

What's the Policy? Using Restorative Practices to Establish a School-wide Disciplinary Plan

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*“Relationships, not
strategies, bring about
meaningful change”*

Bob Costello, 2005

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How would you answer the question, “what’s your policy on (fighting, bullying, discipline, etc)?”

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PRESENTATION GOAL

To present an understanding of the role of a school administrators legal obligations, based on the many layers of legislature, policies and procedures, in establishing and maintaining discipline programs, policies and procedures in Ontario schools

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PRESENTATION GOAL

To develop an awareness of system short and long range plans with respect to establishing school-wide discipline plans, positive school environments, student engagement in the learning process, and the results of system surveys as they pertain to the development of positive relationships

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PRESENTATION GOAL

To present Restorative Practices as a major component in meeting the demands of policies and procedures, and the role it plays in maintaining a positive school climate and establishing a school-wide disciplinary plan

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PRESENTATION GOAL

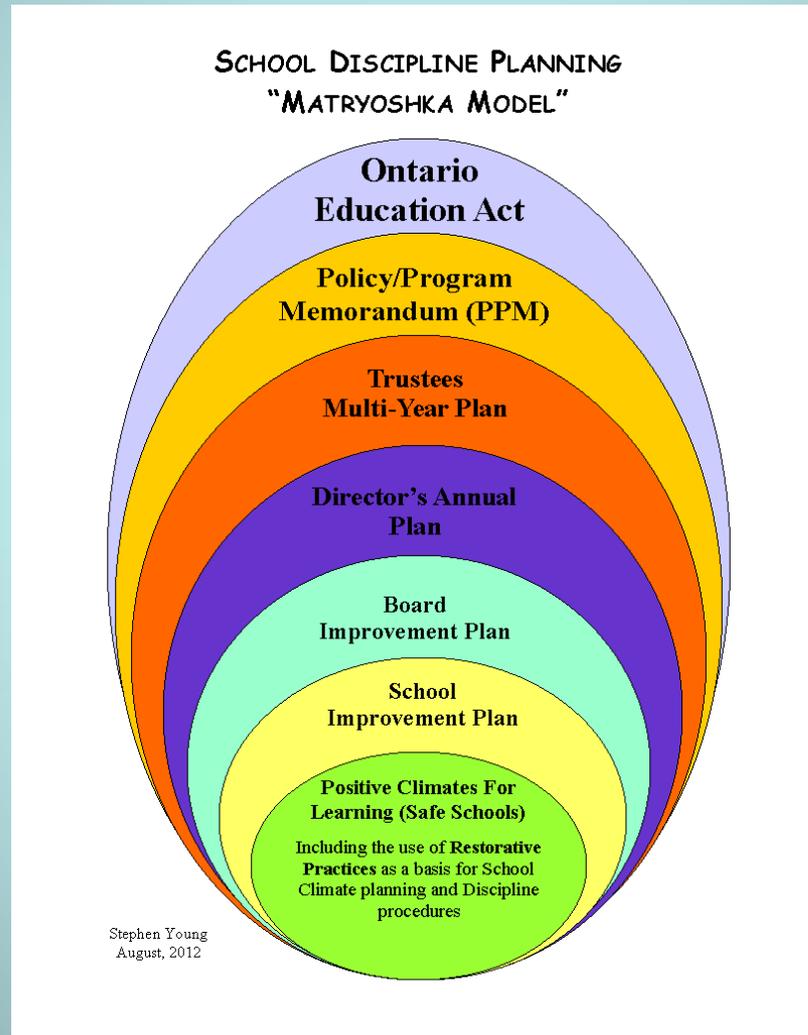
To present strategies for imbedding Restorative Practices into a school discipline/behaviour plan.

