

Restorative Justice in Schools

*Quaila Hugh, Erica Wright, &
Kellsie Sayers*

Acknowledgement/Disclaimer

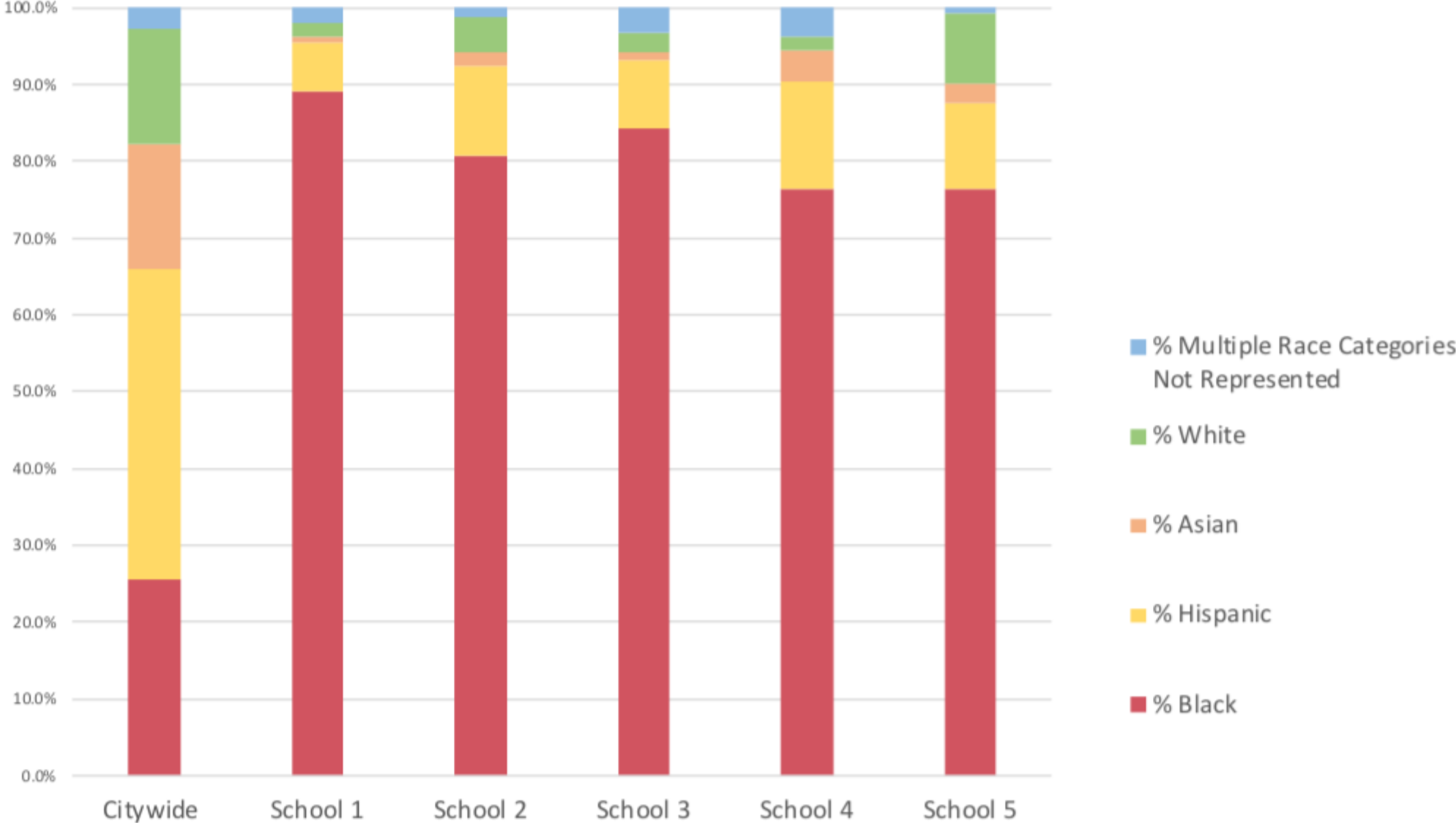
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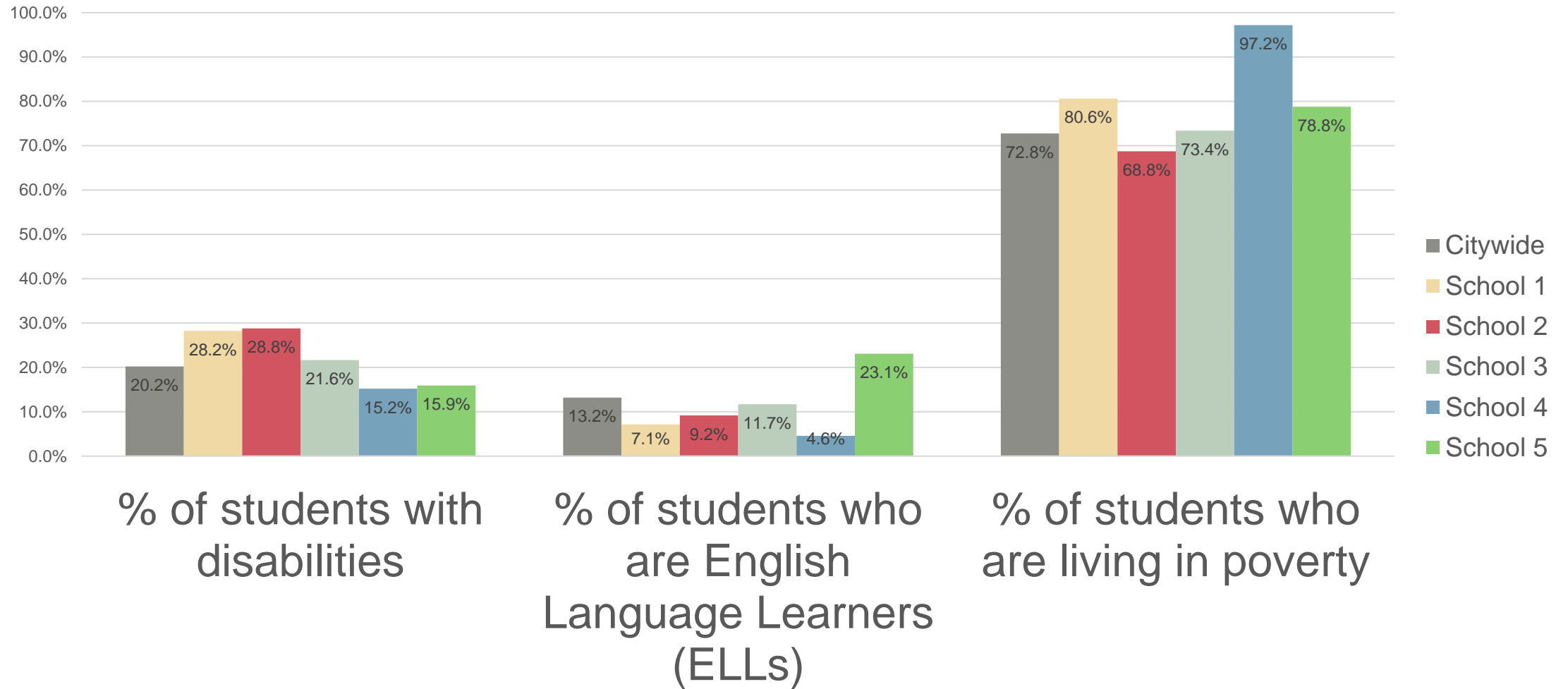
Background



