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# A Case Study Analysis of Elementary Teachers' Attitudes about Student Discipline and the Implementation of Restorative Justice

Kaitlyn M. Spore

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Case Study Analysis of Elementary School Teachers' Attitudes  
Regarding Student Discipline and the  
Implementation of Restorative Justice

By

KAITLYN SPORE

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

Of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Seattle Pacific University

April 25, 2018

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my fiancé, Brien Lautman. Since we met, I've been in a degree or school program, from my Masters at Boston University, to my principal certification, and now my Doctorate. I will never forget sitting with you at brunch at Noble Barton and telling you I wanted to start my Doctorate, while not yet entirely done with my Principal Certification. You stuck by me and supported me through it all. From the weeknights of crock pot meals, and the weekends spent reading and writing, you were always patient and caring. Thank you for not only walking this journey with me, but for being by my side for the adventure of our lives.

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Finally, I would like to thank the students and teachers who inspired this research, and the teachers who volunteered their time in this study. I believe that every child is filled with potential, and as educators it is our responsibility to tap into and grow it. Thank you to the teachers in this study willing to be vulnerable and share their insights, and for your daily commitment to students.

**Seattle Pacific University**

**Abstract**

Case Study Analysis of Elementary School Teachers' Attitudes  
Regarding Student Discipline and the Implementation of Restorative Justice

By Kaitlyn Spore

Chairperson of Dissertation Committee: Dr. Cher Edwards, School of Education

This study examined the attitudes of elementary school teachers regarding student discipline and the implementation of restorative justice practices. The present research was conducted at a public elementary school in the greater Seattle area. All participants were teachers at the public elementary school, and were purposefully selected based on their years of experience, age, gender, and grade level taught. The study utilized qualitative case study methods to analyze the participants' attitudes regarding discipline, specifically the use of exclusionary discipline, and their views on implementing restorative justice practices as an alternative to exclusion.

*Key Words: restorative justice, school discipline, exclusions, suspensions, mindset, implementation*

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Problem Statement**

Racial disproportionality in school discipline is a critical issue permeating the school systems in the United States today (Cowie, Hutson, Jennifer, & Myers, 2008; Elias, 2013; Gregory, Hafen, et al., 2016; Smolkowski, Girvan, McIntosh, Nese, & Horner, 2016). While this issue is not new, it is of critical concern in our current political and social environment, in which individuals of different racial and ethnic backgrounds are subject to prejudice and discriminatory practices (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo, & Pollock, 2017). In addition, while awareness of this issue has increased in recent years, there have not been significant improvements in practices or data; consequently, racial disproportionality in school discipline has also contributed to other concerning trends such as racial disproportionality in academic achievement and in the juvenile justice system (Morris & Perry, 2016). Racial disproportionality in school discipline has many causes, but the practice of exclusionary discipline is a significant contributor to this growing concern. Exclusionary discipline practices involve the removal of a student from a classroom or school and is a practice occurring at much higher rates for certain student subgroups, including African American and Latino students (Carter et al., 2017; Morris, 2005). Research indicates that the removal of students for misbehavior does not decrease the reoccurrence of behavior. Additionally, exclusion from school places further risks on students including academic failure, dropout, and entry into the juvenile justice system (Fabelo et al., 2011; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, & Smolkowski, 2014; Okonofua, Walton, & Eberhardt, 2016). Wong and Lo (2010) argued that when students

are removed from their school and society, they are denied the type of normative experiences that enhance personal development. Thus, by excluding a student from school, the child may not have the opportunity to learn from the experience and grow as an individual. In addition, according to Ahmed and Braithwaite (2006), this social exclusion from school increases students' association with deviant subcultures, as they attempt to protect their sense of belonging and self-respect.

Due to the failure of exclusionary discipline policies to address and correct misbehavior, and its contribution to the widening racial disproportionality gap in discipline consequences, a new approach to school discipline is warranted. One promising approach to school discipline is the use of restorative justice practices in both proactively preventing misbehavior and responding after misbehavior has occurred. Restorative justice practices require individuals affected by an incident to collaborate to identify the impact on others and to create a plan for repairing harm (Gregory, Hafen, et al., 2016). Duncan (2011) explained that restorative justice practices rely on the fundamental principle that people will be happier and make positive change when people do things with them, rather than to them or for them. Restorative justice approaches include restorative conferencing, circles, and victim-offender mediation programs. In each of these formats, a platform exists for students and administrators to engage in righting the wrongs caused by a student's behavior, allow victims to express the personal impact of the crime, and ask questions of their offenders (Duncan, 2011). Restorative justice practices provide a space where students who misbehave, and those affected, work together to identify the harm, acknowledge the effects of the harm, and work toward a resolution to remedy the harm (Mergler, Vargas, & Caldwell, 2014). Through this

process, the victim, offender, and the community participate in a healing process, rather than in a punitive procedure; therefore, this process may increase the chances that harm is repaired, risks reduced, and community built (Duncan, 2011). The elements of restorative justice practices include putting things right for the victim, returning something to the community, addressing the underlying causes of the offense, and ensuring that the offenders have the support needed to fulfill obligations. This process may help develop relationships among students, teachers, and school administrators, teaching students how their actions affect the school and community (Duncan, 2011). The use of restorative justice practices in school discipline offers an alternative to traditional exclusionary discipline practices and may help address and decrease the racial disproportionality that currently exists (Gregory, Hafen et al., 2016).

While restorative justice practices provide an alternative to exclusion, the implementation of restorative practices requires a shift in teachers' attitudes regarding behavior and discipline. Teachers' attitudes regarding student behavior and discipline influence the response to student behavior within the classroom and school community (Pane, Rocco, Miller, & Salmon, 2014). In recent years, school districts and schools have begun to modify existing discipline policies to address equity issues, such as the large proportion of students of color receiving exclusionary discipline actions (Gregory et al., 2016). However, changes to discipline policies to ensure equity are not effective if teachers possess an attitude that is contrary to the underlying assumptions of the new policy (Okonofua et al., 2016). For example, changing to a zero-suspension policy to address racial disproportionality in discipline outcomes may not be effective if teachers' attitudes do not align to the underlying assumptions of this policy. These underlying

assumptions include the belief that individuals should have the opportunity to talk through the issue and solve the problem. The key to changing discipline policies may lie in understanding and changing teachers' attitudes regarding student behavior and discipline (Elias, 2013).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the attitudes of elementary school teachers in regard to student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice. Through this review and description, the researcher aimed to determine if certain themes emerged that would aid an administrator as restorative responses are implemented in their school. This study presented findings and themes from qualitative interviews with elementary school teachers aimed to ascertain their attitudes regarding student behavior and discipline practices. Furthermore, it provided insight on teachers' attitudes and how understanding teachers' current beliefs impacts the effectiveness of school discipline policies and responses to student behavior.

### **Research Questions**

The first research question examined the attitudes of elementary school teachers in terms of student behavior and the use of exclusionary discipline to address student misbehavior. The second research question sought to understand the teachers' beliefs about restorative justice and identify information that may assist administrators seeking to implement restorative justice practices as an alternative to exclusionary discipline practices.

The first research question was as follows: What themes exist within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding student behavior and the use of exclusionary

discipline to address student misbehavior? The second research question was as follows: What themes exist within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding the use of restorative justice as an alternative to exclusionary discipline, and how might these themes provide insight for an administrator seeking to implement restorative justice practices within their school?

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are used throughout the study: exclusionary discipline, racial disproportionality, and restorative justice. The terms are defined below.

- *Exclusionary Discipline*: A type of discipline consequence that removes the student from the classroom or school setting. Exclusions may include removal from class, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion.
- *Racial Disproportionality*: The discrepancy between the rates of discipline consequences that racial minorities experience to their overall proportion of the student population. The rate of disciplinary offenses is much larger than the percentage of the student population that these students make up. African American and Latino students, while a minority in the total student population, make up a majority of the discipline occurrences.
- *Restorative Justice*: Practices that aim to restore relationships after harm has occurred from an individual's actions. These practices bring together the victims and the offenders through structured processes including circles, conferences, and community meetings.

### **Organization of the Study**



This study is organized into five distinct chapters. Chapter One includes an introduction to the problem of exclusionary discipline and the purpose of the study. Chapter Two includes a review of literature describing exclusionary discipline, theoretical constructs of restorative justice, and restorative justice implementation in practice. Chapter Three contains the methodology used for this study to most effectively address the research questions. Chapter Four outlines the findings of the study and themes that emerged through interviews of multiple elementary school teachers. Chapter Five provides an analysis of the data and attempts to address the answers to the research questions based on the data collected.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

#### **The Problem: Exclusionary Discipline**

Traditional school discipline often involves the use of exclusionary measures as a consequence for student misbehavior (Curran, 2016; Vanderhaar, Munoz, & Petrosko, 2014). When a student's behavior contradicts the school or teacher's code of conduct or set expectations, the student often receives a consequence for the behavior. An exclusionary discipline consequence is a type of consequence that removes the student from the classroom, and includes detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). School policies exist that describe which misbehaviors could result in an exclusionary consequence. However, many schools and administrators have discretion over which consequences to assign and the severity of the consequence (Anyon et al., 2014). While traditional discipline and exclusionary practices are common practice, research suggests that these practices not only do little to deter subsequent misbehavior, they also induce harmful risks on students who receive them (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory et al., 2016; Morris & Perry, 2016; Pane et al., 2014).

Exclusionary discipline policies aim to reduce the level of behavior incidents within a school, with the hope of ultimately providing safer schools overall. The beliefs that exclusion will help create safer schools rely on the assumption that when students are excluded from school, they will learn from their misbehavior and return with a greater sense of accountability and desire to behave appropriately (Mergler et al., 2014). Another assumption in exclusionary discipline is that by removing the offending student

from the school or classroom, the student's lack of presence will remove the danger or threat they posed (Cowie et al., 2008). However, no evidence exists that exclusionary policies lead to safer schools (Fabelo et al., 2011). According to Ahmed and Braithwaite (2006), this social exclusion from school increases students' association with deviant subcultures as an attempt to protect their sense of belonging and self-respect. This association with deviant subcultures may also help explain the correlation between exclusion from school and contact with the juvenile justice system (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory, Hafen, et al., 2016). Finally, when the offender is removed based on an assumption that removing the student removes the problem, in reality, the problem is simply relocated in time and place and often exacerbated in the process (Morrison, 2006).

The ramifications for students who have received exclusionary discipline are severe, often impacting their current and future success in both school and life. Traditional discipline responses at schools, including reprimands, detentions, suspensions, or expulsions aim to ostracize and exclude individuals from the school community (Cowie et al., 2008). This behavior can initiate a harmful and escalating pattern of negative student-adult interactions. Additionally, it can contribute to students' disinvestment from school, culminating in their dropping out of school altogether (Gregory et al., 2014). Removal of a student from the classroom results in segregation and isolation from both education and social opportunities (Pane et al., 2014) and does not provide a strong foundation for the building of trusting relationships with teachers or peers. Without trusting relationships, individuals lose their sense of belonging and investment in school, which can also impact how they behave while in the school building (Pane et al., 2014). Wong and Lo (2010) argued that when students are removed

from their school and society, they are denied the type of normative experiences that enhance personal development.

Student academic success and achievement is also negatively impacted when students are excluded from school for behavioral consequences (Morris & Perry, 2016; Mullet, 2014). A primary concern is that when students are excluded from the classroom or school, they miss critical academic instruction, making it easy to fall behind and struggle with content (Mullet, 2014). Morris and Perry (2016) argued that the effects of suspension are long lasting, setting into motion a trajectory of poor performance that continues in subsequent years, even if a student is not suspended again. As a potential result of falling behind academically, excluded students also struggle with remaining in school and graduating from high school (Balfanz, Byrnes, & Fox, 2015). This trajectory is striking, as each suspension that a student receives as a disciplinary consequence decreases the student's chances of graduating from high school by an additional twenty percent, according to Balfanz, Byrnes, and Fox (2015). Beyond high school, the effect of exclusion may also have long-term effects for students, as suspensions are highly associated with entry into the juvenile and criminal justice system (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gibson, Wilson, Haight, Kayama, & Marshall, 2014).

Exclusionary discipline practices begin at the classroom level and continue to the administrative level within a school. At the classroom level, teachers are provided with much discretion over utilizing exclusion or removing a student from the classroom due to the student's behavior. A teacher's decision to refer students for punishment can mean that they are removed from the classroom, thus beginning the process of exclusion (Elias, 2013). The level of discretion that teachers have in managing student behavior differs

among schools, but it is common for teachers to have a high degree of discretion in defining inappropriate behaviors, and how they address these behaviors within their classroom (Skiba et al., 2011). In addition, misconduct categories like defiance and disrespect allow for subjectivity to a greater extent than other behaviors like weapon or drug possession (Smolkowski et al., 2016). Administrators have the power to decide which consequences students receive and are the primary decisionmakers on whether to suspend or expel a student based on their misconduct (Gregory, Cornell, & Fan, 2011). While some schools have discipline policies in place, researchers have found that the consequences provided to students still vary widely for similar behaviors (Skiba et al., 2011).

Exclusionary practices are often experienced in higher numbers within certain subgroups, especially for African American and Latino students (Cowie et al., 2008; Gregory et al., 2016; Smolkowski et al., 2016). In the United States, African American students alone account for forty-six percent of students suspended more than once, yet they only constitute eighteen percent of the population of students in the United States (Elias, 2013). Other factors beyond race may also contribute to the racial differences seen in discipline data; however, these disparities in discipline outcomes remain even after controlling for confounding variables such as poverty, disability, gender, previous academic achievement, school composition, and neighborhood context (Fabelo et al., 2011; Vanderhaar et al., 2014).

A possible leading contributor to the racial disproportionality in school discipline is the subjective nature of how behavior is interpreted by teachers and administrators. Researchers have found that while White students are more likely to be referred for

objective offenses, Black children are more likely to be referred for subjective offenses (Skiba et al., 2002; Smolkowski et al., 2016). This is problematic as people tend to stereotype to fill in gaps in their understanding or to guide their decisions; therefore, the interpretation of behavior by teachers may be influenced by teachers' own biases regarding certain subgroups of students (Okonofua et al., 2016). Teachers may view certain disruptive behaviors as challenges to their authority when students of color exhibit them within their classrooms (Anyon et al., 2014).

Racial disproportionality in discipline consequences is apparent at both the teacher and administrator levels within schools. At the teacher-level, African American students are reprimanded within the classroom and given office referrals for behavior within the classroom at a higher rate than their white peers (Morris & Perry, 2016). At the administrator-level, racial discrepancies in punishment exist even for similar offenses (Morris, 2005). African American, Latino, and Multiracial students are often punished more harshly than their white peers for the same offenses (Anyon et al., 2014). African American students are approximately three times as likely as white students to be suspended for the same offense (Fabelo et al., 2011; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). In addition, the odds of an African American student receiving an out-of-school suspension is nearly two times that of a white student, with African American males being three and a half times more likely to be suspended (Finn & Servoss, 2013). This pattern persists at all levels of the public school system.

The pattern of racial disproportionality in school discipline is an important issue to address and remedy. Exclusionary discipline practices, especially those that are in response to subjective behavior misconduct, may be contributing to this racial

discrepancy (Skiba et al., 2002; Smolkowski et al., 2016). However, if the chain of events that often begins when a student is removed from the classroom for perceived misbehavior and culminates in suspension can be disrupted, there is potential to narrow the entrenched racial discipline gap (Gregory, Allen, Mikami, Hafen, & Pianta, 2014). One potential way to disrupt this chain of events leading to exclusion and contributing to the racial discipline gap is the use of restorative practices as an alternative in responding to misconduct within the school (Anyon et al., 2014; Okonofua et al., 2016).

### **Theoretical Constructs**

An alternative to exclusionary discipline policies that may address both the concerns of exclusion and the racial disproportionality that currently exists in school discipline is the adoption of restorative justice practices (Anyon et al., 2014; Okonofua et al., 2016). Restorative justice practices require individuals affected by an incident to collaborate to identify the impact on others and to create a plan for repairing harm (Gregory et al., 2016). Restorative justice approaches include restorative conferencing, circles, and victim-offender mediation programs (Wachtel, Costello, & Wachtel, 2009). These concepts will be described later in this chapter. In each of these formats, a platform is created for students and administrators to engage in righting the wrongs caused by students' behavior and victims can express the impact the incident has had on their lives and to ask questions of their offenders (Duncan, 2011).

Restorative justice practice draws its roots from the traditions of Maori native people in New Zealand. The Maori engage in conflict resolution meetings, which acknowledge the presence and dignity of all in attendance and follow a process which includes placing emphasis on portraying the positive, acknowledging that the problem,

not the person, is the issue, accepting personal responsibility, and fostering restoration (Wearmouth, McKinney, & Glynn, 2007). The focus in these meetings is to make things right between everyone involved and shifts the focus from the individual to the whole community. In the Maori tradition, the final resolution of conflict must be achieved in ways which respect and restore an individual's autonomy, integrity, self-esteem, and standing within the group to work together as a community and determine resolution steps that meet this criterion within the community (Wearmouth et al., 2007).

**Reintegrative shaming theory.** Restorative justice theory was first developed in the criminal justice system and draws its foundation from Braithwaite's reintegrative shaming theory (Gregory et al., 2011). Braithwaite's (1989) reintegrative shaming theory proposes that following a negative encounter or situation, shaming toward the offender naturally occurs. There are two types of shaming that may occur: stigmatizing shaming or reintegrative shaming (Braithwaite, 1989). Stigmatizing shaming occurs when no effort is made to reconcile the offender with the community and the offender "is outcast and her deviance is allowed to become a master status" (Braithwaite, 1989, p. 101). Reintegrative shaming occurs when effort is made to reconcile the offender with the community and where shaming "labels the act as evil while striving to preserve the identity of the offender as essentially good" (Braithwaite, 1989, p. 100). Braithwaite's (1989) theory indicates that stigmatizing shaming makes criminal subculture more attractive because individuals are cut off from other groups of support, such as their families or neighbors. In contrast, reintegrative shaming communicates disapproval of the act while not rejecting the individual from the community (Braithwaite, 1989). This

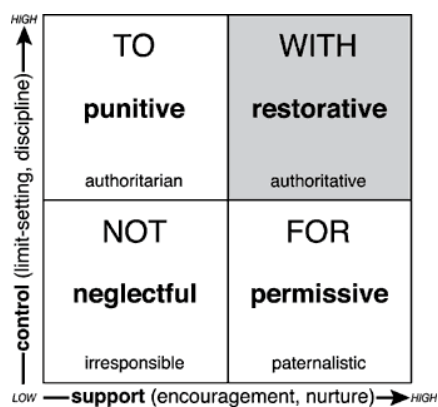


theory also relies on the idea that individuals are interdependent with others in their communities (Braithwaite, 1989).

### **Restorative Justice Theory**

Following from Braithwaite's (1989) reintegrative shaming theory, which was largely intended for the criminal justice system, a new theory emerged called restorative justice theory (McCold & Wachtel, 2002). Restorative justice theory holds broader application in education systems and communities as it was intended for application beyond just the criminal justice system. McCold and Wachtel (2002) developed a theory of restorative justice that encompasses a Social Discipline Window, stakeholder roles, and restorative practices typology. The Social Discipline Window is the combination of the two continuums of control and support, resulting in four distinct approaches to responding to behavior: punitive, permissive, neglectful, and restorative (McCold & Wachtel, 2002). Punitive responses are those with high control and low support, neglectful responses are those with low control and low support, permissive responses are those with low control and high support, and restorative responses are those with high control and high support (McCold & Wachtel, 2002) (see Figure 1 below). These stances are also described by the words not (neglectful), for (permissive), to (punitive), and with (restorative) (McCold & Wachtel, 2002). Stakeholder roles distinguish between primary stakeholders, such as victims, offenders, and families, and secondary stakeholders, such as neighbors and officials (McCold & Wachtel, 2002). The primary stakeholders experience direct harm, have specific needs for restoration, and require an active response in the restoration process. Secondary stakeholders experience vicarious harm, have

aggregate needs for restoration, and require a supportive response in the restoration process (McCold & Wachtel, 2002).



*Figure 1.* The Social Discipline Window. The Social Discipline Window is the combination of the two continuums of control and support. From McCold, P., & Wachtel, T. (2002). Restorative justice theory validation. In E. G. M. Weitekamp & H. J. Kerner (Eds.), *Restorative justice: Theoretical foundations* (pp. 110-142). New York, NY: Routledge.

The final component of restorative justice theory is the typology, which indicates that the primary stakeholders are victims, offenders, and their communities of care, and that the degree to which all three are involved in “meaningful emotional exchange and decision-making” (McCold & Wachtel, 2002, p. 116) is the degree to which the encounter can be restorative. The participation of all three direct stakeholders is required in order to meet everyone’s needs (McCold & Wachtel, 2002).

Restorative practices in schools follow the same principles and patterns demonstrated by restorative justice theory. These practices in schools aim to both prevent behavior incidents before they occur and to intervene after an incident has occurred (Gregory et al., 2016). One preventative practice includes engaging in a

proactive circle, where students participate in a structured group discussion while sitting in a circle (Costello, Wachtel, & Wachtel, 2010). Another strategy is to use affective statements and questions, in which individuals are given the opportunity to share their emotional reactions to both positive and negative events (Wachtel et al., 2009). These preventative strategies may be helpful in building positive relationships, both between teachers and students and among students, and it is this strengthening of relationships that supports the building of a supportive and equitable school climate that does not rely on exclusionary or punitive responses to discipline (Gregory et al., 2011). In addition to the preventative practices, restorative practices aim to resolve conflict and repair harm after an incident has occurred (Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016). One strategy is to conduct a restorative circle where the classroom discusses an incident with the hope of restoring community. In this practice, students share feelings, identify who has been affected, and develop a plan to repair the harm and prevent future conflict (Costello et al., 2010). Restorative conferences are used for more egregious incidents and involve utilizing a structured and scripted meeting protocol (Wachtel, Costello, & Wachtel, 2009). These conferences focus both on holding the individual accountable for his/her actions, but also reintegrating him/her back into the classroom community (Wachtel, Costello, & Wachtel, 2009).

Restorative justice structures emphasize the restoration of harmony not only between the victim and the offender, but also with the rest of the community (Wearmouth et al., 2007). The ownership of behavior that is required in restorative practices causes individuals to understand how their behavior directly affects their peers, the learning environment, and the school community (Mergler et al., 2014). The premise is that in

addition to understanding their impact on the community, individuals are also able to reintegrate into the school and classroom community as a valuable, contributing member (Mullet, 2014). These practices require putting things right for the victim, returning something to the community, addressing the underlying causes of the offense, and ensuring that the individual has the support needed to meet obligations; consequently, this process may help develop relationships among students and school administrators, teaching students how their actions affect the school and community (Duncan, 2011). According to DeWitt and DeWitt (2012), this process of healing and relationship building has the potential to create a culture of acceptance and encouragement that allows the incident to become a learning experience for everyone involved.

## **Empirical Research**

### **Impact of Restorative Practices**

One of the primary forms of empirical evidence for restorative justice originates from the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP) and the work of two researchers, Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel. McCold and Wachtel began implementation of restorative practices at the Community Service Foundation Buxmont Academies, eight alternative school and day treatment programs for high-risk and delinquent youth (Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007). These academies operated within a fully implemented restorative program, including both preventative and reactive restorative practices such as circles and conferencing. In 1999, McCold and Wachtel began a long-term study to evaluate the effectiveness of restorative programs for students enrolled in these programs, aiming to understand how restorative programs impacted the youth's pro-social values, self-esteem, and reoffending behavior (Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007).

The findings of the study indicated that experiencing restorative practices was associated with increased positive social values and self-esteem, and decreased reoffending behaviors (Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007). The study utilized pre- and post-interviews with students upon their entry and exit at Buxmont Academies, and found an increase in social values from entry to exit and an increase in self-esteem from entry to exit. Additionally, the researchers found that the longer the time the individual spent in the program, the greater the reduction in reoffending upon exit. The ideal amount of time to decrease reoffending behavior was found to be six months, producing a reduction in offending rate by two-thirds (Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007). This reduction in reoffending also held true two years after exiting the program (Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007).

This study had two main limitations, including the fact that the researchers were also the founders of the school and restorative program, and the lack of generalizability to general school populations given the alternative nature of the Buxmont schools. Wachtel and McCold were two of the primary founders of restorative justice theory and the International Institute for Restorative Practices. This relationship calls into question the validity of the research results as their positions may have influenced their research and methodology. Additionally, this research was conducted in an alternative school setting with highly trained restorative educators and counselors. This setting does not reflect the nature of most public schools in the country, both in terms of student population and teacher training. Further research is needed on the evaluation of restorative practices on student attitudes and reoffending in the public school setting.

A study conducted by Anyon and colleagues (2016) focused on evaluating the effects of restorative practices on discipline referrals and whether students from

disadvantaged backgrounds had an equitable opportunity to participate in restorative practices. The researchers aimed to discover if a student's participation in restorative practices during the first semester of school was associated with lower odds of discipline referrals in the second semester, and if the association between restorative practices and discipline incidents held for students of different racial backgrounds (Anyon et al., 2016). The study was conducted in the Denver Public Schools, which adopted a discipline policy to incorporate more alternative forms of discipline beyond suspension. Denver Public Schools provided optional training for administrators, teachers, and school staff on restorative practices, and included in their discipline policy a strong recommendation for restorative practices to be utilized for each discipline infraction (Anyon et al., 2016). The students in the study were all enrolled K-12 students ( $n = 9,921$ ) in all district schools ( $n = 180$ ) who had been issued one or more discipline referrals in the 2012-2013 school year (Anyon et al., 2016). Researchers utilized discipline records to complete multilevel logistic regression methods to estimate the relationships between student socio-demographic characteristics, participation in restorative practices in semester one, and discipline outcomes in semester two (Anyon et al., 2016).