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Why a School-Wide Discipline Plan

- School behaviour has changed
- “Zero Tolerance” programs have had little impact on changing behaviour
- Ontario Education Act states that the duty of a Principal is to “give assiduous attention to the health of the pupils”, and to “maintain proper order and discipline”
- recent Ontario legislation (PPMs 128,144,145, and Bills 157,212,13) has enshrined in law the need for school discipline policies and plans.
- The expectation by the public that we all operate from a base of policy and procedure – that policies, procedures and plans imply consistency and accountability

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PPM 128 - THE PROVINCIAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND SCHOOL BOARD CODES OF CONDUCT

“A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted”

“Boards and schools should therefore focus on prevention and early intervention as the key to maintaining a positive school environment”

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PPM 144 BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

“A positive school climate is a crucial component of prevention; it may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. When these relationships are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modelled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm.”

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PPM 145 – PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE AND PROMOTING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

“Prevention is the establishment and use of programs such as bullying prevention and citizenship development, as well as other activities designed to promote the building of healthy relationships and appropriate behaviours.”

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Bill 157- KEEPING OUR KIDS SAFE AT SCHOOL

“Board employees working with students **must** respond to incidents that may have a negative impact on school climate”

i.e., racist or sexist comments

The question is: “how will they respond?”

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Bill 212- AMENDMENT TO THE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT

Requires school boards to demonstrate that they have utilized a variety of proactive measures in managing students' negative behaviours.

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BILL 13 – AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT WITH RESPECT TO BULLYING AND OTHER MATTERS (ACCEPTING SCHOOLS ACT – SEPTEMBER, 2012)

- re-defines Bullying
- “to establish disciplinary approaches that promote positive behaviour”
- “schools will promote a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils and promoting the prevention of bullying”
- “provide support for pupils who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, and for pupils who engage in inappropriate behaviour, to assist them in developing healthy relationships, making good choices, continuing their learning and achieving success”,

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School Board Planning

Trustees Multi Year Plan (TMYP)

- Developed with input from school board personal, and is a reflection of the broad goals identified by the Trustees

Director's Annual Plan (DAP)

- Developed by the Director and Senior administrators (Superintendants)
- Sets out specific strategies to support the Trustees Multi-Year Plan
- Each goal of the TMYP must be addressed

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Board Improvement Plan (BIP)

- Developed by Superintendants, Consultants, system leaders
- Sets specific board-wide goals (SMART Goals) for each priority area, with specific strategies, timelines, resources, professional development, etc
- Must incorporate Provincial goals and priorities when stated

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School Improvement Plan (SIP)

- Developed by each school leadership team
- Incorporates goals, strategies, etc from BIP but contextualizes SMART goals by using school-specific data to determine specific strategies, timelines, etc.
- SIP cannot ignore Provincial or Board priorities
- SIP should reflect the specific needs of the school under each of the broad goals identified by the Board

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York Region District School Board

Policy #668.0 – Safe, Caring and Supportive Schools

Principals are responsible for:

- **developing school plans** which address the social, emotional and academic development of its students including the prevention of and intervention in situations of respectful, inappropriate and bullying behaviour in schools and off school property where the school climate may be negatively affected;

Procedure # 668.0 – Safe, Caring and Supportive School

Principals and Vice-Principals shall:

- establish a Positive Climates for Learning (PC4L) Team to **develop a school plan** for establishing a positive climate for learning and implement a school-wide **progressive discipline plan** that is consistent with the policies and procedures of the Board;
- develop and maintain a School Code of Conduct with staff, students and parents that is consistent with the expectations in the Provincial Code of Conduct;
- develop a **progressive discipline policy**, employ practices that are positive and **restorative** in nature and a continuum of progressive discipline, interventions, supports and consequences that are consistent with the Board's prevention and early intervention strategies;

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Worsley Elementary School – Wasaga Beach, Ontario

Press clippings

“Parent Scott Martin said the school does not have an anti-bullying process in place, something that is required by legislation.”

“Among the teachers’ 34 documented issues, is a claim that the principal is incompetent because there is no plan in place to maintain workers’ safety.”

Bigam (School Council Chairperson) also accused the board and the principal of not having a plan in place to deal with "unsafe situations," and not informing staff of the safety plan.