Racial Demographics, 2018-2019 School Year



Student Population Attributes, 2018-2019 School Year



What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative justice is a philosophy that is being applied in multiple contexts, including schools, families, workplaces, the justice system, global conflict, and as a tool to transform structural and historic harms (Oakland Unified School District).

The circles implemented in our RJ in Schools program are inspired by the Native American tradition known as peacemaking. Peacemaking is a traditional Native American form of justice that focuses on healing and reparation. Peacemaking, or some form of it, is found among many different tribes and reflects each tribe's unique culture, religion, and collective experiences. Peacemaking varies in format and name; the most widely-recognized model comes from the Navajo Nation and is called "peacemaking." Other tribes, like the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Suislaw, call this process "peacegiving," while the Muscogee have "law menders." But what they all have in common is a focus on problem solving and an emphasis on future relations rather than assigning guilt and imposing punishment for past actions (Wolf 2012, Costello 1999).

Navajo
Maxim:
He acts as
if he has no
relatives.

So how do we prevent violence?

→ **By increasing positive social connections (don't isolate someone who is already isolated)**

→ **By examining the root causes of conflict and acknowledging where we've gone wrong**

→ **By including our supporters in making changes to our behavior and our circumstances**

School Approach

- I. What rule was broken?
- II. Who broke it?
- III. What's the appropriate punishment?





Restorative Justice Approach

- I. **Who was harmed? *Focus on the person(s) harmed.***
- II. **What do they need to heal (or to move forward)?**
- III. **Whose obligation is it to meet those needs? *Consider both an individual's actions and collective accountability.***



Our Approach

- I. Relationship Building
- II. Responding to the Needs of the Community
- III. Investment in School Community

A few of our teachers...

Raymond Deal, Peacemaker, Navajo Nation

Sara Whitehorse, Peacemaker, Navajo Nation

Kay Pranis, Practitioner & Trainer

Eric Butler, Talking Piece

Hannah Bronsnick, Talking Piece

Nancy Riestenberg, Practitioner

Yuko Uchikawa, Practitioner

Sonya Shah and the Ahimsa Collective

B.K. Chan, Fluid Exchange



Highlights of a Roundtable Discussion Among Tribal and State Practitioners

How We Prepared

Trainings included:

- ***Intensive on Peacemaking Circles:*** foundation of circle practice
- ***History of Navajo Peacemaking***
- ***The Art of Storytelling:*** how to share strategically to help others move through discomfort
- ***School-based Harm Circles***
- ***Self-Care:*** ensuring a self-reflective space that meets staff needs
- ***Trauma 101:*** understanding trauma in student populations
- ***Culturally Responsive Implementation***
- ***Harm Circle Practice***
- ***Building Buy-In***
- ***The Dynamics of Teen Dating Violence***
- ***Games, Movement, and Space:*** theatre practitioners shared movement activities and games
- ***Navigating Gender and Sex:*** understanding gender roles and dynamics among young
- ***Sexual Education and Boundaries:*** language around boundary setting, rejection, and communication