Anyon's (2016) findings indicated positive results in utilizing restorative practices in preventing future discipline occurrences. Individuals who participated in restorative justice practices in their first semester had lower odds of receiving office discipline referrals ( $OR .21, p < .001$ ) and suspensions ( $OR .07, p < .001$ ) in their second semester compared to first semester. In addition, students from disadvantaged populations, such as Black, Latino, male, and special education students, had similar, equitable rates of participation in restorative practices with their peers (Anyon et al., 2016). Of note, while

these individuals had equitable participation in restorative practices, the gap between Black and White students receiving suspensions remained (Anyon et al., 2016).

While this study provided a lens from a comprehensive, district perspective, the study did not provide much empirical evidence on the longevity of impact for restorative practices or implementation quality. The study was narrow, within a school year, and did not determine if restorative practices predicted a long-term impact on student behavior beyond the school year. Additionally, the study did not provide evaluation on the level of implementation or teacher and student perceptions of restorative justice practices. The nature of the discipline policy and training as optional raises concern over the consistency of practices across the district and the quality of what was provided to students.

A further study on restorative justice practices in schools aimed to also incorporate racial disproportionality in the evaluation of restorative practices for school discipline. Gregory, Clawson, Davis, and Gerewitz (2016) conducted a study at two high schools on the East Coast during their first year of implementation of restorative justice practices. The aim was to determine if greater implementation of restorative justice practices was associated with higher levels of student-to-teacher respect and fewer defiance discipline referrals, and if the effect held across different racial and ethnic groups (Gregory, Clawson et al., 2016). The study included twenty-nine classroom teachers and four hundred and twelve students and involved both teachers and students self-reporting on the level of implementation of restorative practices within their classroom. Students also self-reported the quality of their student-teacher relationships using the Belmont, Skinner, Wellborn, and Connell “Teacher Respect Scale” (Gregory, Clawson, et al., 2016). In addition, discipline referrals were analyzed to determine both

the number and type of offenses before and after implementation. Each component of the data was disaggregated by racial group using students' self-reported race (Gregory et al., 2016).

Gregory et al.'s (2016) findings indicated that student-reported implementation was related to both student-teacher relationships and the number of discipline referrals. Higher student-reported implementation was associated with greater teacher respect ( $r = .58, p < .01$ ) and fewer referrals for Latino and African American students ( $r = -.45, p < .05$ ). Higher student-reported implementation was also associated with fewer Asian and White referrals, but this association was not at the established level for significance ( $r = -.36, p > .10$ ). An interesting finding in the study was that teacher-reported implementation was not related to student-reported implementation, and lacked statistical significance with changes in student-teacher relationships or the number of discipline referrals (Gregory et al., 2016).

While Gregory et al. (2016) provided important findings related to student perceptions of restorative justice implementation and suggests the potential for restorative practices to improve student-teacher relationships and decrease referrals, the misalignment in teacher and student reports of restorative implementation needs to be investigated further. One weakness in the study's structure that may have resulted in this discrepancy was the time frame in which teachers had been trained on restorative practices and the minimal amounts of support and coaching available to them (Gregory et al., 2016). The study did not address teachers' willingness or belief in restorative practices, which may also be an important component for further study.

### **Implementation of Restorative Practices in Schools**



A study conducted by Bevington (2015) aimed to better understand the implementation and impact of restorative practices from the perspective of staff members. The study was a qualitative case study, in which the researcher utilized the practice of appreciative inquiry to gain insight into staff members' perspectives regarding the implementation of restorative practices within their school. The purpose of the study was to explore "in-depth people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, and knowledge" (Bevington, 2015, p. 107) of restorative practices in their school. Bevington (2015) conducted the research within one primary school in London, which consisted of 355 students. The school was described as a highly diverse school, with 30% of the students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch and 66% of students with English as a second language (Bevington, 2015). This school was chosen because it had a history of engagement with restorative practices, and staff could speak to both restorative justice practices and its implementation.

The researcher used the process of appreciative inquiry, with the four phases of inquiry, imagination, innovation, and implementation (Bevington, 2015). The sample size was six, with staff members selected in order to include a range of perspectives in terms of their role in the school. In the inquiry stage of appreciative inquiry, the researcher conducted individual semi-structured interviews and then completed a three-stage coding process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Bevington, 2015).

Bevington's (2015) findings indicated an importance in having congruent values, practices, and outcomes among individuals within the school community. Staff members indicated that restorative practices provided an alternative way of dealing with conflict

and emotions, and acknowledged that “emotions are real, should be recognized, and known how to be dealt with” (Bevington, 2015 p. 109). This was true for both students and adults and participants indicated that restorative practices helped adults be more authentic and honest. In terms of congruence, the findings indicated a strong need for the values of the school to be aligned with the values of restorative justice. With an aligned values system throughout the school, staff are able to use their judgement to respond to conflict in similar ways (Bevington, 2015). Staff indicated that implementation was most effective if there was a core of highly skilled staff, a shared bank of resources and ideas for staff to draw upon, and professional development focused on emotional intelligence (Bevington, 2015). The primary concern regarding implementation was the “inability or unwillingness” (Bevington, 2015, p. 114) of certain staff members to engage with restorative practices, posing significant challenge for school-wide implementation of restorative practices.

The study illuminated the need for congruence of values, and pointed to some potential challenges in implementing restorative practices that others may draw upon (Bevington, 2015). While this study provided insight into the thoughts, beliefs, and emotions of select staff within a school implementing restorative practices, the case study nature of the study does not allow for broad generalizability. In addition, the researcher provided little insight into the selection of staff members for the study and little detail into the level of exposure to restorative practices the school had received. Further explanation and rationale for both of these areas would be beneficial for others conducting similar studies.

A case study research methodology was also utilized to explore the implementation of restorative practices within an Ontario public school. The purpose of the research study was to discover and analyze how restorative practices were experienced and implemented by teachers and administrators, with a focus on their perceptions of restorative practices as a philosophy, its implementation, and their roles in enacting it within their school (Reimer, 2011). The selected school was identified through a conversation the researcher had with a school board member, in which the member indicated this school as a model for restorative practices within the district (Reimer, 2011). The researcher utilized semi-structured interviews with four participants, and selected the participants through voluntary response to an invitation sent to the whole school. In addition to interviews, the researcher also analyzed documents provided by the school board in order to gain an understanding of the regional context of the school and restorative practices within the district (Reimer, 2011).

In analyzing the data, Reimer (2011) used a three-stage coding process and theming strategies. The coding consisted of making the text manageable, hearing what was said, and developing theory (Reimer, 2011). The researcher identified repeating ideas, and reduced the original 33 ideas into 15 theme groups, which were reduced to four constructs. The four constructs were identified as constructing personal understanding of restorative justice, facilitating adoption of new theories, complicating contextual factors of structure and culture, and inconsistent support from gatekeepers of change (Reimer, 2011). The challenges with implementation included differing definitions of restorative practices, lack of time, the need for a strong school community, and the need for strong administrative leadership. An alignment to restorative practice

values, which were identified as contradictory to modern justice system values, was also mentioned by staff members (Reimer, 2011). Additionally, the need for strong training for teachers to increase their confidence in using restorative practices was identified for successful implementation (Reimer, 2011).

While this study was a qualitative case study, and thus no broad generalizations can be drawn, it still provides important considerations for schools implementing restorative practices. Of primary consideration, Reimer (2011) found that implementation for restorative practices requires personal commitment to the values of restorative justice, and a strong system with structures and training in place for staff members. Beyond the lack of generalizability, another limitation of the study was the selection of staff members who participated in the interviews. After requesting participation from all staff members, only four individuals responded with a willingness to be interviewed. This could indicate that these four staff members had strong opinions regarding restorative practices, and therefore may not reflect the opinions and beliefs of the rest of the school staff.

Research conducted by Vaandering (2014) also utilized a case study qualitative approach to increase understanding of the implementation of restorative practices within two schools in Ontario. The purpose of this study was to explore the voices of teachers and principals regarding the philosophy of restorative justice, and how this understanding could improve implementation and sustainability of restorative practices in schools (Vaandering, 2014). Two schools were selected based on size and experience with restorative practices. Both schools had implemented restorative practices three years prior, allowing staff members to have adequate perspective on implementation. At each

school, about 15 staff members volunteered to participate in the study, and the researcher selected two at each school based on their level of training and grade level representation (Vaandering, 2014).

This case study utilized data in the form of interviews and observations. The researcher interviewed each participant and conducted regular observations of their practice over the course of six weeks. After collecting the data, the researcher coded and themed the transcripts and observation notes. Key questions that the researcher used while coding and theming included addressing the personal definitions of restorative practices, the frames of implementation, and identifying the interests served (Vaandering, 2014).

The findings from this study suggested that teachers implementing restorative practices often fell into two categories: those who situated restorative justice into a discourse of an engagement pedagogy and those that situated it into a discourse of behavior and control (Vaandering, 2014). Those within an engagement pedagogy held a view of the child as worthy, the teacher's role as one of support, and a focus on both the present and future for children. Those within a control discourse held a view of the child as valuable if they complied with social norms and viewed the role of the teacher as one of manager and expert (Vaandering, 2014). Teachers within the control discourse also indicated a dismissal of restorative practices if they believed themselves to have management skills already in place. The researcher described these two viewpoints as one that "reinforces punitive, managerial structures" and one that "nurtures relationship-based cultures" (Vaandering, 2014, p. 71).

Based on the findings from this study, the researcher suggested that implementation of restorative practices must address the structural, personal, and professional influences and beliefs of educators (Vaandering, 2014). One downfall of implementation comes when schools or districts “ignore the impact of personal lives on understanding change, and expect that a professional development experience will result in a comprehensive change for all” (Vaandering, 2014, p. 69). Vaandering (2014) suggested that implementation should include a critical reflection on core values of staff members and how they align with the principles and values of restorative practices. Without this understanding, the findings of this study indicated that power relationships underlying the original punitive, managerial structures will remain in the school setting (Vaandering, 2014).

### **Summary**

Racial disproportionality in school discipline is a critical issue in education today (Skiba et al., 2002). Racial minorities receive school disciplinary consequences at a much higher level than their white peers, and often receive much sterner consequences for similar misconduct (Gregory et al., 2016; Skiba et al., 2002). While racial disproportionality in school discipline has many causes, the practice of exclusionary discipline is a significant contributor to this growing concern. Research indicates that the removal of students for misbehavior does not decrease the reoccurrence of behavior. Additionally, exclusion from school places additional risks on students including academic failure, dropout, and entry into the juvenile justice system (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gibson et al., 2014). In addition, these exclusionary practices have many negative consequences for the students that receive them (Curran, 2016). Due to these concerns

and the contribution that exclusionary discipline has on racial disproportionality in discipline, alternative approaches may be warranted.

An alternative approach to school discipline that may improve the racial discrepancy is the use of restorative justice practices in both proactively preventing misbehavior and responding after misbehavior has occurred. Restorative practices may provide an avenue for the building of strong relationships between teachers and students (Gregory et al., 2016). The building of strong relationships may counteract or alleviate potential bias that contributes to the decisions teachers and administrators make when referring students and providing disciplinary consequences (Smolkowski et al., 2016). Restorative practices may also have long-term effects for students, schools, and their communities. At the classroom level, when teachers utilize restorative responses to behavior, and rely less on exclusion from the classroom, students spend more time in the classroom and are more likely to complete their education (Anyon et al., 2016).

Restorative practices may serve as an alternative to traditional exclusionary discipline policies. The processes of allowing the offender to restore, reconcile, and make restitution are not present with traditional responses to behavior (Mullet, 2014). Restorative justice processes seek to repair the harm done to victims by those who have inflicted it by approaching the situation with an attitude of mindfulness, responsibility, empowerment, and inclusion (Clear, 2005). The concept of empowerment is applicable to both the victim and the offender in these situations. Varnham (2005) argued that the rationale behind restoration is that it empowers students to work out differences constructively and to work toward solutions. In working toward solutions and resolving the conflict, the offender may be able to abandon any rationalizations they may have that

their behavior was acceptable, thus making a more profound impact on their future behavior (Duncan, 2011). Initial empirical evidence indicates that the implementation of restorative practices may increase positive student and teacher relationships, decrease the rate of reoccurring offenses, and increase students' attitudes positively (Anyon et al., 2016; Gregory et al., 2016; Mirsky & Wachtel, 2007). Initial qualitative research indicates implementation of restorative practices is complex, and requires a shift in policy and mindsets regarding discipline (Bevington, 2015; Reimer, 2011; Vaandering, 2014). The empirical evidence, though limited, is promising. Certainly, further research is warranted.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter outlines the methodology used to address the research questions regarding elementary school teachers' attitudes about student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice. Included in this chapter is the research design, participant and sampling procedures, measures addressing validity and reliability, and the data collection and analysis processes. Finally, this chapter addresses the limitations of the research design and study.

#### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the attitudes of elementary school teachers in regard to student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice. Through exploration and description, the researcher aimed to determine if certain themes emerged that provided support of administrators' implementation of restorative responses. The first research question was developed to examine the attitudes of elementary school teachers in terms of student behavior and the use of exclusionary discipline to address student misbehavior. The second research question was created to seek understanding regarding the teachers' attitudes about restorative justice and to identify information that may assist an administrator seeking to implement restorative justice practices as an alternative to exclusionary discipline practices. The research questions are as follows:

Research Question 1: What themes exist within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding student behavior and the use of exclusionary discipline to address student misbehavior?

Research Question 2: What themes exist within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding the use of restorative justice as an alternative to exclusionary discipline, and how might these themes provide insight for an administrator seeking to implement restorative justice practices within their school?

### **Research Design**

The research design utilized for this study was a qualitative case study research design (Creswell, 2016). Qualitative research is research that “makes the world visible, in which researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005 p. 3). Creswell (2016) expands on this definition by adding that the final report “includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change” (p. 44).

One form of qualitative research is case study research (Creswell, 2016). Case study research involves the study of a case within a real-life, contemporary context or setting (Yin, 2009). In this type of qualitative design, the researcher explores a real-life, bounded system through detailed, in-depth data collection and reports a description and themes (Creswell, 2016). There are numerous types of case study designs that can be utilized depending on the number of groups analyzed and the purpose of the analysis (Creswell, 2016). For this research, a single instrumental case study design was selected.

A single instrumental case study is one in which the researcher identifies an issue and selects one bounded case to illustrate the issue (Stake, 1995). The identified issue in this case is the attitudes of teachers regarding student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice, and the bounded case utilized is one elementary school within a public school district. The purpose of utilizing a descriptive case study was to understand further, via interviews, the perspectives of elementary school teachers regarding student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice, and to identify themes that may aid an administrator seeking to implement restorative practices within their school. As this is a qualitative research design, there were no independent and dependent variables.

### **Participants**

The participants in this research study were current elementary (K-6th grade) teachers from one elementary school in a public school district in the greater Seattle area. The researcher included seven participants in the study, as this meets Creswell's (2016) minimum recommendation of a sample size of 4-5 participants for case study research. Participants selected for the study represented a diverse population of teachers based on gender, age, grade level position, and years of teaching experience.

### **Sampling Process**

The researcher identified a public school district in the greater Seattle area that has drawn attention in the previous three years for their focus on eliminating school suspensions and exclusions. The media attention this district has received has been both positive, in terms of reducing suspensions, and critical, in terms of teachers reporting feeling unsafe and unsupported with student discipline. Within this district, the researcher identified one elementary school in which to conduct the study. This

elementary school was chosen due to its size, location, student diversity, staff diversity, and exposure to and beginning knowledge of restorative justice practices. The school is a medium-sized school, with a student population of 300. It is in the greater Seattle area, and is an identified Title 1 school, with 85% of the student population receiving free or reduced-price lunch. The student population is diverse, with students of Hispanic, Asian, African American, Pacific Islander, and White racial backgrounds. The staff within the school are diverse in terms of number of years of teaching experience, age, and gender. Finally, the school has begun to explore the idea of restorative justice, but has not adopted or implemented this practice. This exposure allowed interview participants to have a general understanding of restorative justice concepts and a beginning development of their own beliefs regarding the practice and its implementation within an elementary school.

To identify participants within the elementary school, the researcher first conducted an informal interview with the school principal. This interview helped to identify teachers in the school according to gender, age, grade level position, and years of teaching experience. The researcher also asked the principal to help identify teachers whom she believed would be willing to participate in an interview and those with potentially diverse mindsets and opinions on student discipline and the use of restorative justice. The researcher utilized the sampling strategy of maximum variation sampling, in which diverse individuals were selected based on identified criteria in order to include and describe multiple perspectives about the case (Creswell, 2016). The identified criteria were gender, age, grade level position, and years of teaching experience.

The researcher then contacted the identified potential participants through an email invitation. The email provided an initial description of the study and invited voluntary participation from teachers. Interested teachers were asked to email the researcher with their information by a pre-determined deadline. The researcher selected participants from those who expressed interest to ensure a diverse sample of teachers based on the identified criteria of gender, age, grade level position, and years of teaching experience. After the participants were selected, the researcher contacted each participant to set up an appointment for an interview.

### **Measure**

The data collection measure in this study was interviews. The researcher determined a semi-structured interview one-on-one with each participant as the most appropriate interview type. Interview questions were developed around the ideas of student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice. All interview questions were developed based on information from the literature review and findings from other studies within the area of student discipline and implementation of restorative justice practices.

Two important considerations in any research study is the reliability and validity of the research. Reliability within a case study is defined as “the consistency and repeatability of the research procedures” (Yin, 2014, p. 240). To address reliability, the participants received information that explained the study, the interview questions, the interview protocol, and their scheduled date and time in advance of the interview. Consistency was controlled through the structure of the interview, and in asking exactly the same questions in an identical order for each participant.

Validity within a case study is defined as “an attempt to address the accuracy of the findings” (Creswell, 2016, p. 249). To address validity within this study, a pilot test was used to refine the interview questions. Researchers recommend the use of a pilot test to refine and develop interview questions and adapt original plans (Creswell, 2016; Sampson, 2004; Yin, 2009). According to Creswell (2016), the pilot test cases are selected based on convenience, access, and geographic proximity (p. 165). Following this protocol, the researcher identified pilot test teachers within her current school. The researcher provided the interview questions in advance to the pilot test teachers and noted their answers and any clarifications or questions that arose. Based on the pilot test phase, the interview questions were revised. Additionally, definitions of terminology used in the interview questions were provided to participants at the start of each interview and participants viewed their completed interview transcripts to ensure accuracy. Finally, the transcripts were reviewed independently by two second party researchers trained in qualitative research coding and theming practices to establish interrater reliability.

### **Data Collection**

Upon selection of the participants, the researcher contacted each participant to schedule an appointment for an initial interview. Interviews are defined as a data collection method in which an interviewer asks an interviewee questions (Vogt & Johnson, 2016). The initial interview lasted approximately one hour and followed specific questions determined by the researcher. Creswell (2016) recommends designing an interview protocol that is “a form about four to five pages in length, with approximately five to seven open-ended questions” (p. 164). Additionally, an interview protocol is a list of questions and instructions that is used as a guide when interviewing

respondents (Vogt & Johnson, 2016). The researcher asked the same questions of each participant, but also asked additional follow-up questions as needed to ensure thorough answers on each question. With permission from each participant, the researcher recorded each interview and took brief notes during the interview as needed. After the researcher conducted all the initial interviews and completed data transcription steps, the researcher contacted participants through email to share the interview transcription and address any remaining questions or clarifications the participants had as needed.

After completion of each round of interviews, the researcher transcribed the recorded interviews into completed interview transcripts. The researcher then utilized the completed transcripts to complete the coding and theming process. The process of coding and theming allowed the researcher to determine trends and patterns among responses.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher processed each transcript and coded the responses. Coding is the act of reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments (Creswell, 2016). After coding each of the responses, the researcher began to develop themes based on the codes and the commonalities that appeared. Themes are “broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (Creswell, 2016, p. 186).

To address issues of reliability, the transcripts were reviewed independently by two second party researchers trained in qualitative research coding and theming practices. The process of having a second coder allowed for interrater reliability. Interrater reliability, or intercoder agreement, is the use of multiple coders to analyze the transcript

data, which provides stability of responses (Creswell, 2016). Interrater reliability requires agreement and consistency among raters and is the extent to which multiple raters judge responses in the same way (Vogt & Johnson, 2016).

The codes and themes were compared to find any commonalities and possible triangulation of data. Finally, the themes were then evaluated to determine if any recommendations or conclusions could be drawn on teachers' attitudes and how these may impact discipline policies and responses to behavior. The researcher determined if any naturalistic generalizations could be made, which are generalizations that people can learn about the case for themselves or to apply to a population of cases (Creswell, 2016).

### **Limitations**

This study only gained insight from teachers within one elementary school in a public district in the greater Seattle area. Teachers' attitudes may highly differ in other districts locally or around the country. Generalizations cannot be drawn from this study, or to qualitative research in general; however, the study does provide insight that others can draw on. Another limitation is that this study required voluntary participation. As such, individuals that volunteered for an interview may have strong opinions regarding the topic and may not have provided a representative sample of teachers' mindsets within this population.

### **Summary**

The research method utilized in this study was a qualitative case study to examine the attitudes of elementary school teachers regarding student discipline and the use of restorative justice. After completing semi-structured interviews with participants, the researcher followed a process of coding and theming of transcripts to identify patterns,



commonalities, and ideas. Throughout the process, the researcher attended to issues of validity and reliability, including the use of two independent second party coders to address interrater reliability. The results of the study are addressed in Chapter Four.

## Chapter Four

### Results

This study examined the attitudes of elementary school teachers regarding student behavior, discipline, suspension, and the use of restorative justice. The study focused on the examination of information that an administrator may want to understand better when deciding to implement restorative justice practices. Each participant was interviewed once between the months of December 2017 and January 2018. All participants were teachers at the same public elementary school in the greater Seattle area. The participants ranged in their number of years of teaching experience, from first year teachers to teachers in their twentieth year of teaching. Six participants were female and one participant was male. The teachers taught grade levels from first grade to sixth grade. The researcher utilized the sampling strategy of maximum variation sampling, in which diverse individuals were selected based on identified criteria to include and describe multiple perspectives about the case (Creswell, 2016). The identified criteria were gender, age, grade level position, and years of teaching experience.

The participants' responses described both their general attitudes regarding student behavior and response, as well as descriptions of their everyday practice. Their descriptions also provided insight into current disciplinary practices, and desired responses and plans for the future. Five main themes emerged from these interviews. These include a) behavior prevention, b) discipline attitudes, c) behavior response attitudes, d) leadership, and e) implementation needs. These themes are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

*Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes with Representative Quotes*

Theme	Example
Behavior Prevention	
Relationships	“Having a relationship with kids is the most important for sure.” (Laurie, ll. 350).
Expectations	“I think your role needs to be consistent and if you’re a teacher and I think it’s to set expectations.” (Laurie, ll. 60-61)
Community Building	“Kids feel safe, want to take risks, want to support each other, and kind of are learning the lessons along the way about how to make good choices. That they are open to feedback, that they want to support each other.” (Cindy, ll. 40-43)
Discipline Attitudes	
Behavior Change	“Behavior slowly over time goes away, or at least decreases.” (Courtney, ll. 25)
Individual Growth	“Want to give them the skills and tools that they need so that they can be successful human beings in school and in life.” (Leslie, ll. 490-491)
Restorative Justice	“It could be like...pretty profound or heavy or have like a lot more meaning.” (John, ll. 272)
Behavior Response Attitudes	
Suspension Ineffective	“Either the kid’s suspended and is home for three days, which is probably a dream most kids, or they’re in the office, doing nothing that’s really going to change the behavior.” (Cindy, ll. 228-229)
Responses Inadequate	“It is kind of like a never-ending cycle of, yeah, this kid is losing a lot of recesses, but the behavior isn’t changing.” (Shelly, ll. 317-318).
Function of Behavior	“Behavior is usually trying to solve something else.” (Danielle, ll. 371)
Leadership	
Behavior Support	“I feel like an administrator should get involved when it’s just really out of control and disrupting the learning of everyone else.” (Leslie, ll. 176-177)
Consistency	“It does cause a rift between teachers and administration when administration is like doing something that they aren’t explaining to the teachers.” (Courtney, ll. 523-524)

Table 1 Continued

Theme	Example
Trust	“Validate the teacher’s experience and the student’s experience.” (Danielle, ll. 186)
Implementation Needs	
Professional Development	“A lot more background knowledge...but not just um read a book on it. Like, I need person to person like interaction on it...show me what it looks like.” (Shelly, ll. 401-402)
Clear Plan	“Just using the words is not going to be helpful. You have to have...you have to do readings, have discussions, have buy in...and then come up with a good plan for setting this into place.” (Leslie, ll. 507-509)
Buy-In	“I feel like there are people in the world that are just very old school, and don’t change. So um...help them see the benefits of it and why it would be important to try.” (Shelly, ll. 394-395)

### **Behavior Prevention**

All seven participants described behavior prevention as a key component of managing student behavior and provided specific strategies utilized in prevention. These specific strategies include relationships, expectations, and community building.

**Relationships.** Every participant described the importance of building and maintaining relationships with students as a key element of behavior prevention. Courtney described relationships with students as a sign of care, with students who feel cared for and feel their teacher thinks about them positively as more likely to comply and listen to their teacher’s directives. Laurie also commented that kids need to like who they are surrounded by to feel influenced, and stated that “having a relationship with kids is the most important for sure” (Laurie, ll. 350). Shelly described the need to build connections and relationships with kids, both in relation to school subjects, but also as individuals. She commented, “It’s isn’t like, oh, I’m your best friend kind of thing. But it’s like, I care about you, and I want you to be successful, so I am going to get to know

more about you, not just your school necessarily” (Shelly, ll. 124-136). Cindy also expressed her need for connecting with students on a more personal level, and how these personal connections and relationships positively impacted behavior within her classroom. She also explained that relationship building takes time and effort, often above and beyond a teacher’s typical commitment. Cindy described this relationship building as follows:

It’s probably getting to know the kids in a more meaningful way. And that takes a ton of time. So even though I was fun and happy and would go out to recess and play with the kids on the jungle gym, that’s not the same as having two kids in at lunch with you when they’re fighting with each other, or they’re being bullied, or their parents are going through a divorce or whatever. It’s a different level of um...of communication and understanding and it takes more time and it takes uh...a thoughtful ear. It just takes a lot more time and more thoughtful effort, which is absolutely worth it. (Cindy, ll. 150-159)

In describing important components of her classroom management philosophy, Leslie described the difference in a control and authoritarian approach, and one in which the teacher builds relationships and community with students. She also tied building relationships with students as a component of enjoying teaching and her job. Leslie commented, “You want to go, you want to enjoy teaching...have that relationship with the kids...that relationship that you...that you have with the kids is really important and will really set the tone for the rest of the year” (Leslie, ll. 480-487). John specified building relationships with students as a component of establishing trust between teacher and student. He recounted, “There has to be a level of trust in the classroom...especially, like,

from student to teacher, they have to be like...able to trust that you are going to like...be consistent” (John, ll. 155-158).