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Worsley Elementary School – Wasaga Beach

"It's until what I would refer to as a **school assertive discipline plan** is put in place and up and operating as well as safety plans are established and implemented and the current principal has some training in order to carry forward with those plans,"

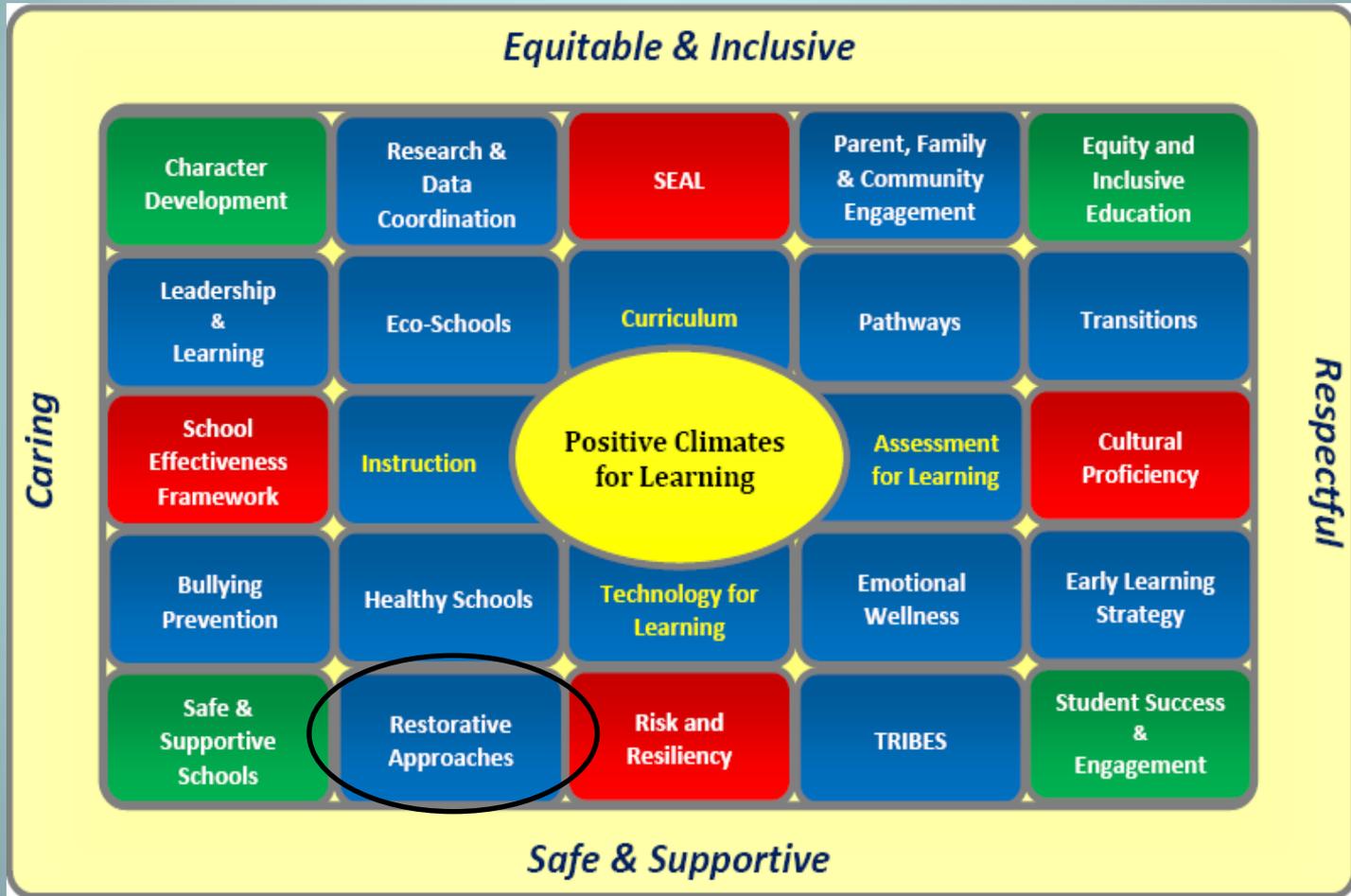
The **discipline plan** is to be formulated by Feb. 29 with input from the school staff. It varies slightly from school to school but a discipline plan is typically a five-step plan on how to deal with students who misbehave. It may begin with a warning and proceed to a timeout, escalating to a trip to the principal's office.

