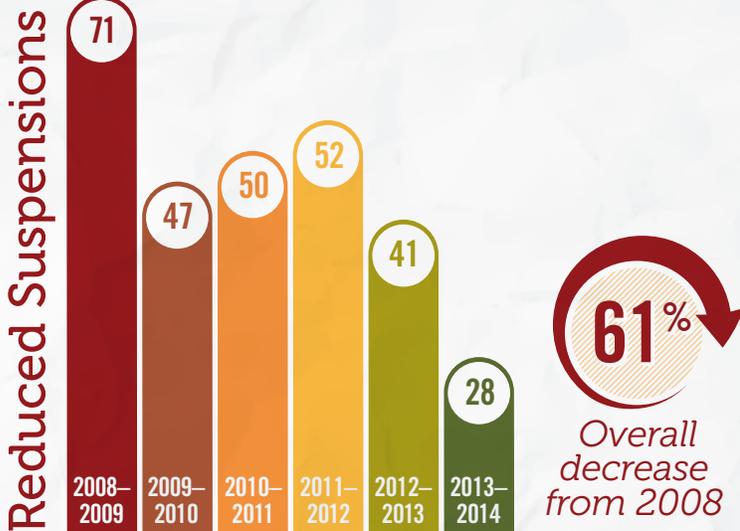
3 million students are suspended each year.
(Advancement Project, July 2013)



★ **IIRP** ★
**WHOLE-SCHOOL
CHANGE**

KEEPING STUDENTS IN SCHOOL WHERE THEY CAN LEARN.

1 Hampstead Hill (Pre-K–8), Baltimore, MD



2 Freedom High School, Bethlehem, PA



Reduced Serious Infractions
2010–2011: 29
2012–2013: 9



Reduced Number of Students with Multiple Suspensions
2010–2011: 330
2012–2013: 120

3 Glenmount School (K–8), Baltimore, MD



Reduced Suspensions
2012–2013: 76
2013–2014: 25



Reduced Number of Students with Multiple Suspensions
2012–2013: 13
2013–2014: 3

CHANGING BEHAVIORS

The restorative environment at CSF Buxmont (IIRP model schools for at-risk youth) enhances the effectiveness of Aggression Replacement Training® (ART), a cognitive-behavioral intervention program. A study by the EPISCenter at Penn State University showed more improvement in attitudes, behaviors and social skills in CSF Buxmont youth who participated in the ART program, from January 2012 through April 2014, than in youth at other Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency-funded ART sites.



Reduced Aggression
11 pts higher than average ART outcomes



Improved Social Skills
4 pts higher than average ART outcomes

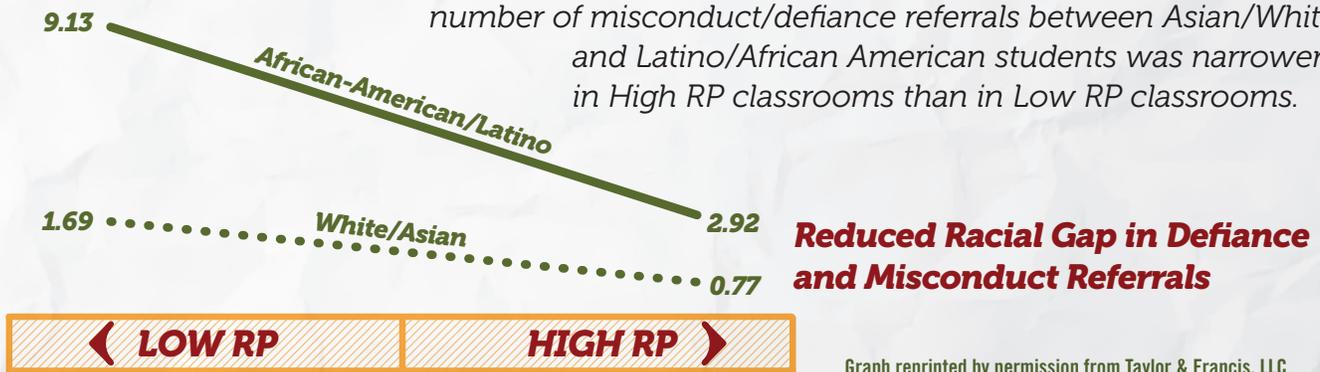
NARROWING THE RACIAL GAP

- African-American students are 3 times more likely to be suspended than white students.
- Just 1 suspension doubles a student's risk of dropping out.

(Advancement Project, July 2013)

Restorative practices offer the promise to transform teacher-student relationships and achieve equity in school discipline, thereby narrowing the racial discipline gap, according to a study led by Anne Gregory of Rutgers University. Classrooms with a high level of restorative practices implementation (High RP) had fewer disciplinary referrals for defiance and misconduct compared to classrooms with a low level of implementation (Low RP), over the 2011–2012 school year.

In addition, as shown in the graph below, the gap in the average number of misconduct/defiance referrals between Asian/White and Latino/African American students was narrower in High RP classrooms than in Low RP classrooms.



NEW SCHOOL POLICIES

Coast to coast, more and more districts are adopting restorative policies.

The U.S. Federal Government issued new guidelines recommending that schools revise their discipline policies to move away from zero tolerance policies, which exclude large numbers of students with suspensions and expulsions, often for minor infractions. Instead the guidelines recommend the use of methods such as restorative practices, which foster positive school climates.