Most participants also described that building relationships with families of their students was another critical component in their everyday practice of behavior prevention. Cindy described the need for teachers to communicate and build relationships with parents as a form of behavior prevention. She explained her belief that many parents are not aware of the behaviors their child displays in the classroom, and that by providing more understanding of what occurs in the classroom, the parents could be more integral in supporting the needs of their child. She stated, “I think that if you really want to have success with a kid, there would have to be some really intentional link with the parent” (Cindy, ll. 588-589). Shelly reiterated the importance of a connection with families, both an academic and a personal connection. She called this connection critical, and described the building of a team between teacher and family in order to best support the child in the classroom. She stated, “Not just a connection academically...I’m talking like on a personal level, like, oh, how is your family doing? What do your kids like to do? What do you like to do?” (Shelly, ll. 462-465).

**Expectations.** Multiple participants commented on the need to set expectations, rules, and norms to prevent student misbehavior. In addition to setting these expectations, the participants described the need to explain the reasoning behind them, to enforce consistently, and to hold students accountable to them. John described posters for different areas of the classroom, such as the carpet, that detailed the expectations within that area, and how he reminds students of the expectations while in each of these areas. After describing the importance of teaching students the appropriate expectations

in each area, both in the classroom and the school, John commented, “And then like...knowing that the appropriate behaviors...the reason we want to see the appropriate behaviors is because like...they will...you know, they are expected to lead to more positive things” (John, ll. 83-85). Finally, John also described the need for school-wide expectations, and reviewing those with every class in the school.

Courtney expressed the need for consistency in holding students to the expectations, and stated, “Be really consistent with uh how you uh hold the kids accountable just so they know what the expectations are in the classroom and what is and is not ok” (Courtney, ll. 30-32). Laurie also commented on the need for consistency with expectations, as she said, “I think your role needs to be consistent and if you’re a teacher and I think it’s to set expectations” (Laurie, ll. 60-61). Similar to John, Laurie also commented on the need to explain the reasoning behind certain expectations to students. She explained, “They need to understand why what they are doing is acceptable or not...or why...you can’t just be like, well, you can’t scream because I said so. There has to be an explanation and a reason...a justifiable reason behind it” (Laurie, ll. 358-360). Shelly also found it as the teacher’s role to set up expectations that prevent behaviors from happening in the classroom, and even commented that with strong expectations and a plan, “hopefully those behaviors will be very limited and the discipline will not need to happen” (Shelly, ll. 147-148). Finally, Leslie added that expectations should be written in collaboration with the students. She commented, “We spend a lot of time at the beginning of the year writing rules together, practicing them” (Leslie, ll. 13-14). She added that teachers should be warm demanders, in which they manage the expectations with an assertive stance in holding the students accountable. She explained, “So I

think...you can...be warm and collaborative and whatever...but, you also as a teacher need to assert yourself and say hey, we don't mess around in here" (Leslie, ll. 230-232).

**Community building.** Another strategy for prevention of misbehavior that was described by many participants was the establishment of a community within their classroom. This was described by many as a key part in students collaborating with one another, and in understanding the impact of their behavior on their classmates and the community within their classroom. Shelly, Courtney, and John all described the role of the teacher in building the classroom community and maintaining the community throughout the school year. They also described the need for students working together and supporting one another. Courtney stated, "I think a teacher's role is to create, uh, a positive community in the classroom and to maintain it" (Courtney, ll. 121). While she did not expand on the classroom community, she asserted that it is a primary role of the teacher in behavior management. John also commented on the teacher's role in behavior by stating, "I think a lot of that is like the culture of the classroom and like the...expectations of having the way that your classroom works as a community known" (John, ll. 75-77). He also described a level of comfort and trust that students need to build with one another, in addition to their relationship with the teacher. He described, "You know you want the classroom to be a community where people can talk to each other and share things...and stuff like that. A place like, where people feel comfortable to be themselves" (John, ll. 160-162). Shelly described the importance of the community working as a team and supporting one another. She explained, "You need to all be able to work together without like bashing people, without like...like, oh I see that's really



hard for you, can I help you?” (Shelly, ll. 495-498). Shelly emphasized the importance of everyone working together as a team for the group and all individuals to be successful.

Both Leslie and Cindy spent more time elaborating on the importance of the classroom community and the strategies they use to develop it. They both commented on the use of class meetings in building community within their classroom. Leslie described the daily occurrence of class meetings, and its use as a tool in teaching students the skills of habits of mind, emotional tools, and growth mindset. She described the feeling of her classroom community as, “We are in there together, we get our work done, we help each other out...it’s like, we are serious about what we do, but we also have fun, we play games” (Leslie, ll. 131-133). Leslie particularly focused on the role of the community in behavior prevention and management, as she related students’ understanding of their behavior and its impact in terms of the community, rather than the teacher or the guideline itself. She commented, “So I just feel like...building that community...when a student doesn’t follow a guideline, they almost feel like a sense of...guilt...that they’ve not done what they’re supposed to” (Leslie, ll. 48-50). Students build their reflection and understanding of behavior by understanding the impact on their classroom peers. In describing this, she stated, “Hey, we have a community here and if I don’t do this it’s going to affect, you know, everyone around me” (Leslie, ll. 63-64).

Cindy also described the importance of classroom community in her students’ behavior and overall learning experience. She commented that a classroom community is where “kids feel safe, want to take risks, want to support each other, and kind of are learning the lessons along the way about how to make good choices.” (Cindy, ll. 40-43). In recounting how she builds her classroom community, she explained that the main

component of building her classroom community is with class meetings, even though this practice is relatively new to her. She stated that this is the first year she has done class meetings with fidelity, and that in her classroom it is a formal, routine structure that her students can utilize to bring issues forth to the class. While a classroom culture has always been critical in her practice, Cindy described the added benefit of regular class meetings as follows:

As close as I am to my kids...I eat lunch with them, and they are always in my room at recesses and stuff...I hear things that I think, oh, did not see that coming. You know...uh...what makes a good friend? Or what motivates you to do your best in school? Or what was a time you dealt with grief? Or something. They share a lot of insightful things that really help me get to know the kids better. (Cindy, ll. 79-83).

### **Discipline Attitudes**

All participants described similar attitudes and beliefs regarding student behavior and the purpose of discipline. These beliefs included the idea of behavior change for students, impacting students' individual growth both in school and in the world, and a positive attitude toward the idea of restorative justice.

**Behavior change.** Each participant shared a belief that the purpose of discipline, or responding to student behavior needs, was to change student behavior in a more positive direction. They indicated a desire for the misbehavior to stop or at least to decrease. John commented that his response to behavior "is effective if the behavior stops" (John, ll. 37-38). He later added that his goal in managing student behavior and in discipline is to "change the behavior to the desired behavior" (John, ll. 67). Leslie also

commented that her response to behavior would be effective “if it changes behavior” (Leslie, ll. 324). Cindy too stated, “I think it’s effective because I think it changes the behavior” (Cindy, ll. 27).

Some participants acknowledged that changing behavior takes time and does not happen immediately. Shelly described a process of behavior change and explained that her role is to “get them on the right track to be successful” (Shelly, ll. 45-46). Both Laurie and Courtney alluded to the time interval of behavior change, and noted that some change should be considered progress. Laurie reflected that her response is effective if “like in a long term, I change their behavior for the better” (Laurie, ll. 50-51). Courtney viewed her response as effective if “behavior slowly over time goes away, or at least decreases” (Courtney, ll. 25). Each of the participants described success in teacher response to student misbehavior as change in the student’s behavior toward a more positive orientation. Teachers did not describe the enforcement of a consequence or punishment as a sign of effectiveness, but rather, if the students’ behavior changed.

**Individual growth.** In addition to behavior change, participants also described a desire to impact individual student growth and skills. Beyond minimizing or eliminating student misbehavior, the participants also spoke about helping students understand the impact of their behaviors on themselves and others, and educating students with skills that would enable them to be successful outside of the classroom or school walls. Danielle, Courtney, and Leslie all described their belief in the importance of students understanding their behavior and the impact of their behaviors, both on self and others around them. Danielle commented, “I would want the child to understand what they did wrong, and know what to do right the next time” (Danielle, ll. 91). She also stated that

one goal she would have in helping students understand their behavior is, “I guess to teach them that their behavior is not in a vacuum. Like, what you do does affect other people” (Danielle, ll. 153-154). Similarly, Courtney also commented that it is important to “help them understand like how their behavior affects other people and how it can affect them” (Courtney, ll. 103-104). Finally, Leslie also bridged between helping students understand the impact, especially in a future orientation. She explained that she wants students to “understand...why it may not be appropriate, and who it affects, and how this isn’t going to help them in their life...no, not in college, not in...their jobs, not in their personal relationship” (Leslie, ll. 150-152).

Other participants, like Leslie, also described the desire, and their belief in the teacher’s role, to help students in their individual growth beyond the classroom. They commented on the goal of molding and creating individuals that have the skills and are successful in the outside world. Courtney described this connection between school and their role in the greater world as follows:

I think a classroom is kind of like a microcosm of the world, so they have to learn to be successful in a classroom community because they are also going to have to learn to be successful in a work community, and a, on like a team, or in a home, or they are going to live in the world with like friends. I just feel like it helps them like learn the social skills that then they need to be successful humans and I think a lot of it starts in the classroom. (Courtney, ll. 112-116).

Leslie and Cindy also elaborated on their belief in educating the whole child in preparation for life outside of the school or classroom. Leslie stated that teachers “want to give them the skills and tools that they need so that they can be successful human

beings in school and in life” (Leslie, ll. 490-491). She also added that students we teach now need “to become productive, healthy citizens when they go out in the world” (Leslie, ll. 65-66). Similarly, Cindy also described effectiveness of responding to student behavior as “them being a successful student, and a successful member of our classroom, and a successful member of our society” (Cindy, ll. 92-93). She added, “I see it more now as helping form these like good little human beings that like know how to make good choices and that you have conversations with” (Cindy, ll. 121-122). The participants described an overall desire to help individual students grow in their interpersonal skills, with the ultimate goal of helping create not only productive and successful students, but also citizens and humans of the world.

**Restorative justice.** In discussing restorative justice, and other responses to student behavior, each participant expressed a positive attitude toward restorative justice ideas, and a willingness to learn more. While expressing a lack of knowledge around restorative justice, each participant still indicated an agreeable stance toward restorative justice, including the idea that restorative justice responses had the potential to be more meaningful and powerful than traditional responses to student behavior. The following are brief quotes from each participant regarding initial attitudes about restorative justice:

“I totally agree with it. I’m totally for it. Punishment, like I said...we’ll get complacent kids, but it’s not going to help them be better human beings. It’s not going to help them with their relationships.” (Leslie, ll. 417-419)

“I am completely open to it. I would just like to know more.” (Cindy, ll. 473)

“I think it could be very successful.” (Shelly, ll. 355)

“I feel like it’s something I would like to learn more about. I wish it was something we could try.” (Danielle, ll. 368)

“I think that it’s great.” (Laurie, ll. 238)

“It feels like that kind of process could be really, really powerful.” (Courtney, ll. 391)

“I think that it’s really intriguing to me, and I think that I would love to see it in action.” (Courtney, ll. 435)

“It could be like...pretty profound or heavy or have like a lot more meaning.” (John, ll. 272)

“It seems like it would be pretty powerful.” (John, ll. 274)

Overall, the participants each expressed an interest in restorative justice and commented that they were open to it or agreed with it based on their limited knowledge. The participants expressed a desire to know more, and later expressed additional information and supports they would need to implement it effectively; however, their attitudes toward it were positive and curious. Further description of their needs and implementation questions will be discussed in a later theme.

### **Behavior Response Attitudes**

The teachers’ responses indicated three main sub-themes in their attitudes about responses to behavior within the school. First, each of the teachers described an overall belief that suspensions as they were currently used, both in-school and out-of-school suspensions, were ineffective at changing behavior, and they overall did not agree with them as a form of response to student misbehavior. The second sub-theme regarding behavior responses was the belief that the responses that were being utilized to respond to student behavior were inadequate. The teachers expressed many similar ideas about ideal responses to behavior, but indicated that the current practices to respond to behavior were not adequate and were not affecting behavior change. Finally, the teachers shared a similar attitude that it is important to understand and determine what the function of a

child's behavior is. Many indicated a belief that student misbehavior was an indicator of deeper concerns, not that students were necessarily choosing to misbehave.

**Suspension ineffective.** Every teacher described a belief that suspensions were not effective in responding to student misbehavior or initiating behavior change. In addition, many teachers commented that suspensions were not only ineffective, but failed to meet the needs of students demonstrating the extreme misbehaviors in which they were being excluded from school for. For out-of-school suspensions, multiple participants stated that students who were sent home will not be doing anything productive while away from school. John described that the students who are suspended “might not have a lot of structure or security or consistency outside of school” (John, ll. 184-185). Danielle stated, “Many times they are at home and not getting anything school related” (Danielle, ll. 274), while Courtney commented, “They are just at home, doing nothing, or playing videogames” (Courtney, ll. 166-167). Shelly described her issue with both out-of-school and in-school suspension as follows:

I don't think out of school suspension, oh just stay home...is beneficial to anyone. Um...a student is like, yeah, I get to stay home. The parent is like, crap, my kid's home, what am I going to do with them? Do I need to take a day off work? And the teacher is like, oh are they just sitting and playing in the office or are they at home and no one is paying attention to them, and they're just getting into more trouble. (Shelly, ll. 211-216)

While teachers described the ineffectiveness of out-of-school suspensions, the majority of their comments were on the topic of in-school suspension. They described not only it being ineffective at changing behavior, but also frustrating for teachers to see

kids, who had recently demonstrated a severe misbehavior, “just parked in the office” (Danielle, ll. 261). Courtney stated that she sees in-school suspension in her school as “kids sitting in the office all day doing nothing unsupervised” (Courtney, ll. 285-286). She added, “I’d hear teachers say, oh they are just in there like eating hot Cheetos...or they are just going down to have a snack and then coming back and then nothing happens” (Courtney, ll. 543-545). Leslie described, “I don’t feel like it should be babysitting, like they come to the office and they hang out and eat pretzels” (Leslie, ll. 185-186). Shelly made a similar comment that expressed her frustration with in-school suspensions and how they are currently practiced. She said, “I don’t agree with sitting in the office and playing all day as a discipline” (Shelly, ll. 208-209) and followed with the comment that “as a teacher, is the most frustrating thing to me, because it’s like, this kid just destroyed my entire room, with no...and now he gets to go play on the ipad” (Shelly, ll. 228-229). Similarly, Laurie also described it as “just a kid stuck in the office all day” (Laurie, ll. 118) and that the kids “are just like kinda sitting there, bored” (Laurie, ll. 119). Leslie also did not find in-school suspensions to be effective, especially given that students don’t complete the work they are missing while out of class. She described, “They’re just sitting and doing work in the office instead of in the classroom...I don’t really understand the purpose of that. Cause half the time, they aren’t doing the work and they’re goofing off...I don’t really think that’s useful” (Leslie, ll. 293-295).

Multiple participants also shared a belief that suspensions, both in and out-of-school suspensions, do little to change the behavior of students. Some of their comments are included below:

“It’s not necessarily going to help them” (Laurie, ll. 90).

“I don’t feel like that’s going to help” (Leslie, ll. 246).



“Either the kid’s suspended and is home for three days, which is probably a dream for most kids, or they’re in the office, doing nothing that’s really going to change the behavior” (Cindy, ll. 228-229).

“It definitely does not change his behavior long term” (Laurie, ll. 136).

Finally, some teachers described perhaps a somewhat conflicting belief in suspensions. While each of these teachers stated they do not believe suspensions to be effective at changing behavior, they also commented on specific student behaviors or actions as being “suspension worthy” (Danielle, ll. 255). Laurie commented, “There’s some behaviors that like do...that kinda do deserve a suspension” (Laurie, ll. 95-96). Similarly, Danielle stated, “You know, those kind of big things are suspension...suspension worthy” (Danielle, ll. 255). Courtney also commented that “for safety reasons, suspension can be necessary sometimes” (Courtney, ll. 163). Finally, Shelly described, “I don’t feel like you should not suspend kids if it is an act that deserves it” (Shelly, ll. 290). While Leslie did not follow this same pattern of belief that some actions are suspension worthy, she did comment that the only positive of suspensions is that “it maybe just sends the message of wow, this is very serious” (Leslie, ll. 285-286).

**Responses inadequate.** In addition to a common belief that suspensions were ineffective at changing behavior, all participants also expressed a general belief and feeling that the current responses to misbehavior within their school were inadequate, both at meeting the needs of students and teachers. First, many teachers described a strong concern for safety within their classrooms and school. John commented that there are “definitely concerns around safety” (John, ll. 246) and that “some teachers have been physically attacked by students” (John, ll. 238). Courtney commented that students were “extremely violent or inappropriate toward adults and kids” (Courtney, ll. 179-180) and “intentionally hurting other students or adults” (Courtney, ll. 206) to the point that “no

one can learn and I can't teach and it's not stopping" (Courtney, ll. 40-41). Danielle also commented that "kids don't feel safe and I can't teach" (Danielle, ll. 47). Finally, Courtney commented that the extreme dangerous behaviors of students were "traumatizing to the other kids in the class" (Courtney, ll. 209). Cindy reported that students in the school "are going to school in trauma everyday" (Cindy, ll. 275-276).

While safety was a primary concern to many of the participants, all participants also described their belief that there were limited options within their school to deal with or respond to student misbehavior. While commenting that suspensions were not effective, the participants also described a concern that the district's push to reduce or eliminate suspensions has caused their administrator to ignore certain behaviors. They described that reducing suspensions may be beneficial, but not without another plan or action instead. The teachers commented on this dynamic in the following statements:

"Kids are getting away with things that they should not...only because they're trying to limit the number of suspensions. So, I don't agree with that." (Shelly, ll. 302-303).

"I like the idea of reducing suspensions, but not at the cost of like not...um...addressing behavior" (Laurie, ll. 148-149).

"There needs to be like a redirection of behavior, as opposed to just like, we're just not going to suspend anyone. Like...um...an effort to like change behavior, as opposed to just changing the discipline around it" (Laurie, ll. 156-158).

"At a certain point, you need to do something about this" (Courtney, ll. 305-306).

"Principals took a hard line, and were like, ok, we are not going to suspend, we are not going to do this, and there was no data recorded" (Courtney, ll. 327-329).

"It's not effective if it's just like, oh, we've reduced suspensions just because we aren't suspending kids anymore" (Leslie, ll. 304-305).

"They just wanna keep this number low" (Laurie, ll. 153).

The participants also commented that the district's publicity around the reduction in suspensions may be misleading. Danielle commented, "People can be

creative....people can take numbers and pitch it however they want to” (Danielle, ll. 303-304), while Courtney stated, “Our behavior data from the past looks like nothing ever happens, which isn’t true” (Courtney, ll. 344-345). Leslie also described that “when you read the PR it’s like, oh, we’ve gone from this to this...” (Leslie, ll. 301), but that the reduction in suspensions does not necessarily indicate that it’s been effective because behavior has not changed.

While describing their displeasure with the perceived lack of response to behavior, teachers also commented that in the absence of suspension, there needs to be a set plan in place for how to respond to behavior. Many participants described a lack of plan within their school, and their general frustration with how behavior has been addressed. Laurie commented that the response to behavior is “not consistent for the kids is what I’ve seen” (Laurie, ll. 151), while Shelly commented, “It is kind of like a never ending cycle of, yeah, this kid is losing a lot of recesses, but the behavior isn’t changing” (Shelly, ll. 317-318). Courtney described a desire for a plan by saying, “We could reduce suspensions if we had an alternative, and like a good, structured way to set it up” (Courtney, ll. 283-284). Leslie said, “I feel like something needs to be done to help the child. The problem is, at schools, we just don’t have enough resources to deal with that, you know.” (Leslie, ll. 261-262). Cindy described the issue as follows:

I don’t think suspension is the answer, but you can’t just put a kid right back in the classroom without having some sort of a plan...a detailed, actionable, thoughtful plan. And I’ve seen that way too often...the kid had some calm down time, but then goes right back into the classroom and I don’t think that’s changed

a lot of their behavior or addressed the needs of the other kids in the classroom.  
(Cindy, ll. 242-247)

Participants not only shared their attitudes regarding the inadequacy of current responses, but also shared their ideas on ideal responses to behavior and components that they believed should be included when responding to student behavior. Many participants shared that students should continue to engage in academic work or activities, even while out of the classroom due to a behavior that occurred within the classroom. Shelly commented that students should be “doing work that they are missing in class” (Shelly, ll. 235), while Courtney stated that students should be “reflecting and do some school work, um...if that could be facilitated, I think that is the ideal” (Courtney, ll. 169). In addition to school work, Courtney explained a desire for more resources, or staff members, to help students in a more comprehensive way. She commented:

A full-time adult that was there to support the students, not only in like doing some school work but also um like resolving problems or making amends in some way for their problems um or any problem that they caused. Um, I feel like it would involve like counseling, which having a really effective counselor would be a big bonus. (Courtney, ll. 194-198)

Danielle also commented on the need for another staff member to be involved. She said, “There has to be an actual space and a human that’s available. And specific plan and pieces on what you should actually do...like maybe a counseling piece, and maybe a homework piece” (Danielle, 262-264). Courtney and Danielle both commented on the need for an effective counselor to help in behavior response situations. Danielle also stated, “It would also be nice to have a counselor on site, all the time. An effective

counselor” (Danielle, ll. 516). Cindy also stated, “We need a counselor, we need a therapist, we need a psychologist” (Cindy, ll. 257-258). Each of these individuals and others called out a counselor, a therapist, and other trained individuals as a need in their school for behavior responses. With a trained professional, the teachers believed that specific skills could be taught with the students who are experiencing behavior issues.

Some of their comments are included below:

“Work with them on problem solving skills and like regulating skills” (Laurie, ll. 504).

“Emotional support from a good therapist” (Danielle, ll. 387).

“A network or a group of people that are there to address the problem and you know...try and consider why...what’s going on, what happened, what are the repercussions, what will help them go down a different path?” (Cindy, ll. 376-378).

“Teach skills for deescalating or different ways you can respond when you are feeling a certain way” (Courtney, ll. 239-241).

“Get supported in their actions...supported in their behavior. To realize what they’re doing, and to talk about why it’s happening and what they can do to change it” (Danielle, 338-339).

In addition to their beliefs and attitudes on the need for trained support personnel to teach skills that may be lacking or to provide emotional and mental health support, the teachers also commented that students should work through a problem-solving process to understand the impact of their actions on others, and to make genuine amends to those who have been impacted. Danielle described that students should “understand what they did wrong, and know what to do right the next time, and if possible, make amends for it somehow” (Danielle, ll. 91-92). She described making amends as “something to acknowledge the fact that you made a mistake and try to help the person out who your behavior impacted” (Danielle, ll. 99-100). Similarly, Leslie commented that students should “understand...why it may not be appropriate, and who it affects, and how this isn’t

going to help them in their life” (Leslie, ll. 150-151). Laurie described how the amends process must occur in a genuine way and that conflict needs to “be resolved thoroughly, not just like forcing them to apologize to each other” (Laurie, ll. 578).

Finally, some participants also described a belief in engagement and involvement with students’ parents in the response to behavior. Shelly said, “Relationships with families...it is critical” (Shelly, ll. 319) and later added that in responding to behavior “the parents need to be involved as well” (Shelly, ll. 455). Cindy said that in her ideal response to behavior there would be an “open circle of communication that includes the student” (Cindy, ll. 381) and “a really intentional link with the parent” (Cindy, ll. 589).

**Function of behavior.** Many of the participants shared a belief that student misbehavior, especially the extreme behaviors, indicated a sign of a greater concern or issue. The participants explained a need to understand what the function of the behavior was, and why the student was displaying it. Many shared a common belief that students misbehaved for a reason, and that addressing the underlying issue would be a key to responding to the behavior. Shelly shared, “Usually the root of behavior isn’t because they just want to do it. There’s usually an underlying reason” (Shelly, ll. 59-60). Similarly, Danielle commented, “Behavior is usually trying to solve something else” (Danielle, ll. 371). They both mentioned the need to dig deeper into a child to understand the behavior. Shelly said, “There’s some deeper issues going on if that’s happening” (Shelly, ll. 224), while Danielle explained a need for “trying to dig deeper into this person and their behaviors” (Danielle, ll. 279-280). Courtney and Cindy also commented on the higher level of need these students have. Cindy described it as, “Wow. This is something big going on” (Cindy, ll. 257), while Courtney said, “There is more going on

with a kid usually that needs that higher level of support than we can provide” (Courtney, ll. 198-199).

Participants also commented on the impact of outside events on students’ behavior while at school. Shelly said, “Sometimes there is major things that happen at home that kinda give a little bit more validity to, oh, this is why they are acting out” (Shelly, ll. 108-109). John shared, “A lot of people that get suspended are kids...are people that need to be in school...and it’s not just a school thing that they are acting out against” (John, ll. 170-171). To solve this, Shelly and John explained a need for the student to feel cared for and wanted. John explained, “They just like want to see someone care about them...and so...they act out...in over the top ways that lead to that” (John, ll. 188-189), while Shelly commented that teachers need to “make them feel wanted cause something’s happening where they are not feeling wanted somewhere else” (Shelly, ll. 177-178).