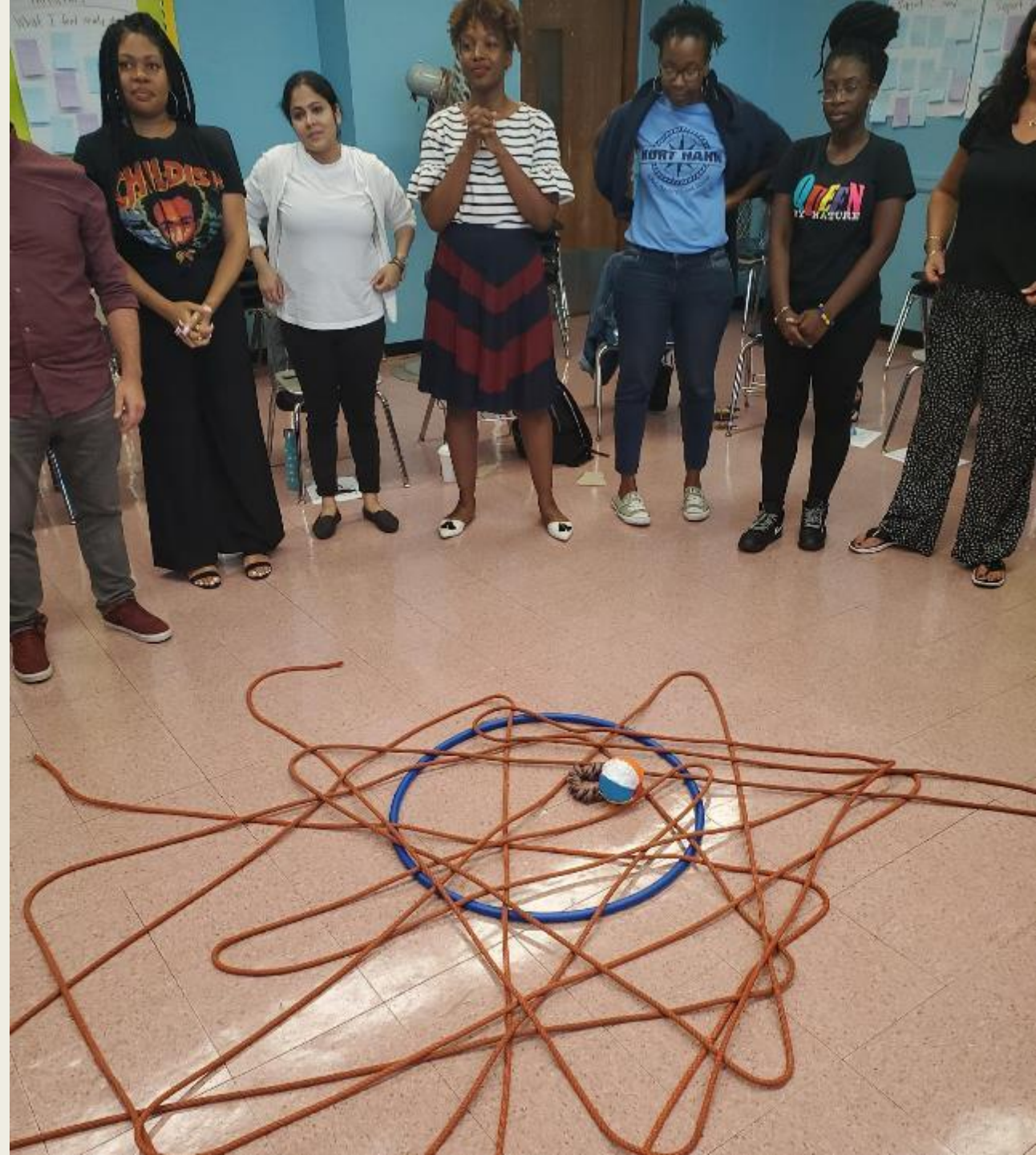


SO WHAT DOES THIS
LOOK LIKE IN REAL
TIME?