"The **behaviour plan** was devised with staff. It has been implemented. My job as superintendent of this school and any others, would be to monitor how this is playing out and, as in any school, staff in special education will continue to monitor programming for students with special needs, and staff is aware of safety plans and that any changes are communicated effectively,"

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So what is
Restorative Practices
and where does it fit in?

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- The term “Restorative Practices” was changed to “*Restorative Approaches*” within the York Region school setting.
- Restorative Approaches is the new “operating system” under which all other programs can be successful. How do we download the RA-OS in our schools?

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- How do Principals initiate and include Restorative Practices into school policies, procedures and plans?
- What steps do they need to take?

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

- Train key school leaders in Restorative Practices awareness and possibly Formal Conference or Circles Training (many staff in YRDSB are trained in Conferencing)
- Begin the process of capacity-building for the school community to develop its collective effectiveness to handle its own issues, by the introduction of Restorative Practices to all staff (teachers, support staff, caretakers, secretaries, etc)

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

- Enlist support and input from parents and other stakeholders
- Establish progressive discipline policies and procedures that incorporate Restorative Practices
- Develop a communications plan to inform all stakeholders once the plan has taken shape.

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

An excerpt from the Coledale P.S. School Handbook

.....at Coledale, there is a high degree of control over the process (RP), but there is also a high degree of support. Offender, victim, support workers, teachers, administration and families may all be engaged in the process to dig deeper into issues in an effort to understand the behaviour, and its effects on others.

Restorative Approaches continues to grow in York Region Schools. Coledale has many teachers and staff trained in the use of Formal Conferencing, and all staff receive training in the use of a restorative approach when working with students. Coledale and the York Region District School Board are on Restorative pathways as we assist in the character and social development of our students and in promoting the Board's vision of preparing learners for life in a changing world community.

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

Develop strategies to train staff over time in the use of the stages of restorative practices

- Restorative Statements,
- Restorative Enquiry, including the use of Restorative questions on a daily basis
- In-formal and/or impromptu conferences
- Circles and class meetings,
- Formal Conferencing,

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

School-wide capacity building strategies:

- Staff meeting scenarios and role playing,
- PD day training,
- funding for external training and resources,
- Co-learning
- Create a staff PLC with a restorative focus
- Modelling
- Practice time

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

Staff meeting sample scenario.

A grade 7 student consistently challenges you in front of the class over any issue – assignments, instruction, classroom management issues, school rules, etc. It is affecting the class environment, and other students are now beginning to do the same. Much classroom time is used in dealing with this constant power struggle.

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

Solving Scenarios guiding questions.

1. Outline the steps you would take to deal with this situation in a restorative manner.
2. Explain how your steps support the student in learning to assume responsibility for his/her own behaviour within the context of the classroom/school environment.
3. What resources and supports might you need?

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

Develop school-wide strategies such that:

- teachers and students will feel empowered to resolve issues in the classroom, the halls and the school grounds,
- all incidents need not be referred elsewhere (though they will also feel supported should they choose to engage third party support, which could be another staff member and not necessarily administration)

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Steps to Developing a School-Wide Restorative Mindset and Approach to Discipline

A school discipline policy will:

- have an explicit framework, that included RP, and which will provide a common language for staff to engage in professional dialogue and consistency of teacher judgement
- encourage a restorative philosophy which will encourage relationship-building and an emphasis on doing things 'with' children as opposed to 'to', 'not' or 'for' them.

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So now how do you answer the question “What’s your Policy on Discipline?”

“Our policy is that we use Restorative Practices when dealing with any student behaviour issues.”

“Our procedure is to involve any, and all, students and staff who may have been involved in an issue, or affected by the issue; taking part in discussions so as to determine what actually happened, who has been affected and how, and how each participant will work to correct the problem and make it right, and what they may do differently the next time. Consequences ,if necessary, will be fair, progressive and natural to the situation, and may be determined by the group. “

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Helpful websites:

Ontario Ministry of Education – Safe Schools Strategy

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/ministry.html>

Bill 13

http://ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=2549

The End!

La Fin!