The absence of comments about this is also an important result. None of the teachers commented on student misbehavior as a choice, or as a purposeful decision to not follow the school expectations.

## **Leadership**

**Behavior support.** Most of the participants indicated a desire for administrators to provide support in behaviors of students once they reached a certain level. The participants indicated a belief that administrators should engage with a student and their behavior when they became very challenging. John commented that the administrator should help with “the more extreme behaviors and misbehaviors in class” (John, ll. 104-105), while Courtney commented that the administrator should step in when it is “beyond

what the teacher can do in that moment” (Courtney, ll. 123). Leslie also explained that an administrator’s role in student behavior is to respond to the more extreme behaviors. She stated, “I feel like an administrator should get involved when it’s just really out of control and disrupting the learning of everyone else” (Leslie, ll. 176-177). Similarly, Danielle and Shelly both commented that the administrator’s role in behavior should be to remove a student from the classroom when their behavior is beyond what the classroom teacher can handle in the moment. Shelly said the administrators “need to either remove that child and figure it out, or work on a plan with a higher level” (Shelly, ll. 141-142), and Danielle shared that the administrator should “separate the child who is having destructive behavior from the rest of the kids” (Danielle, ll. 207).

In addition to responding in moments of challenging behavior and removing a student, the teachers also explained a belief that the administrators should work with the teachers as a team, and should act as a brainstorming partner to develop a behavior plan or plan for support. John explained that he believes it would be helpful to have “suggestions from the administrator on ways to like help the student in the classroom and how to work with them” (John, ll. 115-116). Danielle also shared this belief as she spoke about how an administrator should work to support a teacher. She stated that an administrator should “be able to recognize what the students’ behavior is...maybe coming up with alternatives to try and support them...but doing it in a way that supports the teacher, not doing it at cross purposes with the teacher” (Danielle, ll. 163-165). Shelly also spoke to the importance of working together as a team when she commented that “working together will be a key ingredient for success” (Shelly, ll. 202). Cindy also talked about the importance of an administrator building a plan with the teacher for the



student's success in the classroom. She said an administrator should "like, not just like drop the ball, but like, come back with some sort of a suggested plan" (Cindy, ll. 209-210).

In working together as a team, the participants also explained that clear communication between the administrator and the teachers was important in responding to behavior. Danielle said that she would like the administrator to "let you know what they did with the child" (Danielle, ll. 199) after they have responded to a behavior. John also described a desire for "open communication from the administrator" (John, ll. 121-122), both in terms of communicating what responses were taken, but also in having a clear understanding of the plan for behaviors within the school. Laurie also touched on this piece of clarity in communication regarding the overall behavior plan for the school. She commented that she would like "more communication on what supports I am able to get for each kid" (Laurie, ll. 190). Laurie described a lack of clarity on what behavioral supports were available and how to access them. Her desire for clear communication from the administrator spoke to more systemic communication, in addition to communication about individual students.

Finally, the participants also spoke about a feeling of frustration and a belief that while they would like to be supported in these challenging behaviors by administration, they were not. Danielle shared that she had felt very little support from administration, and when she had tried to seek help in the past, it had made her situation worse. She shared, "I wasn't really getting any support, it just made it harder" (Danielle, ll. 178). She later stated, "I feel like a lot of time teachers feel the behaviors don't get supported...they just get minimized" (Danielle, ll. 191-192). Cindy also repeatedly

described the belief that behaviors were minimized and teachers were not receiving the support they needed from administration, especially for the most challenging behaviors. She described the burden this placed on teachers and the impact it had. Her comments are included below:

I see that kind of thing pushed on a lot, where I can think of the teachers and many examples where it's like, that was an enormous problem all year long and nothing ever really changed. It was all on the teacher's shoulders. So, support and follow through. Actionable support. (Cindy, ll. 218-221).

What I don't see teachers getting support with, which I think is the most overwhelmingly, burdensome, difficult, challenging, energy sucking thing, are those high needs kids. And, it's always...well, that's tabled for later. (Cindy, ll. 320-322).

It just wears them down...it's a big energy suck. And I see that...and I feel like I work with some of the best educators I could even imagine, devoted, hard-working, and thoughtful...and they're completely exhausted...by what's going on in their classrooms and the lack of support. (Cindy, ll. 609-611).

**Consistency.** Within supporting teachers with student behavior needs, the participants repeatedly commented on the need for consistency and follow-through from administration. Teachers reported feeling a lack of consistency, both in a general behavior response plan and in how behaviors were handled once they were responded to. Some participants also commented on a lack of consistency in how specific teachers or situations were treated. Laurie remarked that in her opinion the administrator was

“favoring certain teachers or favoring classrooms” (Laurie, ll. 429) and she believed that was detrimental to the success of changing misbehavior throughout the school. She explained that without consistency across the school, students will be unsure of the plan or the repercussions, as it was potentially different in various settings. She also added that she would like to see an improvement in the administrator’s “consistency on actually responding to calls or responding to issues...I think that’s really important. Um...but then also their consistency in what their response is, is really important” (Laurie, ll. 438-440). Laurie described that sometimes behavior was responded to, but in other times the response was very different or did not occur at all. Courtney also described this lack of consistency, and how it had impacted the relationship between staff members and the administrator. She explained, “It does cause a rift between teachers and administration when administration is like doing something that they aren’t explaining to the teachers” (Courtney, ll. 523-524). Courtney believed that the administrators should be clear on their plan and response, and be consistent in this throughout the school.

Similar to consistency, participants also shared a belief that follow-through was highly needed from administration. Follow-through was commented on both in responding to challenging behavior and plans put into place, but also on initiatives and trainings for the school. Leslie commented that “there’s no real follow-up” (Leslie, ll. 384) for when behaviors occur. She also described a lack of follow-through when implementing new training or learning for teachers. Leslie commented that sometimes the material the administrator presented or provided was worthwhile, but “she needs to do a better job at following up” (Leslie, ll. 551). Cindy also commented on this pattern. She said, “I think the follow through kills us a lot of times” (Cindy, ll. 630) and explained that

while administrators may be well-intentioned or had good ideas, the lack of follow-through prevented anything successful from happening. Cindy also described her beliefs below:

Go to and say this is an issue, or a concern I am having, and not only do I need to talk about it, I need to problem solve, I need support, I need uh...I need follow through. I feel like that's what's been lacking from every administrator I've worked under...is the follow through. (Cindy, ll. 195-198)

**Trust.** In speaking about the administration and their role with student behavior and discipline, most of the participants commented on a desire for trust between the administrator and teachers. This trust was described as something that had been lacking, and that was frustrating for many teachers. Trust was described as belief in teachers when they were expressing a need, and validating their need or concern. Courtney described a desire that administrators “will trust my judgement that like I need them, it's beyond what I can deal with in my classroom at that moment” (Courtney, ll. 89-90). Courtney elaborated that she had felt a lack of trust, and that her concerns or requests for help had been ignored or minimized. She added that this led to a pattern where “people wouldn't call for help because they'd just get shut down” (Courtney, ll. 573). Danielle also shared in this feeling of doubt and mistrust between teachers and administration. She explained that administrators need to “validate the teacher's experience and the student's experience” (Danielle, ll. 186) in the moments of challenge, rather than brush it off or minimize it. Courtney also remarked that she thinks it would be important for administrators to “acknowledge that teachers do deal with a lot of the minor behaviors” (Courtney, ll. 355-356) and to step in and support when they ask for help. Courtney

alluded to teachers deserving credit and recognition for the level of support they provided to students, and a frustration that administrators had not recognized this.

Both Cindy and Shelly described their need for help from an administrator for severe challenges or behaviors, and their feelings of being disregarded. Cindy said that she would like to be able to go to an administrator to say “I need some support here to see me through this crisis, this difficult situation,” yet commented that she had “not had that” (Cindy, ll. 200-201). She explained, “I’ve never had great success in feeling completely backed by any administrator with any one behavior problem” (Cindy, ll. 183-184) and added, “I feel like it gets pushed...pushed off, pushed back” (Cindy, ll. 215-216). To Cindy, a veteran teacher, she commented that when she requested help from an administrator, it was at a point that she truly did not know how to handle a situation; yet, she felt as though her requests for help were not taken seriously. Shelly also reflected on the need for trust between teachers and administrators, and for a teacher’s request for help to be considered and responded to. She commented:

But really, just being supportive of teachers and believing...I think an important thing they can do is, unless they are in the classroom, take the teacher’s word for the behavior. No teacher is just making up a behavior to get a kid out of their classroom...I don’t think. That’s my personal thing. Like, if I go to an administrator, it means it’s a real problem and I need help. (Shelly, ll. 195-199)

### **Implementation Needs**

The participants described a variety of different needs that would be required for restorative justice to be successfully implemented within their school. These needs included professional development, a clear plan, and the buy-in from all staff members.

**Professional development.** All participants explained a need for professional development for all staff members on restorative justice. The responses had many similarities, as most individuals commented on the need to read books or articles, watch videos, and attend training sessions. John commented that he would need “readings and stuff about it...videos...like ways to learn about it” (John, ll. 295) to learn more. Almost all participants commented that they have received a book about carrots and sticks, which had been given to them by the school principal as a book about restorative justice. However, they also all explained that almost no one had read from it, as there had been no expectation to and no follow-up. They each agreed that reading a book would be helpful in their training, but they would like it to be required for all staff members, rather than an optional read. Cindy commented, “Just giving someone a book doesn’t make anything happen” (Cindy, ll. 437), while Leslie explained, “We should be held accountable for reading it and then we should have discussions and then we should think about how are we going to make this happen at our school” (Leslie, ll. 448-449).

Participants shared a common idea of having training sessions on restorative justice as a whole staff. As part of this training, participants commented on their need to see restorative justice in action and what it looks like in a school setting. Shelly described that she needed “a lot more background knowledge...but not just um read a book on it. Like, I need person to person like interaction on it...show me what it looks like” (Shelly, ll. 401-402). She later added, “I need to see it in action to see what it looks like before I could really fully implement...” (Shelly, ll. 406). Cindy shared that it would be important to have “some sort of formal training...a professional person coming in” (Cindy, ll. 500-501). Courtney also commented that they would need “someone who is

really skilled to facilitate it” (Courtney, ll. 452). It was noted by several individuals that the training should be led by a professional individual, or someone with a strong background in restorative justice, rather than the school administration. In addition, Courtney, Leslie, and Cindy all commented on their belief in the lack of knowledge that the administrator had around restorative justice. Courtney reflected, “It maybe feels like our administrator doesn’t have a full understanding of it” (Courtney, ll. 499), while Leslie commented, “I don’t think she knows how to make it happen at the school” (Leslie, ll. 531-532). Cindy also described a belief that the administrator was less knowledgeable on the topic. She said, “The principal...that maybe...just doesn’t know the right thing to do or doesn’t have the...or utilize the resources available to them” (Cindy, ll. 254-255).

Some participants also described the need for the training to be ongoing, rather than a one-time or start-of-year session. Courtney said that staff members would need “training and modeling and practicing...for like a couple of years” (Courtney, ll. 589). Leslie also explained that training and practicing should be an ongoing cycle as she described the ideal learning and implementation structure. She commented that it was important to have “this whole cycle of learning, practice, come back, revise, discuss, revise, try again” (Leslie, ll. 460-461). In addition to the need for the training to be ongoing, participants also remarked on their desire for the training to be differentiated, or at least to provide examples and learning opportunities from the different grade levels or ages. John said that it would be helpful to “show that things look different at different ages...at different age groups” (John, ll. 362), and Laurie reflected that it would be helpful for her personally to see and know “where it has been used in the same grade level as I am in” (Laurie, ll. 370). John and Laurie, both first year teachers, described how in many

trainings they had a hard time applying it to their grade level, and believed they would need specific examples of restorative justice within their primary grades. Additionally, Danielle and Cindy, two veteran teachers, also described this same need. Danielle commented that she would need to know “how we expect it to be used...like in the various grade levels” (Danielle, ll. 458) and Cindy noted a need for an “understanding of restorative justice and how it’s implemented with different age groups and different noticeable behaviors” (Cindy, ll. 514-515).

**Clear plan.** Each of the participants spoke about their belief in the need for a very clear plan if the school was to move forward with restorative justice. Their comments included reflection that currently the school lacked a clear plan for behavior, and the need that many staff members had expressed for clarity around the plan and the systems in place. According to many participants, the first step in a clear plan was the need for a strong, unified definition of what restorative justice is, and how it is used within the school. Participants also expressed frustration that the term restorative justice had been used in the school by the administrators, but that staff had been confused by what was meant by it. Below are the comments of several participants regarding the need for a consistent definition and the frustration of the term being used without a clear understanding:

“Consistent definition of what restorative justice is” (Danielle, ll. 440).

“Right now, it’s just words that we use because we don’t actually have a definition” (Danielle, ll. 449-450).

“She never really defined it, so a lot of staff members felt frustrated” (Cindy, ll. 418).

“It’s a word that gets thrown around my building a lot, but I’ve never really learned a lot about it” (Laurie, ll. 223-224).



“I think the word restorative justice is thrown around. The word restorative practices is thrown around. They have us read these books. But then there’s no follow up” (Leslie, ll. 402-404).

“We don’t do this because it’s not restorative justice, but then there is no defined definition of what restorative justice was” (Courtney, ll. 425-426).

“It was just like, that’s not restorative justice. And everyone said, well, I guess we don’t know what restorative justice is” (Courtney, ll. 428-429).

Beyond the described need for a clear definition of restorative justice, the teachers also commented on the need for a system and structure in place school-wide. Danielle said the school would need “clear systems that everyone knows to access” (Danielle, ll. 478), while Cindy shared that “a plan needs to be in place to help everybody understand what it is, what it looks like, who the support is for it” (Cindy, ll. 569-570). Similarly, Shelly also commented “everyone needs to be aware of it and what it looks like and what the expectations are” (Shelly, ll. 413-414). Each of the participants commented on this need for a plan that everyone understands, and systems in place for people to access for help or support.

In addition to the building of structures and a system, participants commented on the need for a multi-year plan and focus. Courtney explained that in order for restorative justice to work or be effective, it would need to be a “full building focus for a couple of years” (Courtney, ll. 586). Leslie also shared the belief that the plan in place should go beyond one year when she reflected that the school would need “not just a year long, a several years long plan” (Leslie, ll. 451-452). Leslie continued in her explanation that a system has to be built and planned before implementation begins. Her comments are included below:

“it’s not just a matter of telling the PBIS team, ok, this is what we are doing. Or telling the leadership team. And no training.” (Leslie, ll. 519-520)

“just using the words is not going to be helpful. You have to have...you have to do readings, have discussions, have buy in...and then come up with a good plan for setting this into place” (Leslie, ll. 507-509)

Finally, as part of the built plan and system, participants also described their desire for ongoing evaluation of the plan and systems to ensure it is working and to adjust as needed. Shelly commented that the staff should be “seeing what’s working, what isn’t” (Shelly, ll. 418), while John shared that the plan should include “ongoing evaluation of it and seeing if things are working or not” (John, ll. 350-351). Cindy also shared a desire to assess how things are going and to check in with others on the plan and implementation. She shared the need for people to be “intentional and open...we need to meet consistently to talk about what this is” (Cindy, ll. 559-561). In addition to staff evaluation of the plan and implementation, Shelly also shared the need to have not only evaluation of the effectiveness, but also an assessment of both students and staff members’ attitudes about it. She described that she thinks it would be important to ask, “How do kids feel? I would say doing surveys. How are the kids attitudes toward it? How are the staff’s attitudes toward it?” (Shelly, ll. 446-447). Shelly viewed effectiveness here not only as a potential decrease in student misbehavior or alignment with the implementation plan, but also how individuals felt about it.

**Buy-in.** The final belief that participants shared would be important to implementation of restorative justice in their school was the buy-in and aligned belief systems of all staff members. Along with the complete buy-in from staff, participants also commented on consistency across the school building. Laurie and Shelly both explained their belief that restorative justice required a certain type of belief system or frame of mind, and that some individuals may not share the same frame of mind needed for successful implementation. Shelly stated the importance of all staff members “having

the knowledge of what it is and what it entails and the willingness to...implement...or to have that frame of mind” (Shelly, ll. 373-374). She explained her thoughts on frame of mind by saying that there are some individuals who may have a more authoritarian perspective on student behavior. These individuals would perhaps not buy into or believe in restorative justice, as they may hold on to their previous beliefs of strict consequences. She commented on this issue and how to help solve it in saying, “I feel like there are people in the world that are just very old school, and don’t change. So um...help them see the benefits of it and why it would be important to try” (Shelly, ll. 394-395).

Similarly, Laurie also described the “need for similar mindsets” (Laurie, ll. 248) among all staff members in order for implementation of restorative justice to be effective. She explained that her frame of mind around behavior seemed aligned with the philosophy of restorative justice, but that others may not share this attitude. She explained a contrary attitude or belief as follows:

Well, just kick them out. They shouldn’t be in your school. You shouldn’t let them be in your class. So that’s like a very polar opposite mindset...it’s like, well, they hit a kid, so they need to be kicked out of that school. That would be a mindset that I would definitely not identify with. (Laurie, ll. 281-284)

Others also described this need for alignment in belief systems and attitudes before implementation. Courtney commented that for implementation to be successful “you have to have like everyone on board” (Courtney, ll. 506). She said this alignment is so important in that if it does not exist, even the best plans are “not going to matter” (Courtney, ll. 504-505). Laurie shared that “open discussion is really needed” (Laurie, ll. 498-499) for the staff to come together and share their beliefs openly and work toward a

common belief system. Once a common, shared attitude exists, the participants reiterated the need for consistency across the school. Below are comments from multiple participants regarding their belief in the importance of consistency:

“Consistency...so the teachers feel supported and the kids are supported” (Danielle, ll. 481).

“Level of consistency with kids throughout the building” (Laurie, ll. 416).

“You have like all of the information at the start so you like know what it is and are in agreement of what it is” (John, ll. 298-300).

“Get everyone on the same page...we especially need classified staff and certificated staff to be on the same page” (Courtney, ll. 601-602).

“Everyone has an understanding and everyone knows what it is going forward” (Cindy, ll. 479).

John and Danielle also commented on their belief in the need to involve families as well. John shared that it would be important to “send articles to families” and to “reach out to families and do workshops or something” (John, ll. 282-283) to help them understand the shift in discipline practice and the philosophy behind restorative justice. Danielle summed up her view on the need for parent involvement as follows:

Ideally, I would love to see parent education as part of the process. I feel that parents can have...a tendency to want to see concrete punishment of a child who does something wrong to their child. I think having them understand the shift would be important to success. If they don’t believe in something...chances are good their child won’t believe in it either. (Danielle, ll. 522-525)

## **Summary**

This study investigated seven participants’ attitudes regarding student behavior and discipline in an elementary school. Each participant was a teacher at the same public elementary school in the greater Seattle area. The participants’ descriptions and

explanations revealed five themes important to understanding student behavior and responses: a) behavior prevention, b) discipline attitudes, c) behavior response attitudes, d) leadership, and e) implementation needs.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

#### **Discussion**

This study investigated the attitudes of elementary school teachers regarding student behavior, discipline, suspension, and the implementation of restorative justice practices. The teachers interviewed in this study were public school teachers at the same K-6th grade elementary school in the greater Seattle area. The method of qualitative case study research was utilized for this study. Interviews occurred during the months of December 2017 and January 2018, and each interview lasted approximately sixty minutes. Six participants were female, and one participant was male. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 54 years of age, and their number of years of teaching experience ranged from one to twenty years of teaching experience.

This study aimed to address two research questions. The first question was to determine what themes existed within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding student behavior and the use of exclusionary discipline to address student misbehavior. The second question was to determine what themes existed within elementary school teachers' attitudes regarding the use of restorative justice as an alternative to exclusionary discipline, and how might these themes provide insight for an administrator seeking to implement restorative justice practices within their school. Through analysis of the interview transcripts, five main themes emerged from these interviews that address both research questions. These include a) behavior prevention, b) discipline attitudes, c) behavior response attitudes, d) leadership, and e) implementation needs. Each of these

themes and their relation to the two research questions will be discussed throughout this chapter.

Each of the participants shared insight into their beliefs regarding prevention of student misbehavior, and shared similar thoughts on the most effective prevention strategies. Of these, teachers explained that the building of relationships with students was critical in managing student behavior. In their explanations, teachers commented that if a teacher does not build a relationship with a student, it is likely that the student will not care or feel inclined to behave, as they do not connect with the teacher. Similar to building relationships with individual students, participants also shared that building a classroom community and a culture of team work was important in how they viewed behavior prevention. Teachers described this process as important in building trust between teachers and students and among students themselves.

In another element of behavior prevention, the teachers also spoke about the need for clear expectations for students in terms of their behavior. The participants reiterated that students needed to know what was expected of them, and that it was the role of the teacher to make these expectations clear, and to consistently remind and enforce them. These two types of behavior prevention, building relationships and community, and providing and enforcing clear expectations, mirror the findings of Vaandering's (2014) research on restorative justice and teachers' pedagogies of discipline. Vaandering (2014) found that teachers tended to have a pedagogy of discipline that was either an engagement pedagogy or a control pedagogy. She found that teachers aligned with an engagement pedagogy "nurture relationship-based cultures" and those with a control pedagogy "reinforce punitive, managerial structures" (Vaandering, 2014, p. 71). Within

this study, teachers displayed attitudes that reflected elements of both the control pedagogy, with the reiteration of the need for strong expectations and enforcement of those expectations, as well as the engagement pedagogy, with the belief in building relationships and classroom community. However, in analyzing teachers' responses, those with generally more years of teaching experience provided responses more in line with the engagement pedagogy, while teachers with less years of teaching experience were more aligned with a control pedagogy. The teachers with greater than ten years of teaching experience spent more time describing the importance not only of individual relationships with students, but in building a very strong classroom community and team. They placed emphasis on class meetings, reflections with the class as a whole, and relating behavior needs or challenges to the impact it had on the classroom culture. Teachers with less than ten years' teaching experience shared responses that, while still commenting on the need for relationships, were more centered on expectations, controlling student behavior, and managing their response when rules were broken. In addition, the participants with more than ten years of teaching experience also commented that their approach to behavior and discipline has changed over their teaching career, and with more experience and perspective, they believe in the importance of relationships and community building even more.

In relating participants' responses to Vaandering's (2014) research, all participants shared some element of the engagement pedagogy of discipline, with a description of relationships and building trust with students. While the teachers with less teaching experience still commented on some control elements, they also paired their thoughts with a general dissatisfaction of results from these structures. They shared



anecdotal remarks that challenging students in which they had the most success with were those in which they had built a relationship with. Participants' foundational belief in relationships and engagement with students is an important element to consider when implementing restorative justice practices, and the participants in this study seemed to hold this viewpoint with varying degrees of strength.

The purpose of discipline and managing student behavior was ascertained from participants' responses throughout the interviews. In describing their attitudes about the purpose of discipline and managing student behavior, all participants shared a common thread with the desire to change student behavior, and ultimately, ensure successful outcomes for students. When asked what the goal of student discipline was, all of the teachers described a need for modifying and changing undesirable or inappropriate behavior into something more productive and socially acceptable. Some teachers commented that discipline was important for eliminating disruptive activities or misbehaviors in order to ensure the best learning environment for all students. They described the need for students to display appropriate behavior so they could most effectively teach and all students could effectively learn. Their descriptions of discipline included a desire for students to modify their behavior to the classroom and school norms, and limited the role of discipline to success within the classroom and school in the academic setting.

Other participants extended this response and added that in addition to eliminating misbehavior and improving the learning environment, the purpose of discipline or responding to student behavior was to help mold young humans into successful citizens of the world. They viewed student discipline as a critical opportunity to teach students

the skills and behaviors they need to succeed in life. These teachers described a greater purpose in student discipline, and commented on the need to utilize discipline moments as opportunities for individual growth and learning, and their descriptions focused on the whole individual in multiple life settings, not just within the school setting. Teachers commented on the need for students to learn socially acceptable behaviors and skills in the present that would impact them in their future careers and relationships. Participants commented that the school setting was a microcosm of the world, and viewed their role in responding to student behavior as important in impacting the future trajectories of their students and the communities in which they live.

In addition to repeated comments about behavior change and the need to impact individual growth, the teachers also commented on restorative justice as a possible discipline response. Only one teacher described a solid understanding of restorative justice practices within a classroom or school and her confidence in it and knowledge of it. The other six participants all described some understanding of it, but also shared a desire to learn more about it and how it is implemented within a school setting. However, despite not feeling entirely knowledgeable about it, every participant commented positively about it, and shared an attitude that restorative justice practices would be beneficial for student success. Each participant shared that they believed it to be a positive and proactive idea for responding to behavior and for helping students grow and learn in a productive way. The teachers expressed curiosity, a desire to learn more, and a belief that restorative responses could be a powerful tool to impact student behavior and ultimately, the future success of all students.

While analyzing the comments and descriptions participants provided in their interviews provides important themes and commonalities, it is also informative to analyze what was not said in the interviews. None of the teachers commented about discipline in terms of punishment or reparations for inappropriate behavior. The teachers did not share a belief in the need for students to owe something or feel punished for misbehaving. Many even commented that traditional consequences, like owing a recess or losing a privilege, were not effective means to address misbehavior. The teachers shared a stance on wanting students to learn from the behaviors, and to understand the impact of their behaviors on themselves and their classroom community.