BUILDING BUY-IN

MODELING





CIRCLES



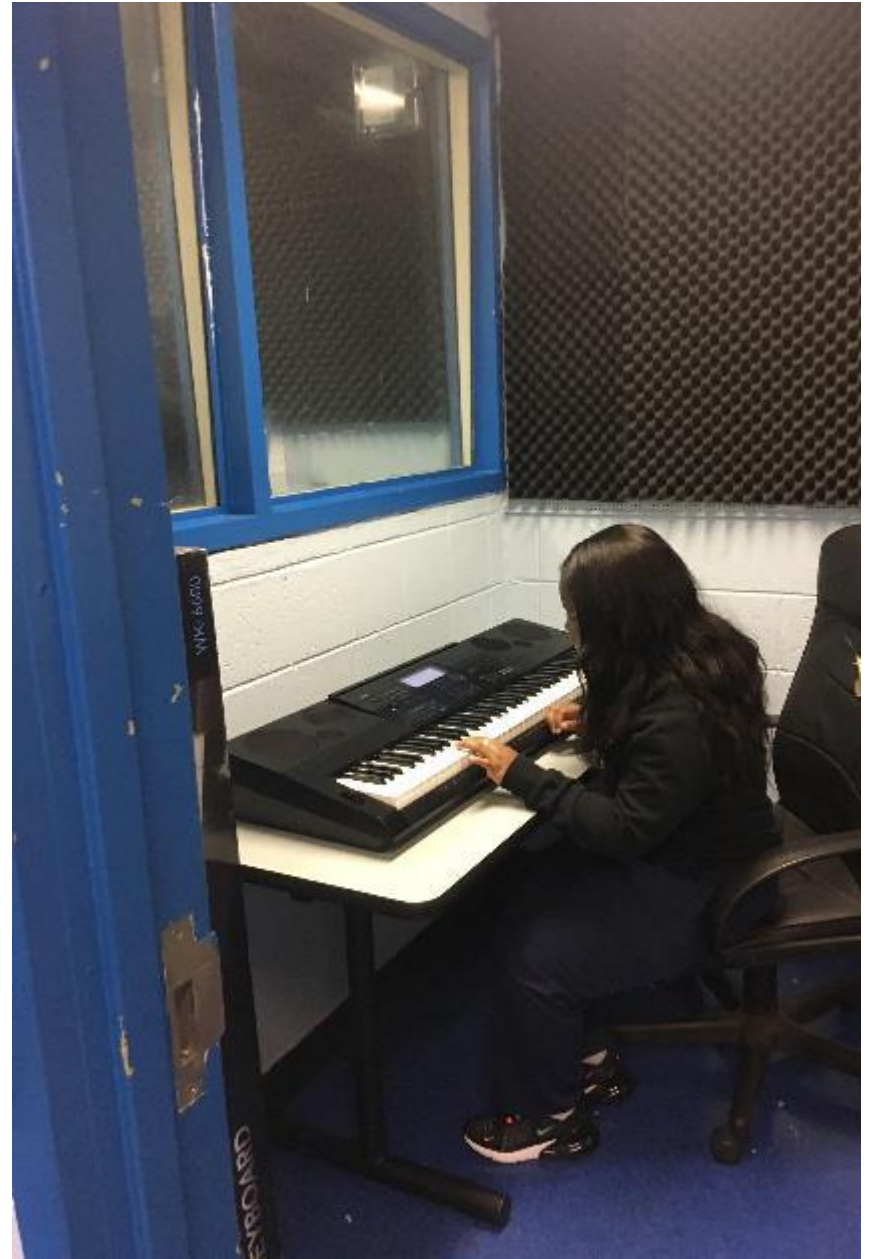
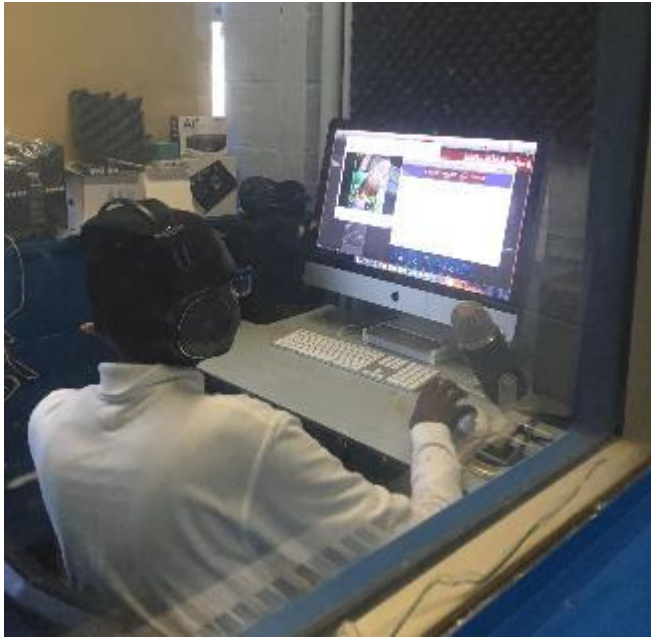
STRENGTH- BASED CHANGE







COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS





OUR TEAM APPROACH



Assessment Questions

- What is leadership's vision for your school?
- What is the quality of the relationships between/among the administrators, teachers, staff, students and parents?
- How do students perceive their school, its safety and capacity for fairness?
- What supports do students and staff need? What supports are available?
- What opportunities exist for school-wide community-building? To what extent does your school acknowledge, embrace, and celebrate its racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity?
- Who are the natural allies for restorative practices? Who is already approaching their work with a restorative mindset?

Tips for Implementation

- ❑ **This work should be voluntary: The leaders of this work should have the strongest relationships across the school community.**
- ❑ **Identify voluntary settings where this will work. (ie club, student government)**
- ❑ **RJ programming should be designed with the school's structure and limitations in mind.**
- ❑ **Building systems of accountability for all stakeholders.**

a brief note on intimate partner violence

Openly discuss attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that enforce harmful gender norms and contribute to unhealthy relationships and violence.





QUESTIONS?

restorativepractices@courtinnovation.org