Each of the participants expressed a strong opinion and attitude that current responses to misbehavior were largely ineffective. When directly asked about their attitudes and beliefs about suspension as a form of student discipline, every participant shared a common belief that suspension was largely ineffective at changing behavior. In addition, some participants commented not only on its ineffectiveness, but also described it as having a negative impact on many students. Researchers have indicated that while traditional discipline and exclusionary practices are common practice, these practices not only do little to deter subsequent misbehavior, they also induce harmful risks on students who receive them (Fabelo et al., 2011; Gregory, Morrison, et al., 2016; Morris & Perry, 2016; Pane et al., 2014). The teachers in this study shared a belief aligned to this research, as they commented that students who are suspended often spend their time away from school engaged in unproductive, and even dangerous, activities. Many teachers described students spending their time during suspension at home playing videogames or getting into trouble in the community. They also shared that when

students return from a suspension, little has changed about their overall behavior. Finally, teachers also explained that when students are suspended, they are not engaged in any learning or academic activities. They shared a frustration that students are out of the classroom and miss critical learning when they are suspended. This is closely related to Mullet's (2014) findings that when students are excluded from the classroom or school, they miss critical academic instruction, making it easy to fall behind and struggle with content.

Teachers also shared a general frustration with the structure of in-school suspensions within their school. In describing their thoughts around suspension, many participants commented that in-school suspension was also largely ineffective. They described the process as students being babysat by office staff, playing unsupervised, and learning little from the incident that resulted in the suspension in the first place. Teachers expressed frustration that students who had recently displayed violent or destructive behavior in their classroom were later observed playing in the office, with little discussion around how to change their behavior moving forward.

Participants were also asked to comment on their thoughts regarding their district's push for eliminating or reducing suspensions. Every participant expressed a belief that reducing suspensions was a positive goal to work toward, and their belief that ultimately suspensions were not effective at changing behavior or helping students succeed. However, each participant also coupled this response with expressing a need for some type of response to misbehavior. The teachers explained that while they believed eliminating suspensions was positive, they felt that this push subsequently caused misbehavior to be unaddressed completely. Teachers expressed concern that behaviors

were not being addressed, and that this led to more severe behaviors and a high concern for safety in the classroom. Some participants even commented that while they did not agree with suspension and believed it to be ineffective, they thought it was the only option to ensure student and staff safety at times. They described a need for alternative responses to misbehavior that would address the behavior and allow students to learn and grow from the situation. They believed this to be lacking, and that reducing suspensions without an alternative in place was an issue that needed to be addressed. A few teachers also commented that the district was communicating a perception that the reduction in suspensions was effective, but personally believed that it would only be effective if behavior was changing. They commented that they do not believe this to be the case, and simply not suspending students does not lead to behavior change.

Beyond suspensions, the participants also commented on an overall dissatisfaction with current responses to behavior. Multiple teachers described escalated student behavior as a safety concern, and included descriptions of teachers and students being physically assaulted or attacked by students with behavior challenges. Many commented on violent behaviors exhibited by students, and the lack of a process or system to change or respond effectively to these behaviors. The teachers lamented that the cycle seems to continue, as students who are violent or misbehave continue to do so with little change. Part of their discussion also included a desire for more services and responses for students, and a belief that students who were of most concern needed additional help other than what was currently provided at the school. They expressed hope for counseling and mental health services, and felt that the extreme behaviors they experienced were due to the students needing more than what they as teachers or a school

could currently provide. Teachers also described a desire for a stronger system or process to respond to behavior, with a structure and plan in place to address the needs of students. The participants commented that from what they knew about restorative justice, it appeared as a possible alternative that could more adequately address the needs of students and guide them through a process of reflection, amends, and learning about their behavior and its impact, ultimately helping to shape behavior changes or modifications.

A component that was consistently brought up by each participant was the role of leadership and administration in behavior responses and student discipline. Participants shared similar beliefs about the role of administrators in student behavior and discipline; however, the two most veteran teachers differed slightly in their attitudes compared to the other teachers in the study. Most of the participants commented that they believed administrators should step in to support teachers and students when behavior was severe, and that administration should intervene at certain points. These teachers expressed their belief that teachers should manage student behavior and discipline within their classroom until it reached a certain point, and then the administrator should intervene. They each described this threshold as once a student became physically destructive and violent, either toward other students, the teacher, or property. The two most veteran teachers slightly differed in this belief, and described more ownership on the teacher for all behavior, even the more serious behavior described by other teachers. They also described greater personal responsibility for preventing misbehavior within their classroom, and explained a belief that it was the teacher's responsibility to build the community and prevent misbehavior from occurring in the first place.

All of the participants expressed a general dissatisfaction with their current administrator in terms of response to student behavior and specific patterns that they perceived as frustrating from their leadership. Each participant described frustration regarding the perceived lack of consistency and follow-through from administration, and some commented on a belief that administration had shown favoritism to certain teachers in the school. They commented on a lack of trust between administrators and teachers, and the need for rebuilding of trust in order to work together for student success. Some described feeling a lack of support from administration and a perceived belief that even when they asked for help, it was not followed up on. Many participants also commented on their belief that the administrator was lacking skills and knowledge in the area of student behavior and discipline, and often did not fully understand practices that she commented on or desired staff to utilize. Every participant commented that the administrator had brought up the term restorative practice and had openly stated her belief in it and desire for the school to utilize it; however, each participant also commented that they did not believe the administrator had a full understanding of restorative practices and was likely inadequate in her delivery of information regarding it. Reimer (2011) found that successful implementation of restorative practices requires strong administrative leadership. The current perception of teachers in this study does not align with a strong belief in their administrative leadership in this area, and would likely need to be addressed moving forward.

In regards to restorative justice, each of the participants described a positive attitude toward it, but also recounted different needs or requirements they believed would need to be in place in order for it to be successfully implemented. Bevington (2015)

found that successful implementation of restorative practices required congruent values, practices, and outcomes among individuals within the school community, and every participant in this study commented on the need for alignment across all staff members. They shared a belief that in order for restorative practices to be successfully implemented, every staff member needed to share not only a common belief in the practices, but also a consistent definition in restorative practices and their specific role in it. Reimer (2011) also concluded that a consistent definition was important for success. Participants in this study expressed current frustration over not having a clear definition or understanding of restorative practices, yet hearing the term being used by administration.

Another need that the participants described was for strong professional development and training, led by a professional in restorative practices. They described a desire for this training to be frontloaded, and ongoing through the first few years on implementation. Part of this training included descriptions about training a core group of teachers or staff members throughout the school that could also serve as leaders in restorative practices throughout the building. Some participants also commented on the need for the training and practice to be differentiated based on grade and age levels. Bevington's (2015) findings included similar needs, as staff indicated that implementation is most effective if there is a core of highly skilled staff, a shared bank of resources and ideas for staff to draw upon, and professional development focused on emotional intelligence. The participants in this study also described a need for a clear plan of implementation to be in place before the school officially adopts restorative practices within their building. They reported the importance of a plan, including a



multi-year plan, that detailed the processes, systems, and steps the school would utilize. The teachers believed this to be of critical importance for every staff member to be informed and implementing the same practices throughout the school. Reimer's (2011) study shared this finding, as teachers reported a need for a strong system with structures and training in place for staff members.

Finally, teachers in the study also reported the need for buy-in across all staff members, and also in the parent and family community. Many participants commented that implementing restorative practices would require a shift in attitudes and practice for some staff members, and stated their belief in the importance of all staff members, both certificated and classified, to be in agreement on not only the procedures, but also the philosophy behind restorative practices. Participants described the need for buy-in from staff members, and the requirement for open conversations with those who may not be in alignment with the values of restorative justice. Vaandering (2014) suggested that implementation should include a critical reflection on core values of staff members and how they align with the principles and values of restorative practices, which is similar to the comments made by some participants in this study.

### **Limitations**

This study only gained insight from teachers within one elementary school in a public district in the greater Seattle area. Teachers' attitudes may highly differ in other districts locally or around the country. Generalizations cannot be drawn from this study; however, the study does provide insight that others can draw on. This study included six female participants and one male participant and as such it is difficult to make any conclusions about the attitudes of male teachers with only one representative.

Additionally, all of the participants in this study were white. Further research in this area should aim to include more male and minority participants to seek an understanding of their perspectives on the issue.

Another limitation is that this study required voluntary participation. As such, individuals that volunteered for an interview may have strong opinions regarding the topic and may not have provided a representative sample of teachers' attitudes within this population. As a case study, seven participants meet the minimum criteria for sample size (Creswell, 2016).

### **Implications for Practice**

The participants in this study were all public school teachers from one K-6th grade elementary school in the greater Seattle area. This study aimed to describe the attitudes of teachers regarding student behavior, discipline, suspensions, and the implementation of restorative justice. Five themes were identified including a) behavior prevention, b) discipline attitudes, c) behavior response attitudes, d) leadership, and e) implementation needs. Implications of these findings are included below. These implications may apply to elementary through high school institutions, both in the public and private sector, who are aiming to implement restorative practices within their school.

The first implication of this study is that adopting or implementing restorative justice practices within a school building is a process that takes time and forethought. The decision to implement restorative practices cannot be decided on a whim, or without any input from the school staff or greater community. Research in restorative justice implementation also indicates this as a strong need. Vaandering (2014) found that the implementation of restorative practices must address the structural, personal, and

professional influences and beliefs of educators, while Bevington (2015) indicated an importance in having congruent values, practices, and outcomes among individuals within the school community. Participants in this study commented that they had heard the term restorative justice “thrown around” in their school, and had been frustrated by this because it had never come from a whole group discussion around discipline or plans moving forward. An administrator seeking to implement restorative justice should first consult the school staff, both to understand their beliefs and opinions, but also to be transparent in the goals for the school and the decisions to be made moving forward.

One finding from the study is that all participants commented in support of the ideas of restorative justice and were curious to learn more and implement it within their school; however, their hesitation came from a feeling of unknown and confusion in current discipline procedures within the school. An implication from this finding for administrators is that it is critical to have a strong plan in place for implementing restorative practices. This plan should be a multi-year plan, and detail what components the school will adopt each year, specific roles of every staff member, and training to support implementation. It is important to have clarity regarding the plan, how teachers can learn more and access support, and the direction in which the school is moving toward. This plan should also consist of a pre-plan, with set objectives and training in place prior to whole-school implementation. Along with this plan, a specific training model and plan should also be in place. This would include frontload training and background knowledge for all staff members, as well as an ongoing training plan that is consistent throughout the first few years of implementation. This implication is similar to the findings of previous restorative justice implementation research. Reimer (2011)

indicated that one component of successful implementation was the need for strong training for teachers to increase their confidence in using restorative practices.

Additionally, implementation for restorative practices requires a strong system with structures and training in place for staff members (Reimer, 2011).

Another implication for administrators seeking to implement restorative practices is to build a team within their school of highly trained and confident staff members who can serve as a guide and resource to other staff members. The findings from previous research also indicated that implementation is most effective if there is a core of highly skilled staff, a shared bank of resources and ideas for staff to draw upon, and professional development focused on emotional intelligence (Bevington, 2015). The teachers in this study commented on the need to first have professional trainers teach the staff, but also to have a team of staff members within the school who had more knowledge and training to help others. This team would be responsible for monitoring implementation according to the plan, and assisting others in need of support.

A final implication for administrators based on the findings of this study is the importance of trust, relationships, and transparency between administrators and staff members, especially in terms of student behavior and discipline. While teachers commented on their desire to learn more about restorative justice, they continually described a lack of trust between teachers and administration. They did not feel connected to the administration and even commented on a lack of trust based on continual lack of follow-through from their perception. Teachers described not knowing the policies and procedures around student discipline in their school and a need for stronger transparency and clarity across the school. Restorative justice has a foundation

of relationship, among and between students, staff members, and families, and it is vital for a school to have strong, trusting relationships among its members in order for restorative justice implementation to be effective. Vaandering (2014) suggested that implementation should include a critical reflection on core values of staff members and how they align with the principles and values of restorative practices. This reflection on core values may also address the feelings of relationship and trust within school staff communities.

### **Areas for Further Research**

This study investigated the attitudes of elementary school teachers within one public K-6th grade school regarding student behavior, discipline, suspension, and the implementation of restorative justice. This school was chosen due to staff members having some introductory knowledge around restorative practices, but who have not yet as a school adopted restorative justice as part of their discipline policy or procedure. The findings of this study may help administrators seeking to understand possible perspectives and attitudes of teachers before they begin their own implementation process within their school. Given that this was a qualitative study and not generalizable to other settings or populations, the first area of further research would be to conduct similar studies in other school settings, both public and private. In addition, further research could also include a similar study at different levels of schooling, including middle and high schools.

While understanding teachers' attitudes regarding discipline and restorative justice is important, as they are often the initial line of contact with students in schools, additional research is also needed to understand the attitudes of classified staff members

within schools. Classified staff members include supervisory staff, teacher assistants, custodial staff, office staff, kitchen staff, and other employees within the school building. These individuals often have contact with students in more unstructured areas throughout the school, such as recess or lunch time, and would also play a primary role in behavior management and response. Further research could aim to better understand their attitudes and beliefs around student discipline and the implementation of restorative justice, as implementation within a school building would also require their support and follow-through.

Another area of research to consider is the investigation of the attitudes and beliefs of parents and guardians of students in the school. The implementation of restorative practices within a school would require the involvement of parents in the process of reconciliation and conferencing. While restorative justice practices are a shift from traditional discipline policies for staff members within schools, it is also a shift for many parents who experienced traditional discipline policies as students themselves while in school. Parents involved in student discipline often either have a student that has done harm to another student or staff member, or who has been the receiver of harm from another student. They may feel strong emotions after a discipline event has occurred, and may come to a situation with specific opinions and attitudes about how it should be addressed. As a school plans to involve parents in restorative practices, it would be highly important to understand the beliefs and attitudes the parent population holds, and how to address these opinions during implementation.

A final area of further research to consider is the role of mental health services within restorative justice practices and behavior responses in schools. Many of the

teachers in this study commented on the need for counseling and mental health services or partnerships with their students, and spoke about the high needs many of their students have. Restorative justice practices alone may not address this need, and it would be important for further research to investigate how to incorporate mental health services into restorative practices and school responses to behavior.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I investigated the attitudes and beliefs of seven public elementary school teachers regarding student behavior, discipline, suspensions, and the implementation of restorative justice. Their accounts represent the experiences and attitudes of teachers from the same public K-6th elementary school in the greater Seattle area. The interviews provide insight into teachers' potential attitudes around student discipline, which may be useful for administrators seeking to implement restorative practices within their school.

The participants shared their attitudes and beliefs regarding student behavior and discipline through one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. Five themes emerged from these interviews including a) behavior prevention, b) discipline attitudes, c) behavior response attitudes, d) leadership, and e) implementation needs. Each of these themes provide insight to administrators on ideas to consider when implementing restorative practices. These themes are very similar to findings from other qualitative studies regarding restorative practice implementation in other schools. The primary difference in these results is that these attitudes and beliefs represent teachers prior to implementation, whereas findings from other studies represent attitudes and beliefs either during or after implementation. These results are significant as they portray a need for administrators to

consider multiple factors, opinions, and beliefs of staff members before deciding and moving forward with restorative justice implementation.

The results of this study indicate that these participants are willing and open to restorative justice practices, and have similar beliefs and attitudes regarding student behavior and discipline that complement the underlying philosophy of restorative justice. However, the findings also revealed multiple needs of the teachers and staff members within this school if they were to move forward with adopting or implementing restorative practices. Participants shared a strong desire for more knowledge, understanding, and training around restorative practices. They described a need for clarity and a strong plan, procedure, and process in place regarding student behavior and response. Finally, they also shared a need for transparency, trust, and the building of relationships between teachers and administrators within their school. These results may provide insight into teachers' potential attitudes and beliefs regarding student behavior and discipline, and shed light on the need for administrators to gain a full understanding of the perspectives of their teachers before implementing a new practice within their school.



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## Appendix A

### Email Invitation to Participants and Informed Consent

Greetings (Name),

I would like to request your help in completing a research project about the attitudes and views of elementary school teachers regarding student discipline. Through this research, I am seeking to better understand teachers' attitudes and how understanding teachers' current attitudes impact the effectiveness of school discipline policies and responses to student behavior. You are in a unique position to share your views and insights; therefore, I am requesting you to participate in the following way:

Participate in one, one-on-one interview. The interview will be no more than one and a half to two hours. We can arrange the interview at a time and location convenient to you between now and January 30, 2018.

I have attached the informed consent for you to review as well. Participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. All information will be kept confidential.

Please email me back to let me know your willingness to participate.

Thank you,

Kaitlyn Spore

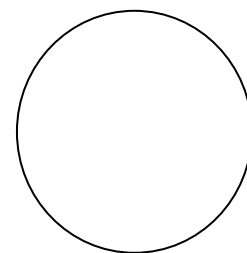




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## INFORMED CONSENT



**Title of the Study:** Case Study Analysis of Elementary Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Student Discipline and the Implementation of Restorative Justice

Principal Investigator: Kaitlyn Spore, Student, [sporek1@spu.edu](mailto:sporek1@spu.edu), (949)330-9802  
Co-Investigator: Dr. Cher Edwards, [edwards@spu.edu](mailto:edwards@spu.edu), (206)261-2286

### DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research is to explore and describe the attitudes of elementary school teachers in regards to student behavior, exclusionary discipline, and restorative justice. The researcher aims to determine if certain themes emerge that would aid an administrator as restorative responses are implemented in their school building. This study will provide insight on teachers' attitudes and how understanding teachers' current mindsets impacts the effectiveness of school discipline policies and responses to student behavior. You have been invited to participate because you are an elementary school teacher that teaches at a school with some beginning exposure to Restorative Justice practices.

This study will include males and females between the ages of 21 and 60.

The research will take place at Seattle Pacific University, 3307 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave West, Seattle WA and at Southern Heights Elementary, 11249 14<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Seattle, WA.

### WHAT WILL MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

If you decide to participate in this research you will be asked to participate in one, one-on-one interviews. The interview will be no more than one and a half to two hours. We can arrange the interview at a time and a location convenient to you between now and January 30, 2018. These interviews will be audio-recorded. You may withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, you will be invited to offer feedback on initial written transcriptions for accuracy should you choose.

### ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO ME?

There are no know major risks to your participation in this research study.

Seattle Pacific University and associated researchers do not offer to reimburse participants for medical claims or other compensation. If physical injury is suffered in the course of research, or for more information, please notify the investigator in charge, (Kaitlyn Spore, 949-330-9802).

Participant's Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of \_\_\_\_

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO ME?**

We do not anticipate direct benefits; however, your participation will contribute to understanding elementary school discipline practices and the views teachers may hold on these practices, and you may derive satisfaction from your contribution.

**HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE PROTECTED?**

The results of this study will be written and presented in the Principal Investigator's dissertation. While there will probably be publications as a result of this study, your name will not be used nor will you be identified in any way. The information in the study records will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give permission in writing to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to the study. Your de-identified data may be used in future research, presentations or for teaching purposes by the Principal Investigator listed above.

**WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after you leave today you should contact the Principal Investigator, (Kaitlyn Spore, 949-330-9802).

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject you should contact the Seattle Pacific University Institutional Review Board Chair at 206.281.2201 or [IRB@spu.edu](mailto:IRB@spu.edu).

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you begin participation and change your mind you may end your participation at any time without penalty. You may elect not to answer specific questions in the interview.

Your signature indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

**Participant's Name (please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's  
Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PI's Name (please print):** Kaitlyn Spore

**PI's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Copies to:* Participant    Principal Investigator

## Appendix B

### Interview Questions

1. When a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? Do you think your response is effective? How do you know?
2. What do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student?
3. What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? What do you think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?
4. What are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student discipline? Why or why not?
5. What are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think efforts at reducing suspensions within this district or school have been effective?
6. Tell me what you know about restorative justice.
7. What are your thoughts and/or feelings about restorative justice?
8. If you were to try restorative justice, in your classroom or in your school, what support would you need?
9. What do you think needs to be in place, either up front or ongoing, for restorative justice responses to be effective?
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs, thoughts, or opinions regarding student behavior, discipline, suspensions, or restorative justice that you would like to share or you think would be helpful to this study?

## Appendix C

### Interview Transcripts

Teacher 1 [Pseudo name Courtney]; Female; 32 years; 7 years' experience  
12/18/17; 11:15am; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
Currently teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 1: My name is [Courtney] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *So, the first question is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? Do*  
6 *you think your response is effective, and how do you know? And I might also ask you how has*  
7 *how your response changed over the course of your teaching career, if it has at all.*

8

9 Yeah, um, I would say it really depends on... partly the student, and partly the behavior. For  
10 minor things that, like the way I would respond to any kid do any little thing is usually just  
11 verbal to start or I mean if I can get them to understand with like a hand gesture of some kind or  
12 like a face... [giggles]...proximity, that's also fine. But usually I say um, just a quick verbal  
13 reminder...uh...I also use some positive um reinforcement type things, so I feel like I also try and  
14 reward kids that are doing the right thing...um...before having to like discipline a kid who's  
15 not...uhh...a lot of times for either like repeated um misbehaviors um I will find time to like have  
16 a conversation with a kid outside of class um...I try to keep it to more like natural consequences  
17 um...so like I don't want them to just like miss recess all the time, so a lot of times those  
18 conversations happen like during lunch so I will have them sit with me in the office and like have  
19 lunch with them and like talk through um what's going on and like choices that they made and  
20 how it affects other kids. Um...sometimes it will involve parent communication uh especially if  
21 it's like a repeated problem...um...I feel like I am kinda blanking here but...I also um... if I need  
22 to I will call for support in the office...um...usually pretty severe, really disruptive behaviors,  
23 otherwise I'll deal with it in the classroom. Um...either talking to the kid, moving the kid, having  
24 the kid take a break...I've used buddy classes before, stuff like that. Um, and, I feel like it's  
25 effective if behavior slowly over time goes away, or at least decreases. Um...I don't always  
26 think it's effective what I do because it doesn't always go away... [chuckles]...I think another  
27 important part of dealing with behavior is relationships because if kids don't care about you or  
28 what you think of them or what is going on in your classroom, they are much less likely to want  
29 to listen to you or want to change behavior because of what you say, so, I feel like it is most  
30 important to like really build that up in the beginning of the year and be really consistent uh with  
31 how you um hold the kids accountable just so they know what the expectations are in the  
32 classroom and what is and is not ok.

33

34 *Mhmm. What would you describe is like, you said, the behavior gets to a certain point or a*  
 35 *certain level of disruption that you would call for help... how would you describe those*  
 36 *behaviors?*

37  
 38 Um...I would usually call for support if there was something unsafe going on, like a kid is either  
 39 um trying to hurt another kid, hurting me, uh destroying things in the classroom, uh yelling cuss  
 40 words that are like making it so...basically so if it's that no one can learn and I can't teach and  
 41 like it's not stopping then I would call for support cause it's not fair to the rest of the  
 42 kids...because everyone is focused on this one behavior and no one can do anything else until  
 43 there's a break from it. Uh, I will sometimes send a kid to the office for like a break or a cool  
 44 down, but that doesn't necessarily, it's different than calling for like someone to come and like  
 45 remove a child. Um...I had a student this year and that needed very frequent um assistance from  
 46 the office, but since that student has been put into a different placement, I haven't since they've  
 47 left needed that support at all...so...it's very dependent on the kids in the class.

48  
 49 *When you call for support, what do you hope to have happen?*

50  
 51 I really hope that um the student can be given time with another adult, either if it's in the  
 52 classroom that's fine, but in my experience, they need a different setting to reset. Um... I hope  
 53 that that student can get time with an adult to kind of like deescalate and get their brain in a place  
 54 where they can come back and join class.

55  
 56 *What does that coming back in and joining class look like?*

57  
 58 I mean ideally it means that they're able to sit and learn, like they are able to do work and learn  
 59 as if that episode had not happened...[chuckles]

60  
 61 *But that re-entry piece, what does that look like, when an adult, let's say in your perfect world,*  
 62 *an adult comes, removes the student, the student deescalates, resets, and is now ready to go back*  
 63 *to class. What does that like look like? Like, your classroom door opens, and what would*  
 64 *happen?*

65  
 66 Um, ideally they would come in and either be able to look around and see, oh, we are doing this,  
 67 I know where I should be. Or come up to me and ask for help in getting back into what we are  
 68 doing. Like if we are in math, they can either come to wherever I'm sitting and helping and just  
 69 sit and do the work with me and the other kids, or if we are still in a lesson, that they can come  
 70 back in and join the lesson. If people are working independently, then they can just head to their  
 71 seat and start with direction from me start, just get back into work.

72  
 73 *Ok, so kinda just on their own, come back in, and kind of reintegrate back into the room?*

74  
 75 Ideally, yeah... [chuckles]

76

77 *Ok. Um, has your response to student behavior changed over the course of your teaching*  
 78 *career?*

79  
 80 Yes, I would say um... gosh, that's a good question. Um, I think it's changed a lot um... my first  
 81 couple years of teaching I was not in a place where I had any like extreme behaviors, and so the  
 82 behaviors I feel like I struggled with my first year teaching would be like non-issues now. Um,  
 83 so, I am just trying to think, I feel like I, I have gotten a lot better at like my own like  
 84 management of um, I guess emotions, like I feel like I can stay much calmer and I used to, I used  
 85 to get more escalated by kids than I do now. Like, I'm able to stay calmer because I've realized  
 86 that like really helps the kids to also stay calmer and uh, that's a big difference I would say, that I  
 87 wasn't like that necessarily my first couple years of teaching. Um, I've also had [clears throat]  
 88 really inconsistent um levels of support from like administration so I feel like right now I am in a  
 89 place where I know I can call for support and they will trust my judgement that like I need them,  
 90 it's beyond what I can deal with in class at that moment and I will get support for that student  
 91 and get them back into class...um...in the past I've had other times where I've felt unable to call  
 92 for help, so like, you just kinda, think, I think you just let more happen in class, just, things  
 93 happen that you don't want happening but you don't know what to do about it. I feel like now, I  
 94 understand when I can call and get support from another adult in the building, um, I understand  
 95 more like options, like, oh, I can send this kid with another teacher to have like a buddy class, or  
 96 I can um, I don't know, I just feel like I didn't always know what to do, so a lot of behaviors just  
 97 went on when they shouldn't, when now they wouldn't, because I didn't know how to respond.

98  
 99 *Ok. Um, what do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student, and just, how would you*  
 100 *define discipline?*

101  
 102 Um, I think that um the point of discipline is to help kids kind of like slowly understand like  
 103 what their behavior maybe should look like, and help them understand like, how their behavior  
 104 affects other people and how it can affect them. Um...so, I think the purpose of it is to kind of  
 105 like, I mean, I guess to create a consistency, so like you know um, how the expectations are.  
 106 Discipline helps to show them when they are not meeting those expectations or when they are  
 107 not following like the norm of the classroom. And, um, help them to correct it.

108  
 109 *Ok. Um, why do you think it's important for them to correct their behavior or have self-*  
 110 *awareness, is kind of what it sounded like you were talking about a bit?*

111  
 112 I mean, I think a classroom is kind of like a microcosm of the world, so they have to learn to be  
 113 successful in a classroom community because they are also going to have to learn to be  
 114 successful in a work community and a, on like a team, or in a home, or they are going to live in  
 115 the world with like friends. I just feel like it helps them like learn the social skills that then they  
 116 need to be successful humans [small chuckle] and I think a lot of it starts in the classroom.

117  
 118 *Um, what do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? And what do*  
 119 *you think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

120  
121 I think a teacher's role is to create uh, a positive community in the classroom and to maintain it.  
122 Um, I think to help students like function in the classroom and learn, and the administrator  
123 comes in when there's something happening that is beyond what the teacher can do at that  
124 moment. Um, so the goal of being in the classroom is learning, and so if there's something  
125 going on that, at that time, that like you can't problem solve it and the kid can't move forward  
126 until it's...um, like if the goal is learning, and a student has something going on that is causing  
127 them to not being able to learn and causing others to also not be able to learn, I feel like the  
128 administrator's job is to help support in either, um, deescalating them, or helping them problem  
129 solve, kind of like for the sake of the rest of the class I guess. Cause, if I could just stop and like  
130 problem solve and help them deescalate in the moment, that'd be great, but then you are ignoring  
131 all the other kids. Like, I wish I had more time for that, um, and I feel like that's where it can be  
132 helpful to have administrators at least have something, or a way, or a place that kids can  
133 deescalate and get ready to join the class again. If that makes sense.

134  
135 *Mmmhmm. Ok, um, tell me a little bit more about like, communication between administrator*  
136 *and teacher in those moments where you need an administrator's help. Like, how do you*  
137 *communicate between the two people and then how do you communicate once like the incident*  
138 *has been responded to?*

139  
140 Um, in the moment, I usually will either call the main office, and they will communicate it to  
141 someone who's available, usually our, essentially our assistant principal, our EA. Um, or I will  
142 text her directly and ask...especially if it's like not immediate. Like, would you have time to  
143 problem solve with some kids during recess? Or would you have time to address this later in the  
144 day? And she will usually text me back with like, yeah, I can do it at this time. But if it's  
145 immediate, I usually will call the office for the support of whoever is available. And then I, then  
146 we just make sure that we talk in person afterwards. Um, for one student we had like a google  
147 spreadsheet, that we would, when there was an incident, we would each type in our part, so like,  
148 I put in what happened before hand and what the antecedent was, and then whoever supported  
149 would then put in like what happened next and the response and the amount of time it took. And  
150 um, we did that for only one kid in my experience. But um, usually it is just like conversations  
151 afterwards and follow up like, are there consequences that like are still like, are they going to  
152 miss a recess with you? Did you contact parents? Would you like me to contact parents? That  
153 kind of stuff. It's usually in person, like after school or during recess or during planning or  
154 whatever.

155  
156 *Ok. What are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student*  
157 *discipline? Why or why not?*

158  
159 Um, I feel that um, suspensions, um, are sometimes necessary, but usually, I would prefer that  
160 things are dealt with in in-school suspension...um... just because if the kid is having trouble in  
161 school, I don't always see that they have the same like the same level of support at home as they  
162 do at school. And so I feel like if they are just out of school for like a day or two, um... I think



163 for safety reasons, they can be necessary sometimes, but I feel like if they are just out of school,  
 164 they don't always come back knowing like, oh, I was suspended exactly for this reason, I've  
 165 spent time at home really thinking it through, and like figuring out how to change my behaviors.  
 166 Um, I don't think that work always happens, I think sometimes they are like just at home, doing  
 167 nothing, or playing videogames, or whatever they're doing at home. And so, I feel like if there is  
 168 a way for them to have an in-school suspension, where they could have time to do more like  
 169 reflecting and do some school work, um, if that could be facilitated, I think that that is the ideal.  
 170 Um, but I mean, I guess if there's a, I don't know, I mean if you had it set up well in your school,  
 171 I don't know that out of school suspensions would be necessary at all...um...if they are in a safe  
 172 place for the student to be, with adult supervision, um, that would be better than um an out of  
 173 school suspension, kind of anytime.

174  
 175 *You said, out of school suspensions are sometimes necessary. Describe those, when would those*  
 176 *be? Like, when do you think that would be necessary?*

177  
 178 Um, I feel like, um, I'm trying to think. Well, I guess, when I think about those kids that I've  
 179 had in my class that have been suspended, it's because they've been like extremely um violent or  
 180 inappropriate towards adults and kids in the school and I guess it has almost been like a reset for  
 181 them. Um, if they had an in-school suspension place that would work, I think that would be fine.  
 182 But I think um what ends up happening in a school like ours is that it just like drains all the time  
 183 of everyone in the office for whoever's in school suspension. They are just sitting there in the  
 184 office just like draining the attention of like all the adults and this year at least when one kid got  
 185 suspended, I just feel like he had been doing that for days. Like, he was in the office like  
 186 destroying things for two straight days and it just, he needed a break and a reset. I don't know if  
 187 that's, If there was a better place for a student to be, that would be great, but I don't feel like we  
 188 have that in my school, so sometimes I think it's necessary when a kid's being really violent and  
 189 destructive, just to have a reset.

190  
 191 *You said, in school suspension if it's facilitated. What would that ideally look like? Like, what*  
 192 *would an ideal facilitated in school suspension look like?*

193  
 194 Um, I think it would be like, it's almost its own classroom um with a full-time adult that was in  
 195 there to support the students, not only in like doing some school work but also um like resolving  
 196 problems or making amends in some way for their problems um or any problems that they  
 197 caused. Um, I feel like it would involve like counseling, which having a really effective  
 198 counselor would be a big bonus. Um, because I just feel like there is more going on with a kid  
 199 usually that needs that level of support than we can provide with just the classroom teacher and  
 200 just an administrator in a disciplinary way. There's usually more supports that are necessary that  
 201 they are not getting.

202  
 203 *Um, what kinds of things would you say would be good candidates for an in-school suspension?*  
 204

205 I mean like, [sigh]...it's like I can just picture it in my head...[chuckles]...I mean, I think if a kid  
206 is intentionally hurting other children or adults, like, I don't know, I mean this year a lot of us  
207 have experienced that. Um, punching, kicking, hitting, kicking, spitting on adults, swearing at  
208 them, like that's not something that the other kids should even see. Like that's gotta be  
209 traumatizing to the other kids in the class to see their teacher or their principal or other adults in  
210 the building like being beaten on and sworn at, and kicked by a student. Um, I feel like it also  
211 tells the other kids that like it is not ok if there is some kind of way that, that's like no that's not  
212 ok, they will be in this other classroom like getting the help that they need to solve this problem  
213 or to like support this behavior. Like they are not just going to be in here again in an hour, or  
214 tomorrow.

215  
216 *You said, you mentioned, that in an in school suspension, in an ideal one, there would be*  
217 *counseling and that students would spend some time making amends for whatever the problem or*  
218 *the issue was. Tell me more about the making amends. What would that look like, or what*  
219 *would the product be?*

220  
221 I mean, if a kid has destroyed things, I think that they need to find a way to either put them back  
222 together or help clean it up. Um, if they're hurting people, they need to apologize in a sincere  
223 way. Uh...I just feel like, it's more like natural consequences I guess, but, just thinking in the  
224 real world, if I like were to hit someone, I would apologize. [chuckles] If I were to accidentally  
225 ruin something of theirs, I would either replace it or try and fix it. And I just feel like it's a way  
226 to teach that. It's just like the natural consequence of life I guess.

227  
228 *Do you think the making amends process is important for any kind of relationship rebuilding?*

229  
230 Yeah. I absolutely do, because I think that's a big part of forgiveness. Um, and, especially for  
231 kids, if like, another student has done something to them and they never get any apology, I don't  
232 think, I mean, eventually, they don't want to be associated with that person, they don't want to  
233 be friends with that person. Um, and I feel like that can really harm the classroom community  
234 when you have that going on, especially like over and over again.

235  
236 *Tell me more about the counseling. What would that look like?*

237  
238 Um, I feel like, if you have a counselor that was really effective and good at connecting with the  
239 kids, I just feel like that could be someone that could help facilitate some of that and um teach  
240 skills at least for deescalating or different ways you can respond when you are feeling a certain  
241 way, rather than hurting someone or swearing at them, or destroying someone's property or the  
242 room, or hurting yourself. Like what else could you do. I think like um just teaching those  
243 strategies over time.

244  
245 *As of now, like when students are suspended, would you say that is effective at changing*  
246 *behavior?*

247

248 Um...I think in older grades, it's less effective, because I think that they don't necessarily want to  
249 be there. I think in younger grades it can be more effective just because younger kids, in my  
250 experience, are more likely to want to be at school and want to be around their peers and their  
251 teacher. Um, it also just depends on the parents' response at home...like, if they went home and  
252 got a beating, they might be really good for a couple of days. If they go home and they play  
253 videogames all day, they're gonna not think twice about getting suspended. I think a lot of it  
254 depends on the response they get at home, which we have no control over.

255

256 *What about long term? You said, if they go home and get a certain response, they may be really*  
257 *good for a few days. What about long term?*

258

259 I haven't seen anything long term. I've maybe seen like a behavior stop, but not overall  
260 behavior.

261

262 *Ok. Um, what about... tell me a little bit more about older kids, and why you think it wouldn't be*  
263 *as effective or might not be as purposeful?*

264

265 Um, I think that older kids are more likely to just not like want to be at school, and a lot of times  
266 kids that have like extreme behaviors also do not, aren't successful at school and do not enjoy it.  
267 Especially thinking of like middle school, high school, I mean a parent... If a kid gets suspended,  
268 I feel like they wouldn't have like any supervision, they'd just be left at home. Versus like a 5,  
269 or 6, or 7 year old, they would like have to be at home with them...hopefully...um, and so I feel  
270 like, then they are just at home for the day to do whatever, and I don't think that's like a deterrent  
271 for some kids.

272

273 *Um, what are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think efforts at reducing*  
274 *suspensions within the district or within the school have been effective?*

275

276 Um, I think that with the right supports, it's really, really possible, and a really good thing. I  
277 think the middle school and high schools, from what I've heard, have done a better job at setting  
278 up a classroom where you can have a successful in school suspension. Elementaries, especially a  
279 small one like ours, we don't have the support staff. I mean, the people that can deal with it, we  
280 have, a principal and an EA. But at a bigger school, you would also have an AP, and you might  
281 also have a full-time counselor, and there would be more support for that kind of thing. Um, a  
282 lot of it falls on people that it's not their job...like the office manager...it's not her job necessarily  
283 to support in, yet she does. So I feel like we could reduce it, if we had an alternative, and like a  
284 good, structured way to set it up. And, if it's not set up, it's going to be really hard to  
285 reduce...because there is no one to deal with it. Except kids sitting in the office all day doing  
286 nothing unsupervised.

287

288 *So, what is the alternative to reducing suspensions? What's been communicated?*

289

290 I haven't... I don't really know. I feel like in like middle school and high school, they have like a  
291 success center or an in-school suspension place, and I haven't heard a plan for a school like ours.  
292 I mean, our EA takes a lot on. She does a lot, a lot more, than the EA we had last year for  
293 example. Um, it feels like very different this year than it did last year, because I do really feel  
294 like she takes it on herself. Um, but I mean, even that, she does have like a small office, and it's  
295 not set up to accommodate more than like two kids at a time, you know? So, um, I feel like to  
296 really decrease suspension we need a better structure, and like a place, a better place for it. And  
297 maybe more adults.

298

299 *What's been communicated at the school level about suspensions, and reducing it, or behavior*  
300 *or discipline?*

301

302 Um, I feel like I understand that over the last 3,4, 5 years, we are reducing suspensions district-  
303 wide. And I know in our school, I guess I don't know what they looked like before those goals  
304 were in place. Um, I know that this year, there are more suspensions than there were last year,  
305 because I feel like, we have a different voice in the building that is saying, like, at a certain point,  
306 you need to do something about this. You can't just let them sit in the office and destroy things  
307 and... I don't know. It just depends on, I feel like there were more suspensions this year than  
308 there were last year.

309

310 *Tell me more about what you mean when you say there is a different voice.*

311

312 Our EA this year is um, not just on board 100% with like, we won't suspend anyone. Like, I feel  
313 like there is a line that is kinda like drawn of like, if they're being um like repeatedly unsafe and  
314 like destroying things and like just violent, they do need a suspension. Like I feel like that's  
315 what I'm noticing this year.

316

317 *And how is that different from previous years?*

318

319 I mean, last year, I feel like the only kid that ever got suspended, like in the last couple of years,  
320 were like if they were on the path towards like a behavior IEP. Or on the path to a different  
321 placement. Those kids, their behavior was extremely well documented, they did have  
322 suspensions, and other than that, no one else did.

323

324 *So, what happened with all of the other kids or behaviors?*

325

326 I don't know... they hung out in the office and bothered our office manager. I don't know. I just  
327 feel like, at least when those goals were new, there may have been some principals that took a  
328 hard line, and were like, ok, we are not going to suspend, we are not doing to do this, and there  
329 was no data recorded. And I feel like this year, with some new things in place, we are trying to  
330 record more data around minor discipline, as well as more major discipline. Um, which is just  
331 something we haven't done at our school since those goals were put into place.

332

333 *Recording data. Tell me what you mean.*

334

335 Um, like, we have these little forms, like FYI forms, but every adult has, not just on the  
336 playground. Like, I know that those existed before, so basically any behavior that I deal with,  
337 we are just like kinda recording it. So like, minor behavior, this is the student and the grade.  
338 Like, pick one behavior, where it happened, and like what I did about it. So we are just  
339 recording it, even like after the fact, just to collect data around like, where the behavior is  
340 happening, and what are teachers or other people doing about it. So it's not just like, if I call the  
341 office and the student needs to be removed, it's like, did I have two kids, who like, I need to have  
342 a conversation with at recess, and do something to fix the problem in class. And if I do that, and  
343 I take the time to do that, then I just record it and send it to the office. So we are like trying to  
344 get a better idea of like where we actually have behaviors, because our behavior data from the  
345 past looks like nothing ever happens, which isn't true.

346

347 *And why is that?*

348

349 I just think there was no system in place to record anything that was happening. And it looks  
350 like, like basically you can tell, it looks like there are two kids in the whole school that have any  
351 behavior issues if you look at last year or the year before. And that's not accurate. Because I  
352 feel like everyone...all the data was honed in on, for kids that like... like a student that maybe  
353 they were trying to place into EBC, or a student they were like trying to get on a behavior IEP,  
354 they have data recorded around all of their behaviors. And there wasn't really a way....teachers  
355 were not recording other behavior. I feel like it...I feel like this acknowledges that teachers do  
356 deal with a lot of the minor behaviors, but they are still happening.

357

358 *What happens with the data?*

359

360 Um...we just for the first time kind of like got a graph of it, just to show school-wide where are  
361 they happening, when are they happening, like are there spikes in it...um, what types of  
362 behaviors. And also students...I think that [EA]'s new philosophy is that, or not philosophy, her  
363 new system that we are trying, is that any kid that ends up with three FYI's in a month, like, then  
364 that teacher probably needs more support. So, it's just identifying that there's needs, so we can  
365 actually address it. And I just feel like, and this is my 7<sup>th</sup> year at this school, and I've never seen  
366 a system that actually... I mean, we used to have of course, the behaviors that were recorded, but  
367 I feel like it wasn't on teachers as much as it was the office and the recess staff, and now I feel  
368 like it's being taken on more like by everyone, which is more representative of what actually  
369 happens. Cause I feel like before there were like the problem solving sheets, and then the  
370 conduct reports...and I don't think that people were filling those out. [chuckles] I just don't  
371 think it was happening. And this is more just like an informal, I already dealt with it, here's what  
372 happened, but I already dealt with it, and I feel like people are starting to take it on...which feels  
373 like a positive change in our school.

374

375 *In what way? That teachers are taking it on?*

376  
377 I think that teachers are taking it on, and it acknowledges that we have more problems than just  
378 like the couple Tier 3 kids in each grade, and that teachers need support in other ways... or with  
379 different kids. Maybe like lower level supports, but there is a need. And just because we only  
380 have minimal behavior data, it doesn't mean that there is just minimal behavior going on. So, I  
381 feel like the data just has to reflect what is actually happening, and we are getting closer to that.

382  
383 *Ok. Tell me what you know about restorative justice.*

384  
385 My understanding of restorative justice is that it is um, a philosophy around discipline, but also a  
386 process. So, um, anytime that um, someone does something that, I mean, a wrong I guess, that  
387 they make it right. Like that they, go through a process of like acknowledging who they  
388 impacted and how they impacted them. They go through a process of like problem solving with  
389 that person, whoever was involved in it. Um, and so, I guess, my...I, I understand that, like, I  
390 understand the philosophy around it... I don't understand as much about like how to implement  
391 it. It feels like that kind of process could be really, really powerful, but I guess I don't see how  
392 we would have time in the classroom setting to do it. So that's like kind of where my  
393 understanding falls away, because I understand like maybe as a school how we could implement  
394 it, but not necessarily what my role would be in it...if that makes sense.

395  
396 *Mhmm. How have you learned about your learnings of restorative justice?*

397  
398 I mean, conversations. I've talked to a friend who knows about it a decent amount I feel like.  
399 [Our principal] bought us each a book, the Sticks and Carrots book, you may know it? So we all  
400 have that, and we've read like one excerpt from it as a staff. We probably will be reading more  
401 of it, but so far, I mean, I have only read what she's asked us to read, so I have not like gone  
402 ahead. But um, I know, I know that we are going to learning more about it as a whole staff,  
403 cause I don't....I think it's something that people take bits and pieces of, but my understanding is  
404 that it is a much more systematic process and like philosophy, so I am having a hard time  
405 sometimes if like our administrator says, like, oh, well we believe, this, and we do this...but we  
406 don't do that. I mean, we don't do restorative justice. Like, she can say this, but we don't have  
407 anything in place to support it. So, I feel like sometimes it gets thrown around a little bit, but  
408 from my understanding of it, which is not deep or in detail, but more of an overall understanding,  
409 we are not capable of implementing it in like what we have or have had in the past at our school.  
410 Like, we will. But right now, I feel like saying that like that's what we do, is not accurate.

411  
412 *So when someone says that that's what you do, and it's not accurate, what components maybe*  
413 *are said that they are being done or like, what is being tied to restorative justice?*

414  
415 I feel like...[sigh]...and I'm not on our PBIS team but I know most of these conversations are  
416 from PBIS, from the team. Last year, most of this happened on the team. Like, people would be  
417 asking about like how to deal with a behavior or how a behavior maybe was dealt with, and an  
418 administrator would say, well that's not a restorative justice practice. And everyone was like,

419 but what's restorative justice, and is that like something we are actually doing as a staff? Like,  
420 you can't say, no, we aren't doing that because it's not restorative justice, if that's not what  
421 restorative justice actually is. I don't know if that makes sense.

422

423 *No, it does.*

424

425 Like, I feel like it was an answer of like, we don't do this because it's not restorative justice, but  
426 then there was no defined definition of what restorative justice was. Or like, because that's  
427 obviously what it is, and like our school has a thorough understanding of it and of this process  
428 and philosophy and that's why we don't do it, it was just like, that's not restorative justice. And  
429 everyone said, well, I guess we don't understand what restorative justice is.

430

431 *Ok. Um, with what you've learned about restorative justice, what the responses defined as*  
432 *restorative or not restorative have been within the building, like, what are your thoughts and*  
433 *feelings about restorative justice?*

434

435 I think that it is really intriguing to me, and I think that I would love to see it in action. Um, I  
436 feel like it's going to require a lot of support though for classroom teachers. From what my  
437 understanding, from what like a lot of it is, it sounds like a time consuming process, and involves  
438 a lot of people, like anyone involved in a problem has like a facilitated problem solving session  
439 and that's not something that I, as a classroom teacher, see myself being able to do. So, for it to  
440 be in place, first, I think the whole staff needs to have a very clear understanding of all the  
441 aspects of restorative justice and what that means. Which I think is the first step, which I think,  
442 at least, buying this book, and maybe we are going to do a book study at some point, will at least  
443 maybe get people somewhat on the same page. But, um, I mean, I think that kinda like what I  
444 was saying how in school suspension needs to be very well supported, like they would go  
445 together. Like, if we were going to be able to have this like thorough problem solving process  
446 happen, we are going to need that same level of support. There needs to be an adult that the kids  
447 like know and trust that can facilitate it and communicate it back to teachers like what's  
448 happened and what's going on, and I don't know. I don't see how I would have time for that, in  
449 my school day unfortunately. Like, otherwise, you'd be using every lunch, every break, every  
450 planning, every before and after school, which you can't really do with kids...like...I, I don't see  
451 how I could facilitate it, but I see how at a school level it is possible. But kind of like  
452 suspensions, we need a person and a place and a, someone who is really skilled in that to  
453 facilitate it.

454

455 *You kind of started to answer this, but, if you were to try restorative justice, either within your*  
456 *classroom or within your school, what support would you need?*

457

458 Um, I think that...yeah, I think that we would need a whole school understanding, a whole staff,  
459 including paras, including everyone, cause everyone would need to be on the same page about  
460 it. Um...I think we would need at least one person that feels like comfortable facilitating those  
461 kind of problem solving um conversations. Um, in class I feel like we would need some around

462 like, if we could do some restorative justice type things like as part of like a class meeting  
 463 type...um...I could see teachers being able to do that, but there also kinda needs to be like time  
 464 set aside for that. Um, I have worked in buildings for short term in the past where every single  
 465 class, the schedule is built around um that need, so every single class has like 20 minutes at the  
 466 beginning of the day for a class meeting before any content or any specialists start. And that was  
 467 an expectation school wide. If you had that built into your schedule, I could see being able to  
 468 like actually have, you know, regular class meetings and like begin to build up those kinds of  
 469 conversation skills, or um, where like you are problem solving as a class, like everyone has the  
 470 language that they need because you are teaching it to the kids in the classroom before they are  
 471 expected to like just go to the office and have some big, scary problem solving thing with an  
 472 administrator or something. Um, so I feel like we need a schedule support, but also like some  
 473 modeling, like a lot of modeling, around like kind of what we have done with implementing  
 474 ruler...like over a couple years we've implemented different aspects of it...like, if we were going  
 475 to do like a restorative justice class meeting something added to our classroom, that would have  
 476 to modeled and like we would need help for the first couple years with like language and like the  
 477 problem solving strategies and like....things like that...activities that would build that up.

478

479 *Do you have a class meeting time now within your school schedule?*

480

481 Uh no. Some teachers do it random days. I usually do...it's more just like a mood meter check  
 482 in and like a little check in...just on Fridays I have time. I don't have time any other day. Um, I  
 483 know that like one other teacher that does a class meeting I think on Mondays. So...but I don't  
 484 know of a lot of teachers that do.

485

486 *So it's not required?*

487

488 It's not a school wide expectation. It's expected that we implement some kind of socio-  
 489 emotional learning into every day, but that can be just...that can be very simple. There's not like  
 490 a... and I know some classes tried to implement like a daily thing, and then their schedule got  
 491 changed. So now they no longer are able to. Or it got cut really short.

492

493 *You spoke a little bit earlier about how maybe you've noticed that restorative justice is a bigger  
 494 philosophy and process, and that sometimes bits and pieces are maybe pulled out and defined as  
 495 restorative justice. What do you think...what are your thoughts about that happening? Do you  
 496 think it's ok if pieces are just pulled?*

497

498 I think that it is...I feel like it can be ok if people actually understand like what it is. Um...it  
 499 maybe feels like our administrator didn't have a full understanding of it when she was calling  
 500 those little bits and pieces out...because it didn't fit with my more general understanding of  
 501 it...like, I don't know...I feel like, if everyone understood what it was, we could like pull bits of  
 502 it, and maybe implement little bits at a time, but if you are like just pulling little bits, and just  
 503 making statements about it without like supporting them or...I just feel like, if no one else in the  
 504 building knows what you are talking about, it's not impactful to use...like everyone has to know



505 what it is, or like it's not going to matter. So if only one person in the building understands  
 506 restorative justice, then it's never going to work. You have to have like everyone on board, in the  
 507 same way, before you can apply little bits of it. I kinda think.

508

509 *Um...What was the reaction, either yours or others that you can speak to, when maybe a*  
 510 *situation arose behaviorally and people asked about what the response would be or what the*  
 511 *next step would be, and the term restorative justice was thrown around without this*  
 512 *understanding of what it is? What was the reaction from staff, or their feelings? Did it then*  
 513 *connotate something with restorative justice...or...?*

514

515 I would say that um...people felt like nothing was happening. So, you're saying...if an  
 516 administrator said, no that's not an appropriate consequence or that's not an appropriate reaction  
 517 because it's not part of restorative justice...then the feeling was, so you're not going to do  
 518 anything about it, or you're going to do something that others may feel is like a reward for that  
 519 kid...like, they just...I feel like...it's misconstrued a little bit because they see something  
 520 happening that doesn't...that hasn't been explained...so I feel like it does cause a rift...it's like, oh  
 521 well the administrators are just dealing with this in like their own way that's not supporting what  
 522 I need...or not supporting how the teacher thinks the kid should...their behavior should be  
 523 responded to. So I feel like it does cause a rift between teachers and administration when  
 524 administration is like doing something that they aren't explaining to the teachers...or they are  
 525 taking parts of something but not like the whole philosophy.

526

527 *Ok. Do you feel like the push back was on that like lack of understanding of what was going on*  
 528 *or do you feel like it was people knew what restorative justice was and were like, no, that's not*  
 529 *how I want you to respond?*

530

531 I think that it's more the former...that um...people didn't understand what restorative justice was  
 532 and so I feel like getting like a little snit bit of...like, so you're saying that we follow this  
 533 restorative justice philosophy...this is what I see you doing...so that must be what restorative  
 534 justice is, when that's not representative of the whole thing. And so, I think it wasn't more...I  
 535 know what it is, and this is not it...It was more like, I don't know what it is, but if this is what  
 536 you think it is, I'm not down with that...because they don't understand the whole picture.

537

538 *And what was that thing that they saw associated with it?*

539

540 I am just trying to think. I feel like um...I'm trying to think of an example. I feel like it was um  
 541 maybe kids just being in the office like having breaks or getting treats or something like this  
 542 that...I'm not really sure because it wasn't an experience that I had. But I feel like it was  
 543 something related to that. I'd hear teachers say, oh they are just in there like eating hot  
 544 Cheetos...[chuckles]...or they are just going down and having a snack, and then coming back, and  
 545 then nothing happens.

546

547 *What would maybe teachers want to have happen?*

548

549 I don't know. [chuckles] I'm not sure. I feel like something that was more purposeful, like a  
550 consequence or... this is hard, this would be a better question for someone that was at one of  
551 those meetings, because I was not. Someone on the PBIS team would know more about what  
552 was happening.

553

554 *Ok. What's the conversation been like this year about it?*

555

556 I think people overall just feel much, much more supported with their behaviors...and I feel like  
557 it's very obvious that we are trying to get our data to match what's actually happening so we can  
558 even understand what behavior needs we have in our school. Um, and so I feel like we have  
559 some positive forward motion around data...and I think people know that we are going to be  
560 learning about restorative justice and that seems like a positive...we just aren't there yet. We are  
561 just at the very beginning of this. Like, we are going to be doing a book study to learn about it.  
562 Um... I don't know what supports we will have...like, with in school suspension type things...or  
563 like facilitating this um...like the problem solving stuff. I don't know what we will be able to  
564 figure out in the future...um...I just feel like overall, everyone is much more supported and much  
565 happier with the response we are getting from our admins. It feels different.

566

567 *And is that because there's a response? Or because...like, why does it feel so different?*

568

569 Um...it feels like we are getting a response, and it's much more...it's communicated in a much  
570 more supportive way...um...it's more consistent...and I feel like...um...I don't know how to say  
571 this...I don't know...I mean, I feel like it's the difference of one person, like, that can really  
572 change the culture of like how we respond to things. And um...last year I know people felt like  
573 they couldn't call for help because they'd just get shut down. Or they were treated like they  
574 should be able to handle this, and why do they need help with this. Um, and this year, I feel like  
575 there is just more trust. Like, if I call the office, they're going to trust that I actually need help  
576 and they're going to support me in that. Um...and that just wasn't the case last year.

577

578 *Just based on your knowledge and what you've learned so far...what do you think needs to be in  
579 place, either up front or ongoing, for restorative justice to be effective within a school?*

580

581 Um...I think that just like implementing anything...implementing a socio-emotional curriculum  
582 for the last three years...we are...right now um...we are working on the skill of close reading  
583 complex text...just like we are implementing any of these things...we need ongoing like  
584 professional development, whole staff, like all together. So, right now it feels like it would be a  
585 lot to implement something like this, just because we already have a couple things that we are  
586 kinda in the air with right now. I feel like it would have to be a full building focus for a couple  
587 years and we would need...um...we would need to probably like read about it...and like watching  
588 videos and things...just to get an understanding of it. And then I just think we would need a lot  
589 of training and modeling and practicing, like for a couple of years. We would need an  
590 ongoing...ongoing support...like implementing it...like the way we would for any other

591 curriculum or instructional skill or socio-emotional philosophy...like we would need that with  
592 this too.

593

594 *So then what's your feeling about having this book...that you may or may not be reading...how*  
595 *does that play into like...you said something that to implement this, we are already implementing*  
596 *other things, and this would be another thing that we'd have to learn and implement...then,*  
597 *where does this low level learning, maybe reading a book about it, fall into that?*

598

599 I think if we can at least get a general understanding as a staff of what restorative justice is, then  
600 it would prepare us for a conversation or training around it, but...I mean...yeah, it does feel low  
601 level right now. We need to just get on the same page. We especially need like classified staff  
602 and certificated to be on the same page. I think that's really important because they see the kids  
603 a lot of the time, and there's often like a gap between that just because our learnings are different  
604 and so...um....I don't know... I feel like it's just like step one and we would have to...like, maybe  
605 we can do some low level learning this year, and if we're gonna focus on it next year, we are  
606 gonna have to...the learning would really have to start like in the summer. So, we can do some  
607 low level learning, but that's what it is to me. It's like the baseline.

608

609 *Let's say you come back from break and your principal says, we are doing restorative justice.*  
610 *What would your response be? What would you be thinking? What questions would you have?*

611

612 Um, I would probably want to ask her for what her definition of it is...like, how do you define it?  
613 And like, what do you mean, we are doing that now? Like, what does it mean for our school and  
614 behavior management system? Like, I would like to know a very thorough explanation. I'd want  
615 to know like what she means by that...and like, if there are aspects that we want to start  
616 implementing, I think people, if they at least had an understanding of it, would be open to it...but  
617 like, I would really want to know like what it's going to look like and like who's going to  
618 support in all the problem solving and like how can we use this in our classrooms. Like, a lot of  
619 people...I can visualize how it could be possible, I just think it would take a lot of time, and  
620 support, and research to figure it out. But I think it's possible...it's doable for sure...but, it's not  
621 happening right now because we have a lot of other things that I feel like we are very focused on.

622

623 *If you could design your dream response to behavior in a school, what would that entail?*

624

625 I...I mean, I keep picturing this success center, or whatever you want to call it, where like a  
626 kid...kids...it's like not a place you go where you are in trouble, but it's like a place you can take  
627 a break and reset, you can work through a problem, you can have an alternate setting if you can't  
628 function in your classroom. It has like adults in it that can like help you solve your problems and  
629 figure out strategies to deescalate and help you with your school work and like...it's like this safe  
630 place. That would be really awesome to have in school. But, I have never seen one actually  
631 function in a school I've worked in...so...it's just like something I am picturing in my head. But I  
632 don't know if it's feasible, or realistic, or if does exist in place. I think in middle schools and  
633 high schools it does, but I don't know about elementaries.

634

635 *Describe what all would a success room entail? What would they do?*

636

637 Um...I think a lot of it would be like...and part of it, if it's an in school suspension, like, you  
 638 would also need to like have some support in some school work. But, yeah, I think like any  
 639 restorative practices like problem solving or like making amends in some way...writing an  
 640 apology, figuring out ways to solve conflicts that have come up. I mean, I don't really  
 641 know...that would be part of it. Um.. I'm not totally sure.

642

643 *Is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs, thoughts, opinions, about*  
 644 *student behavior, discipline, suspensions, restorative justice that you would like to share or that*  
 645 *you think would be helpful to the study?*

646

647 I am not sure right now.

648

649 *Alright, thank you. That's it!*

Teacher 2 [Pseudo Name Laurie]; Female; 22 years; 1<sup>st</sup> year teacher  
 12/18/17; 10:00am; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
 Currently teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 2: My name is [Laurie] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
 6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 Um, I think it just depends on the student and what type of behavior it is. Um...so for like a  
 9 minor misbehavior, like they're talking while I'm talking, or like something like that...I just do  
 10 like a warning system...like first check or whatever is a warning, and the next one is like you lose  
 11 recess and etcetera it goes on. And then, they can always earn it back. And so, like nine times  
 12 out of ten they earn it back and it's like they're aware of what they did and you know. My goal  
 13 is for them to turn their behavior around. Um...and that's for like minor like tier one, two kids  
 14 that just works for them. Um...is it effective? Not always. I don't think anything is effective all  
 15 the time. Um...but it works for the majority I would say. And then um...I guess just the reason I  
 16 know is because they earn it back somehow or their behavior changes in some way. Um, for  
 17 more severe misbehaviors, I would say that I often um...like try to have a conversation with the  
 18 student and if often times will like get transferred to the office...like...um...somebody from the  
 19 office will come to support so that like I can focus on my class while the other kid gets the  
 20 support that he or she needs.

21

22 *What distinguishes for you tier one, tier two behaviors and kind of the higher tier 3 behaviors.*  
 23 *Can you describe some of those types of things?*

24  
 25 It's been a really hard...it's been like a really grey area for me. Like, this year, I'm not quite sure  
 26 yet, but the kid has a lot to do with it. Like I think there have been a few kids that have been  
 27 like...I've been told like if this happens with this kid, call the office, that kind of a thing.  
 28 Um...but I think just like, if it's disrupting everybody's learning, and I don't feel like I have the  
 29 ability to stop it, then I guess that's just when I go to...like when I think it's just a tier two or a  
 30 tier one...and then I think like if it's dangerous, or unsafe, then that's like a tier three. That's  
 31 kind of how I've been um distinguishing them. But it's been tough this year...like I don't really  
 32 know what a tier two or tier three is, and like what the difference is.

33  
 34 *You said sometimes you might have a conversation with a kid. What does that conversation look*  
 35 *like, or what's your goal with the conversation?*

36  
 37 Um...again, it like kinda depends on the kid. But like, just for example, one kid, like I know like  
 38 he'll respond really...like he like knows what he did...like he has remorse for the things that he  
 39 does...so like, I'll just ask him, why did you do this? Did you think that was right? And I'll have  
 40 him reflect on it. Like...um...I try to have them reflect on it as much as I can as opposed to me  
 41 telling them what they did was wrong or why it's wrong or...um...so I do my best to have them  
 42 reflect on it, and then in all honesty, there's not always time for that. And then, I don't want to  
 43 like keep them in from recess or like I don't want to like punish them. I don't want them to feel  
 44 like they are being punished just for talking to me about it. If I have time, I really try to have  
 45 them reflect on it, but sometimes it takes a lot longer than others. And so, that's what I try to do.

46  
 47 *Ok. What do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student, and also I am going to add on*  
 48 *to that...how would you define discipline?*

49  
 50 Uh...well I think the purpose of discipline is like in hopes to change their behavior, right...like in  
 51 a long term, to change their behavior for the better. At least that is what I would hope the  
 52 purpose of it is. Um...and discipline...I feel like the word discipline has like a negative, um,  
 53 meaning behind it. But, I kinda just view it as a direction of behavior. But I think right now it's  
 54 just another work for trouble, like you're in trouble, it's kinda how it feels when I hear that word,  
 55 so...but I would like to think of it as a redirection of someone's behavior.

56  
 57 *Ok. What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? What do you*  
 58 *think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

59  
 60 Um...for the teacher...I mean I think for both..I think your role needs to be consistent and if  
 61 you're a teacher and I think it's to set expectations and then if those expectations are not met,  
 62 then there is some form of discipline involved. Um...like, I'm holding you here, my expectation  
 63 is here for you, and if you don't meet that expectation there's some sort of consequence or  
 64 discipline of some kind. And then for an administration, I think...how I've seen it is when kids

65 cannot respond to your expectations or they for whatever reason are not succeeding in your  
 66 classroom, that's when administrators step in. Umm...but I personally believe that the role of the  
 67 administrators should be with more students, and not just the really, really difficult ones um  
 68 because then it would be more consistent for all kids. But I've seen it just with my really, really  
 69 tough kiddos.

70  
 71 *What does that look like, in terms of when an administrator comes in and then what would it look*  
 72 *like then kinda in your own belief around them being more involved kind of across the board?*

73  
 74 So, in my class I looks like um...it's a warning systems so like if you do this, then the office is  
 75 gonna have to come kind of a thing. So it's more of like a threat it feels like...so, if you do this,  
 76 the office is going to come. Umm...and then they come, and then the kid is either removed or  
 77 they like take a break with someone right next to them from the office. Umm...and so it feels  
 78 like it's very much a threat, like, if you do this, like this is going to happen. And I think that  
 79 causes a lot of anxiety in kids, or like a fear, of like my parents are going to get called or  
 80 whatever it is. But, if the office was more um...not that they should be, but if they were able to  
 81 like more involved in everybody's behavior, um...like if there were more people, it seems like,  
 82 then it wouldn't cause this like high stress and anxiety for kids. Umm...but I don't know what  
 83 that would look like because I have never seen it like that, but it's like kinda a wondering that  
 84 I've had.

85  
 86 *What are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student*  
 87 *discipline? Why or why not?*

88  
 89 To be honest, I am not really sure, because I think that a lot of kids that would um...be like in this  
 90 category of being suspended um...maybe like it's not necessarily going to help them. But, for  
 91 some kids it would be effective but not for all. Umm...so I don't really like the idea of  
 92 suspension as a general...like in general I don't really because I don't think that it's...just, if a kid  
 93 is acting up at school then like chances are that they aren't enjoying school, and so they don't  
 94 want to be at school, and so then you're saying, ok, you don't have to be at school today.  
 95 Um...but then also I think that there's some behaviors that like do...that kinda do deserve a  
 96 suspension, but I think in general I don't like the idea of suspension in mass quantities I guess.  
 97 Um...so I would say like in general, I don't really agree with it. In school suspension is different,  
 98 but I don't agree with like suspension too much. And then yeah, just because I think that if a kid  
 99 is acting up then I think that there's more to it, and sending them home for a day, or more than a  
 100 day, is not necessarily the answer.

101  
 102 *Ok. You used the word effective at first when you were describing that, like you didn't think it*  
 103 *was effective. Tell me more what you mean by that. Tell me a little bit more.*

104  
 105 Uh...well I think that if you are misbehaving in school, then your behavior, it should be...like you  
 106 should be taught how to behave at school, instead of saying like oh you did this, so you can't  
 107 come back for this amount of days. So, I don't think it's teaching them how to act appropriately,

108 I think it's just telling them that what they did is wrong, but not why, or a different way to  
109 respond to it would be or a different act is or so, I think in that sense it's not effective. Like, they  
110 know they're in trouble, and that part of it is very clear, but what they should do or what they did  
111 wrong is not necessarily clear because they aren't learning anything else other than, oh, I did this  
112 and I got in trouble.

113

114 *You also mentioned there being a difference between in school suspension and out of school*  
115 *suspension. Can you tell me more on what your thoughts are around that?*

116

117 I think the way I've seen in school suspension has not been super effective, because it's just a kid  
118 stuck in the office all day because there's nobody um...it's just...they're like given no attention in  
119 the office, so they are just like kinda sitting there, bored. Um...and then I hear a lot of people  
120 saying, like, oh, this is boring, isn't it? You don't want to do this again, do you? So I think an  
121 alternative in school suspension would be like you're in school like talking about what you did  
122 and what you could have done...like reflecting on why you are there, and not just like you are  
123 stuck there. Because I've had a kid that's had an in school suspension a couple times, and he  
124 comes back not knowing what happened...like, he just come back like, oh, I had a break for a day  
125 or a day long break is what he thinks of it. And that's obviously not what it is...and so I think if  
126 there was more structure around in school suspension, like your reflecting on what you did and  
127 kinda like even problem solving what you could do next time if this situation happens again. I  
128 think that there's a more um...more effective way to have in school suspension.

129

130 *So, the student that comes back thinking that they just had a day break, what is their behavior*  
131 *like when they come back? Do you see an increase or a decrease in behavior, or does it just*  
132 *kind of depend?*

133

134 The student is pretty inconsistent so it's pretty hard to say, but the day that he comes back is  
135 usually...fine...like I can't think of anything crazy that's happened on the day he comes back, but  
136 it definitely does not change his behavior long term. Um...the one thing that's changed his  
137 behavior that I've noticed is that he's gained...like he's grown a relationships with um two adults  
138 in the building and so...when he takes a break, he goes to them. But like, the in school  
139 suspension aspect of it I don't think has made a huge difference. I think that he gets in trouble at  
140 home because of it and there's an element of fear involved in it, but not like a  
141 reflective...like...I'm going to change my behavior. He doesn't come back like wanting to  
142 change his behavior by any means. He doesn't come back with like an escalated behavior  
143 either...so, he just comes back himself.

144

145 *Ok. What are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think efforts at reducing*  
146 *suspensions within your district or school have been effective?*

147

148 I'm kinda conflicted, because I really do like the idea of reducing suspensions, but not at the cost  
149 of like not...um...addressing behavior. I don't like the idea of like, well, we can only have this  
150 number of suspensions, so we cannot suspend this time, but next time we can. Like, if it happens

151 again, then we will. Because, like, it's not consistent for the kids is what I've seen. It's like,  
152 well, he hit a kid this time, but if he does it again, then we'll suspend him because they just  
153 wanna keep this number low. I think that like, in this district, there was a big, hefty goal of like a  
154 certain percentage of suspensions or something, and I think that there were a lot of kids that  
155 should have been disciplined that weren't...um...from what I've seen. But, I do really like the  
156 idea of long-term reducing the suspension rate, but there needs to be like a redirection of  
157 behavior, as opposed to just like, we're just not going to suspend anyone. Like..um...an effort to  
158 like change behavior, as opposed to just changing the discipline around it I guess. I think they  
159 should go like, hand in hand, as opposed to just not disciplining or giving a consequence to  
160 anything.

161  
162 *Being a new teacher and coming into the district when they were in the middle of this effort, how*  
163 *was that communicated to you? What was the communication around student behavior,*  
164 *discipline, suspension?*

165  
166 Um, it wasn't. I would say it wasn't communicated at all. I think it was like mentioned in a few  
167 like really lengthy meetings, just like the overall goals, not necessarily around suspension, but  
168 like the whole 2020 goals, it was just thrown into the mix in one of those very long meetings.  
169 But there was never like a meeting or a conversation about what discipline looks like or anything  
170 like that.

171  
172 *What do you think about that?*

173  
174 Um...I wish that I would have been given more training, like definitely around discipline, and  
175 like how to handle it on my own in the classroom. Because, especially when I was student  
176 teaching, we didn't really have any behavior issues, like at all really. And then this year I  
177 walked into a class full of them, and so I did not really know how to respond to them. And I  
178 think if I would have responded differently in the first two months of school, I would have set  
179 myself up a lot better than I did. Um...and I would have been more successful earlier on than  
180 figuring it out later and kinda problem solving and back tracking from what I already...I didn't  
181 really know what to do. So I think just training around that would have been nice. Not even  
182 district...not even like about the district goals or anything, but just about like basic classroom  
183 management with really difficult kids would have been nice.

184  
185 *Ok. What about communication at the school level around discipline and policies and response?*  
186

187 I would still like more of that. Like I was saying, like with Tier one, two, and three, it's so  
188 confusing to me. I have to ask my teaching partner like all the time, like, is this kid a tier two?  
189 Why do you think they're a tier three? Yeah...I have to constantly ask. Uh...and so I would love  
190 to have more communication on what supports I am able to get for each kid and who to go to for  
191 that, and what forms do I need to get, and all this...because I feel like I go to one person all the  
192 time, and I think that she just takes it on, cause she is great, but I think that I am like putting too  
193 much on her because she is the only person I know to go to.



194  
 195 *You've used the words like tier one, tier two, tier three a lot. Everyone has their own definition*  
 196 *of those. Are those terms that are used within your building? Are they used to describe not only*  
 197 *behaviors, but also responses to behaviors as well? Like, is there plans in place around this is*  
 198 *what we do with a tier two or a tier three, or is it just kind of like language that is used to*  
 199 *describe?*

200  
 201 That is a good question. I believe...well, my understanding is that...and this could be wrong,  
 202 because like I said, I am not fully clear on it...but from my understanding, is that there are  
 203 different levels of behavior and that they do have like different types of responses. Tier one from  
 204 my understanding is like a gen...like the majority of students...like it's things like procedures,  
 205 and those are the responses to tier one kids...those are just your average classroom behaviors.  
 206 And then responses to tier two are like...I have like a meeting with all of these people about what  
 207 I would call like tier two people...the tier two kids I mean...and so the responses to those are  
 208 different because they are more severe. And so, my understanding of it is very general, but what  
 209 I get is that the behaviors in tier one, tier two, tier three...they increase as they go up, and then the  
 210 responses also increase to match the behaviors. So, does that answer your question.

211  
 212 *Yeah. I was just curious how it was defined in your building. Ok, tell me what you know about*  
 213 *restorative justice.*

214  
 215 Um, I really wish I could tell you a lot more, but I don't know a whole lot about restorative  
 216 justice. I know that it's related to discipline and that it's kinda an outlook on how we discipline  
 217 kids. Um...and I've heard about it in terms of reducing suspension, like within my building and  
 218 people I've talked to about it. But, I guess what I understand about it is that it's just like a way to  
 219 get...um...like a way to match the crime to the discipline I guess, and like to have kids really  
 220 work through it on their own. They use problem solving skills and they match...they...like use  
 221 what they've learned and kinda what they bring to solve their own problems and it's a way to  
 222 like dispute these behaviors and make them go...minimize. So I wish I could tell you a whole lot  
 223 more about it...um...but it's a word that gets thrown around my building a lot, but I've never  
 224 really learned a lot about it.

225  
 226 *Thrown around by who?*

227  
 228 Umm...administrators I would say. It's like, they talk about the books they've read about it, and  
 229 like in meetings they talk about it...like they just throw it around...like, we are working on  
 230 restorative justice, like that kind of a thing, and I feel like I've never...I just hear the word a lot...I  
 231 hear the phrase and I hear things that go along with it and I know that like it has to do with  
 232 discipline and it has to do with behavior, but I am not sure what exactly they are talking about.

233  
 234 *So, with whatever you know about restorative justice, or have heard, or in context, what are your*  
 235 *initial thoughts and feelings about restorative justice?*

236

237 Um...well, I feel confused a little bit...[chuckles]...but, um, from what I've heard about it and  
 238 from the people who have talked to me about it...um, I think that it's great, but I don't want to  
 239 speak too highly or too low about it, because I don't know a lot about it. Um...and so, my  
 240 thoughts are mostly like curiosities...I just have a lot of questions about it...what it looks like, and  
 241 how it's implemented, and so...but I mean, my feelings are good about it because I've not heard  
 242 anything bad about it.

243

244 *Ok. When you say you think it's great, what about what you've heard makes you think it would*  
 245 *be great?*

246

247 I think just the people who've talked with me about it, I trust them, and I know that like I  
 248 have...similar mindsets as them...the people I've been talking to about it. So I think that, like  
 249 when it's just thrown around in meetings, like the context behind it is...I agree with. So, my  
 250 initial thought is like, oh, well, if I agree with everything we are saying, then I probably agree  
 251 with restorative justice and what it looks like. Yeah.

252

253 *Ok. When you say you agree with the context behind it, what is the context behind it?*

254

255 Um...well we talk...well, when it's brought up, are talking about like social emotional learning  
 256 and just talking about being like culturally responsive and so I agree with like everything we are  
 257 talking about in like those contexts, and being more culturally responsive in the classroom and  
 258 stuff...that's when it's been brought up, and so, yeah, I've just been kinda like, well, I would  
 259 probably agree with that if I knew more about it.

260

261 *Ok. Also, you said that people who were saying kind of like low level information about it with*  
 262 *you, and people that tend to be people you have similar mindsets to. Tell me about that a little*  
 263 *bit more, and like what would somebody with a different mindset be thinking?*

264

265 Um...well, I guess I've talked to my principal about it...I haven't talked to her about this, but I've  
 266 talked with her about being culturally responsive, like I had like a mini-interview with her and  
 267 stuff, and that's all we really talked about...um...and so she has been the person that will kind of  
 268 like, bring it up here and there in meetings and such, and since I know that I agree with her on  
 269 what being a culturally responsive teacher looks like...that's something different, but I kinda just  
 270 kind of put them together...and so, I agree with her on being culturally responsive, and so  
 271 restorative justice...I guess I will kind of trust her going into that. But, someone with a different  
 272 mindset, I have no idea what that would look like because I don't really fully understand what  
 273 restorative justice looks like either.

274

275 *Ok. Are there people you would say that have different mindsets just in general around discipline*  
 276 *or culturally responsive teaching?*

277

278 Not at my school, but in my life, yeah. Like, my parents...like people that aren't really in  
 279 education I think...yes. [chuckles] It would be very different...like, for example, my parents

280 don't really understand anything about education, like they do, but they went to school a long  
 281 time ago and it's a lot different. So when I talk to them, their opinions are like, well, just kick  
 282 them out. They shouldn't be in your school. You shouldn't let them be in your class. So that's  
 283 like a very polar opposite mindset...it's like, well, they hit a kid, so they need to be kicked out of  
 284 that school. That would be a mindset that I would definitely not identify with.

285

286 *Ok. Tell me more about...because it sounds like restorative justice has maybe sometimes been*  
 287 *lumped into culturally responsive teaching, how would you describe culturally responsive*  
 288 *teaching?*

289

290 Um...I would just describe it...I mean, there's different...so I think about it in the different levels  
 291 of it...and so, I just think of it as though you are bringing like students' cultures and their beliefs  
 292 and you are like integrating it into teaching...and so you are able to reach them more effectively  
 293 and in different ways. And so, you aren't just like teaching an um...a group of kids...it's like not  
 294 a traditional way...it wouldn't look traditional I guess. And so, you bring in things that they're  
 295 familiar with, that they believe, like songs and dances and whatever they might be comfortable  
 296 with, and you're delivering them..um...like all this information in ways that make sense to them,  
 297 as opposed to ways that make sense to me.

298

299 *Ok. How does that play into discipline? Or how it has been brought up in terms of discipline?*

300

301 Um...I don't...well, I am not sure how it has been brought up I guess. But, how I've related it to  
 302 discipline, is just that I just think of these kids and how they get disciplined at home, and how  
 303 different that looks at school. Um...and that's probably, for a lot of kids, like, even the way I see  
 304 their parents interact with them....and it's not negative, or positive, it's just their  
 305 interactions...and it's very different than how a teacher interacts with them or how somebody at  
 306 school interacts with them...and so, making that match something more to what it looks like at  
 307 home or what they're used to, or making them connect like...connect themselves...like, I don't  
 308 know. I guess, just making it more comfortable and recognizable to them.

309

310 *Ok. You said, your mindset, your attitude, it differs than maybe your parents around discipline,*  
 311 *like their belief is that the kids need to be kicked out of school. What do you think for you has*  
 312 *made that difference? Like, why is your attitude about it different than your parents or maybe*  
 313 *someone else who has a different attitude is?*

314

315 Um...I don't know...I think a part of it is just my personality. But, then I think also, school was a  
 316 lot different for them. Like, I think that's how it was for them when they were in school, and  
 317 then when I was in school...the behaviors in my classroom when I was younger were not nearly  
 318 what they are now. I think that it's just become this like norm of....well, this is just how kids act  
 319 now. Like this would be like kicking everyone out type of thing. Um...but then I also think that  
 320 there is a level of compassion...and I want to understand these kids. I don't want just kick them  
 321 out and...so I think it's a bunch of different things, but I think it's just something they've  
 322 never...they're not used to or have never been exposed to...I think is the most prominent reason.

323

324 *So, you are speaking about your parents and saying they just don't have experience in the*  
 325 *classroom, so maybe that's why they kind of have a different attitude about it. What would you*  
 326 *say about, or guess around, teachers who have a similar attitude as your parents do? Like, let's*  
 327 *say there is a teacher who has a similar attitude as your parents, like, a student misbehaves and*  
 328 *they need to be kicked out. Why do you think they would think or feel that?*

329

330 Um...honestly because they are probably burnt out. They've probably had a lot of kids do that  
 331 same thing, year after year, and they aren't seeing any...um...changes or they're not seeing their  
 332 behavior change. Or even like...there's a lot of talk in my building about how every classroom  
 333 has a behavior...like, every classroom has a tough kid or a few or whatever...so I think that if you  
 334 get that year after year after year, and nothing is changing and the behaviors are just staying  
 335 really difficult, then I think it would be really easy to get into that mindset of, well, whatever we  
 336 are doing is not working and they need to leave. And so I think just being burnt out would be a  
 337 huge part of it.

338

339 *Ok. You talk a lot about wanting to change behavior and like how that would be the goal. Have*  
 340 *you found...I know this is your first year of teaching...but what have you found to be really*  
 341 *effective in changing behavior? You spoke about a few things earlier, but I'm curious if you had*  
 342 *to just highlight a few things you have noticed that have really helped, or maybe not causing a*  
 343 *complete change, but maybe are impacting in a positive way. What would you call out as being*  
 344 *important?*

345

346 Um...I think first and foremost, having a relationship with the kids is the most important in  
 347 changing their behavior cause even as an adult, if I don't like someone, chances are, I'm not  
 348 going to want to change who I am for them. So, I mean, as a kid...it's probably definitely like  
 349 that. You know...you need to like who...who...who you're surrounded by to even feel influenced  
 350 to change anything. So I think having a relationship with kids is the most important for sure.

351

352 *Ok. Anything else?*

353

354 Oh, well, I mean there's a lot of factors, but...consistency, I think is key, because if...they get in  
 355 trouble for something one day and then they do the same thing the next day and they don't get in  
 356 trouble, then...they are going to be really confused on what's expected of them. So,  
 357 consistency...and then, um...I don't know what it would be called, I guess equity...but, they need  
 358 to understand why what they are doing is not acceptable or why...you can't just be like, well, you  
 359 can't scream because I said so. There has to be an explanation and a reason...a justifiable reason  
 360 behind it. So I think those three things play the biggest part in behavior change.

361

362 *Ok...Alright, if you were to try restorative justice, given what you know about it or what you've*  
 363 *heard...in your classroom or in your school, what support would you need? And you can base*  
 364 *this is off of whatever you've heard about what restorative justice might be. If you were going to*  
 365 *try it with whatever you know it to be right now, what kind of support would you need?*

366  
 367 Um...definitely some training on behind what it is...but for me, what helps the most is seeing  
 368 something in action, or, seeing examples of this is what it looks like in action...these are the steps  
 369 you need to take...so seeing it...well, getting training on what it is and the ins and outs of it, but  
 370 then also examples of...um...like where it's been used in the same grade level as I am in.  
 371 Because I feel like with some trainings that like we've been doing, not around this at all, but like  
 372 different things...there's an example of like a sixth grade teacher doing it, but I can't find myself  
 373 applying it to my class at all. And so, that really is a huge thing, seeing it in action in the same  
 374 age group that I'm teaching...um...is something that I would really need. And also just  
 375 um...training to learn what it actually is.

376  
 377 *Let's pretend we are talking about the Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 responses...and you were just talking*  
 378 *about that in general...what would training look like, or be the most effective for you as a*  
 379 *teacher, if you were to implement a new behavior system? If you could describe the perfect*  
 380 *training...in terms of how long it is, how frequent it is...who does it, whose involved, what your*  
 381 *involvement is...what would you say, as a new teacher, is the best or effective way so that you*  
 382 *can be trained to implement it really well?*

383  
 384 Um...I think, like a huge part of it is...like what I was saying...is being lumped with people that  
 385 are in my same age group or grade band. Because, talking to a sixth grade teacher about it is  
 386 helpful, but not nearly as helpful as talking with another second grade teacher about experiences  
 387 they've had...so talking about that. Um...and then I think also like in a perfect world, and a  
 388 perfect training world, being trained by somebody who knows the kids that I am dealing with  
 389 and knows their behaviors, would be the most effective...um...because they can use really clear  
 390 examples...like, oh, Timmy, you could do this for Timmy when he does this...or  
 391 whatever...um...and so, in a perfect training world, having somebody that knows your kids and  
 392 what behaviors you're dealing with. And um...length wise, I think just long enough that...to get  
 393 in depth on each...whether it's a tier, or different behavior categories or whatever it might be...to  
 394 get just in depth enough to really understand the behavior and the response I guess. So, I don't  
 395 know how long that would be, but long enough. [chuckles]

396  
 397 *Let's say you go back to school after break and your principal or someone in your building says,*  
 398 *ok, we are going to start restorative justice...what would you be thinking, and what questions*  
 399 *would you have? What would be going on in your head?*

400  
 401 [chuckles] Umm...there would be a lot going on in my head. I would definitely ask for support  
 402 right away and asking what this looks like, and what's expected of me, in certain scenarios. So,  
 403 like, there's certain things that happen in my class like you know, weekly, every other day, or  
 404 that kind of thing...like, they are pretty consistent. So I would ask things like, when this happens,  
 405 what does it look like with restorative justice? What do I do? Um...so like, specific examples  
 406 that I could apply to like other scenarios as well. Um...but there would be some panic happening  
 407 in my head just because I am so unclear about it. But then so I would just ask her to really, really

408 clearly explain what it looks like and what is expected of me and what I should be expecting of  
409 my students.

410

411 *Ok. What do you think needs to be in place, either up front or ongoing, for restorative justice*  
412 *responses to be effective?*

413

414 Um...I think...from what little I know about it, I think, just teachers need to be on the same page.  
415 I think for any disciplinary like procedures, I think teachers and administration need to be on the  
416 same page so there's a level of consistency with kids throughout the building. So, if I have a kid  
417 in my class, the discipline is the same when they're at recess, or when they're at lunch, or  
418 wherever, then it would be in my classroom. If they have the same expectations throughout, then  
419 the same responses to when that expectation is not met...so, whatever that would look like with  
420 restorative justice, I think that teachers need to be on the same page...very explicitly of what's  
421 expected and what's the response to not meeting the expectations.

422

423 *What is the effect when teachers, or other people in the building, are not on the same page?*

424

425 Um...I think, that's when behavior issues occur. Like, the...just like a small example...if like kids  
426 are running in the hallway, if some teachers care and some teachers don't, then kids are always  
427 going to test their luck and run in the hallways...so, it's just a small example, but I think that kids  
428 need to know that if this is unacceptable, this is not acceptable anywhere, not just in here. Then  
429 there's also like a level of...um...favoring certain teachers or favoring classrooms or whatever it  
430 might be...then you grow this like hatred toward your teacher because they're so mean and you  
431 know...there's a different level of respect that you get from students if you're holding them  
432 accountable and other teachers are not.

433

434 *What about, you speak about consistency a lot...what about consistency from administration?*

435

436 I think that's also very, very important. So I think consistency with how they...with how often  
437 they respond is really, really important, but I know that there's a lot of other things going on,  
438 right? So...um...I totally get that...but I think their consistency on actually responding to calls or  
439 responding to issues...I think that's really important. Um...but then also their consistency in what  
440 their response is, is really important. If the principal is coming to your room...and you are a  
441 student....they are coming for you and you have no idea what's going to happen...are they in bad  
442 mood and they are going to suspend me...or are they in a good mood and they are just going to  
443 give me a break...then that creates like a whole new level of like fear and anxiety in a student.  
444 Where like if you know that she's just coming to go on a walk and give me a break, then it's like  
445 a...you know what to expect...and so I think that's more effective...the more consistency the  
446 better.

447

448 *You said something there that I am going to ask a little bit more on. You said, students might not*  
449 *know if the administrator or whoever is coming...if they are in a good mood, they might respond*  
450 *this way...if they are in a bad mood, they might respond that way. Um...is that something you*

451 *notice, or you think is like a need? Do you see that, or if you, you spoke a little bit about the*  
 452 *impact on kids, but what about the impact on teacher when...if it's not a consistent thing?*

453  
 454 Um...I don't notice it from our administration really...but to honest, I know myself...I catch  
 455 myself in that...if, like, my patience is really low one day, I have to be super aware of it,  
 456 like...just because I do believe that being consistent is key for kids. And so, that's something that  
 457 I like catch myself a lot in...like, I know that I am like really tired today, so I need to...so, I don't  
 458 notice it really with administration, or I haven't at all...but, I know that we are all like humans,  
 459 and so I know it is there.

460  
 461 *So the last question is, is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs, your*  
 462 *thoughts, your opinions...about any of these things...student behavior, discipline, suspensions,*  
 463 *restorative justice, that you would like to share or think would be helpful to this study?*

464  
 465 Um...I guess just that...like...I don't know a lot about it at all, but I really wish that I did. And so,  
 466 just...I wish...I mean, I guess my school is not really implementing it or anything, but if they ever  
 467 do, or if they are thinking about it, I really hope that there's...that I am able to learn lots more  
 468 about it. Um...is there anything else you want to know?

469  
 470 *I'm just curious from something you said right there. What is your take on...your school is not*  
 471 *implementing restorative justice, yet, there are people in your building like talking about it, or*  
 472 *like throwing out the term...how do you balance those? How would you describe maybe where*  
 473 *your building is at with restorative justice?*

474  
 475 Um...I have no idea, so I don't really want to speak on it at all...but, I think that there's so much  
 476 being implemented...it feels like all the time...that just the different things we're expected to be  
 477 doing...that when this term is just like thrown around, I'm like...well, I am just going to wait until  
 478 they tell me that I have to do this because I am focusing on like A, B, and C right now...and like I  
 479 need to figure out how to do what she is asking me to do now, before I have to figure out what  
 480 she might be talking about in the future. So, I think that there's a lot on our plates  
 481 already...especially for me, I guess I can't really say we...I'm talking for myself...there's a lot on  
 482 my plate I feel that I am being asked to do...and so, I find myself just not wanting to think about  
 483 this potential thing that's probably going to be coming soon. So...and I don't know where they  
 484 are at in like implementing...I don't want to speak on that because I have like no idea.

485  
 486 *One other thing...as a teacher, if you could describe or build your like ideal behavior response*  
 487 *system, within your classroom or within your school, what do you think needs to be in that*  
 488 *system and what would it look like? If you had whatever resources you needed....just your dream*  
 489 *response to student behavior...what would that look like?*

490  
 491 Well, more people for sure. Um...not necessarily like one on ones, but um...people that were  
 492 there to consistently like remind kids of what their behavior should be...like kids that are not  
 493 capable of regulating themselves and regulating their own behavior, I think that it would be

494 helpful to have just somebody there when it's needed...like when they need help regulating...just  
 495 be able to call and have somebody work with them on regulating their behavior or their  
 496 mood...even just when it is needed, would be helpful for a lot of my kids. Um...I think that  
 497 there's also like a level of...or needs to be a level of like openness with all kids and um...like the  
 498 discussion of equity and what like every kid needs different things...and having that open  
 499 discussion is really needed because I've had the issue of like, well this kid is the worst behaved  
 500 in class, like why is he getting rewards all the time. So that was like a big issue...so just like  
 501 being very open about what kids need and it's not a secret and it's like really open and so  
 502 everyone is on the same page...like students and adults. Um...but yeah, I think just having a  
 503 person who can come and that knows this kid that they are working with and can really just work  
 504 with them on problem solving skills and like regulating skills on a regular basis would be like  
 505 really helpful for a lot of my kids. So that they can...like a gradual release...so they can work on  
 506 like doing that themselves eventually. Those are the two things I think of the most.

507

508 *Ok. Tell me a little more about um...you said, students who sometimes have the most challenging*  
 509 *behavior apparently are then rewarded often. Can you tell me a little bit more about that? What*  
 510 *do you mean by that? And why is that challenging or can maybe be a conflict?*

511

512 Yeah...so, totally. So, like, a normal...like what I would consider an average student...like, they  
 513 know that they need to sit on the carpet, they know they need to like, keep their hands to  
 514 themselves...they know these basic school norms. Where, some of my other kids don't...or just  
 515 aren't able to control their bodies...so they will get rewarded for like you were here for five  
 516 minutes and you didn't hit anybody...or, you um...didn't um...you know...physically hurt  
 517 anybody for the past ten minutes...or....like...they're...I'm praising them for a lot smaller things  
 518 because that's what they can handle themselves...where other kids in my class, it's like, no, you  
 519 are expected to sit on the carpet for fifteen minutes and not move...or not get off the carpet...and  
 520 so, I guess, we are like rewarding kids based on what they can handle themselves, or what we  
 521 think they can handle is more accurate. Um...and so, some kids just need constant praise and like  
 522 constant rewarding of these behaviors so they can more...more...like more successful. And that  
 523 doesn't make sense to kids...they are like, well I was good for fifteen minutes and I haven't  
 524 gotten anything. They've been sitting for three and they got a piece of candy or they got a  
 525 star...and so...yeah...that's the issue that I see in my class, that there's a level of...it doesn't seem  
 526 fair to a lot of kids.

527

528 *Ok. Does it seem effective for those kids that need the constant praise or smaller chunks of*  
 529 *reward and reinforcement?*

530

531 Um...some...it's not consistent. But, when it helps, it helps. And when it doesn't, it doesn't.  
 532 And so, I would say it helps more often than not. Um...I use like a star chart rewards system, and  
 533 so sometimes it's like I see them, and I write like a nonverbal star just to kind of remind them,  
 534 you are doing great and I see you...um...and then like when they reach ten stars they get like to  
 535 choose from like their list of rewards...and some are small, like ten minutes of computer time,



536 and some are bigger. So it helps them sometimes, but sometimes it's like, I don't care about that  
537 chart and I am going to do what I am going to do...so it's not consistent.

538

539 *So, what's your take on the impact on student behavior on other students? You talked a bit*  
540 *about the impact of the rewards system on other students, but what about the impact of certain*  
541 *kids' behavior on other students? Whether it is student behavior that is just kind of, dangerous*  
542 *in general, or behavior that is more aggressive toward other students. What do you see is the*  
543 *impact on other kids, and how do you respond to that...or not even respond to it, but what's your*  
544 *thought about that?*

545

546 It's something I have thought about a lot actually, because I have um...some kids where their  
547 behavior...like it affects me on a daily basis...so I can only imagine what it does to students who  
548 have been with this kid for three years. So I think, it bothers me a lot how much they are  
549 affected by it. But, I think that they've grown so used to ignoring it...it's like shocking to me all  
550 the time, when, I have one kid screaming at the top of his lungs, and it doesn't seem to phase  
551 anybody in class. It just blows my mind that they seemingly can ignore this behavior. But, it's  
552 concerning that they are going to grow up learning to ignore behavior like that, and just learn to  
553 accept it...and I, personally, just would not want them to do that. Like, I don't think you should  
554 just accept behavior like this. So, I've talked to some people about it, and some...when...when  
555 bigger things happen, like not just when he is screaming...but there are times when the kids have  
556 all seen him hit me...and that just...we have pretty lengthy conversations about it...where like, I  
557 let them ask me questions about it...and I let them know, this behavior is not okay....not only to  
558 teachers, but to each other, to anybody. It's never ok to hit anybody...that kind of a thing. But I  
559 can see that a lot of kids are pretty checked out...like...just like they ignore the behavior, the  
560 ignore the talks about it, I've noticed. And so, I don't know if that's just from...this is their third  
561 year of seeing it, or...I'm not sure what it is. But, it's something that's really bothered me.

562

563 *What about behavior between kids that maybe not be by a student that has tier three*  
564 *behaviors...but maybe, like, there was a fight on the playground...or a disagreement, or two kids*  
565 *get in a conflict...not necessarily a student that has very specific needs, but more just kind of*  
566 *general student behavior and discipline that might pop up. Like, let's say, two kids go out on the*  
567 *playground and a fight pops up, and they come back into your classroom...what to you is*  
568 *important to address, resolve...back in the classroom after something like that has happened?*

569

570 Um...I think it is really important to like address it and resolve it period...because...I see a lot of  
571 teachers....not necessarily just teachers...but I see a lot of brushing it off, like, oh, they'll get over  
572 it and I just have to teach kind of thing...and I totally get that. But I also think that um...it's  
573 important for the kids to work to resolve it...not necessarily themselves, but I think...just so they  
574 aren't just like holding this anger in and then the next recess they are just going to go out and  
575 fight again. Um...but I don't know how much that...I haven't thought a lot about that kind of  
576 behavior affecting the other kids really...and even though it obviously does...but I haven't  
577 thought about it as much. But, I think it's important that if there is any student conflict, for it to

578 be resolved thoroughly, not just like forcing them to apologize to each other. I think they need to  
579 like talk about what happened...depending on the kids and what happened.

580

581 *You said some people might respond in a way of just, I just need to get to teaching, so I am not*  
582 *going to respond to this. Tell me more about that. What do you see is that kind of response?*  
583 *Why would someone have that response? You said you might understand why they would.*

584

585 Well I think that's what you have to do if you have like twenty other kids that are ready to do  
586 what you are doing, and there's two kids that are upset, I think that um...that's when a support  
587 would be really nice...like somebody that can come in and help resolve this conflict while you  
588 are teaching...because, realistically, if they are that angry, they are not going to be learning  
589 anyways...so there is no point in them sitting through a lesson and pretending they are listening  
590 when they are just thinking about what just happened. But I think that as a teacher, realistically  
591 you can't just stop everything and resolve this conflict cause it happens every day...and you  
592 know...you would never teach anything. So I think that's where like a support would...is  
593 needed...and would come in and help.

594

595 *Alright, thank you. That is all of my questions unless you have anything else.*

596

597 I don't think so.

598

599 *Ok. Thank you!*

Teacher 3 [Pseudo Name Shelly]; Female; 40 years; 17 years teaching  
12/19/17; 11:30 am; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
Currently teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 3: My name is [Shelly] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 Um...I would say it depends on what the behavior is...um...if it's a minor behavior, I try to  
9 correct it and give positive feedback to those kids who are doing the correct thing and see if that  
10 will impact the student and have them think about it and fix it. Um...if not, I might go and say,  
11 hey, can you please keep your hands to yourself? Or, you need to sit this way, or you need to sit  
12 this way. Uh, I try to keep a, an upbeat, positive tone in my voice all the time. Um...and  
13 sometimes it's effective...I think it just depends on the child cause some children [laughs] are  
14 much harder to be effective with. Um...and then I usually can get the child to correct their  
15 behavior so...it's successful most times.

16

17 *What about non-minor issues?*

18

19 Uh, major issues, especially if another child is in danger or if there is a safety thing, I will step in  
20 immediately and stop what I am doing and probably use a...a louder voice to make an impact of  
21 like...this is important, you need to fix it now...um kind of mentality, but always still like with a  
22 smile on my face. Where I might be loud and I might be firm, but I still have a smile on my face  
23 of like ok, now! You know, kind of thing. So...I think behavior wise, I am pretty effective for  
24 most students...I feel that I can control a lot of situations without like...things escalating so...

25

26 *Do you think that your kind of response to misbehavior has changed over the course of your*  
27 *teaching career?*

28

29 Um...yes and no. I think with years experience I've learned a lot of different strategies to  
30 use...um...from when I first started teaching, my first year. I taught older kids, in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and  
31 their behavior was...I was just shocked...I didn't even know what to do. [Laughs]. Um...so, I  
32 definitely have learned a lot over the years. Kids, unfortunately, behavior has gotten a lot worse  
33 over the years. Um...even though I am going down grade levels, um...it, it has definitely  
34 changed. I taught in Hawaii for three years, and that was a whole different type of atmosphere as  
35 well. Um...two of those years being on a military base, so...parents were expecting very  
36 like...rigid um...strict behavior. Um...so, it has definitely changed, through I think just trainings,  
37 just through knowledge of kids, knowledge of cultures...like, I think it's changed a lot over the  
38 years. And being more effective in less time, and less draining.

39

40 *What do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student? And also, how would you define*  
41 *discipline?*

42

43 Um...I think the purpose of disciplining the child is to help them be successful and just do the  
44 right thing in the classroom. Um...I don't know...I don't do a lot of actual discipline, like, oh  
45 you're in trouble, you're in time out. It's more of corrective behavior. Um...to get them on the  
46 right track to be successful. Um...obviously there are times for discipline...if another student is  
47 hurt. Um...even with like straight up defiance, I'm not like oh, you need to lose your recess. It's  
48 like no...we need to have a conversation about how we are going to fix this so I feel respected  
49 and you feel respected. Um...cause them losing recess or them like sitting and like out of  
50 something, isn't going to fix their behavior. I think the conversation is...you might have that  
51 conversation during recess...[chuckles]...but it is...but the point isn't for them to lose their recess,  
52 it is for them to get on the right track of making good choices and being successful. I think the  
53 whole goal, as a teacher, is that you want your kids to be successful. If they can't behave  
54 correctly and they impact those students around them, and they impact you as a teacher being  
55 able to do your job...then you need to step in to fix that...whether it be conversation, or whether  
56 it be, let's come up with a plan, of like, hey...this isn't working. Like, you obviously have a  
57 problem...either with the assignment, is it too hard? Do I need to modify it? Is it too easy? Do I  
58 need to challenge you? Is it, you don't have a clue what you are doing and we need to get you  
59 some more help? Um...kind of behavior...I mean, usually the root of behavior isn't because they

60 just want to do it. There's usually an underlying reason. Not all cases...[laughs]...I have since  
 61 found out. But, um...I think generally...I, I don't know if I would call it discipline necessarily,  
 62 but I use a lot of...I try to avoid sending kids to the office at all means, because when they are out  
 63 of the classroom, they are missing education. So...

64

65 *You said you would have a conversation with students. What would that conversation consist of,*  
 66 *or what would the framework of that conversation be?*

67

68 Um, I think that trying to get to the issue more...like, hey, why are you doing this? Did you wake  
 69 up and have a bad day? Um...it's funny because the mood meter has actually come into play a  
 70 lot...of like kids saying, I'm grumpy. My mom woke me up early and I just wanted to sleep. Or  
 71 like, I stayed up really late and had to get up early. And it's like, hmm, maybe that's why you're  
 72 in a bad mood today. Um...so, just kind of talking about like...ok, tomorrow, how could we fix  
 73 this? Like, maybe you can go to bed earlier, and you can say, Mom, can you wake me up in a  
 74 different way, and not yell at me, can you just like come and tap me? Or like, let's learn to raise  
 75 our hand. If it's too hard, don't just sit there and get mad. If you raise your hand, I might not be  
 76 able to come to you right away, be patient...let's see if we can figure it out. The more kind of  
 77 coming up with plans with how to fix it. If it's a kid who's hitting all the time, if it's a kid who's  
 78 swearing all the time...then the conversation is a little bit different. It's more like, this is  
 79 unacceptable. I can't have you be unsafe to yourself, unsafe to me, unsafe to your classmates. It  
 80 isn't more of like, oh, how are you today? No. It's more like, in my classroom it's not allowed.  
 81 So it's more of a, not an easy going conversation. Where as...and that is very rare I would say.  
 82 In my seventeen years, I've had a couple of years where there's one child that will do that. But  
 83 um...generally speaking, I think that um...you can earn their respect and they appreciate or...if  
 84 you earn their respect, they're going to behave for you. And nine times out of ten, they do...in  
 85 my experience.

86

87 *What about, it sounds like a lot of what you are describing are behaviors in the classroom, or*  
 88 *directed toward the teacher. What about student to student conflicts? How do you handle that?*

89

90 I've actually been really lucky...um...when I taught in older grades, it was a little more of the...he  
 91 said, she said, I don't like them, the gossipy kind of turning one kid against another kid.  
 92 Um...that was the beginning of my career, the older kids. And um...it was more challenging  
 93 because there was um...more people involved. It wasn't a one on one or two on one situation. In  
 94 primary grades, in like my K-1 experience, it hasn't happened too often at all, where I've had to  
 95 deal with it. It's a quick like, hey, we are all friends...we are all friends in Kindergarten, we are  
 96 all friends in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Let's figure out how we can get along. And it's kind of like solved the  
 97 issue, it hasn't...it hasn't been a repetitive thing where it lasts more than like five  
 98 minutes...[chuckles]...it's more of like oh I am young and I am mad that he didn't share the toy  
 99 type of thing, and then it's over. Um...so, in the older grades, I would try to like, ok, let me hear  
 100 both sides of the story, see what the problem was, see if I could solve it. If it was just like an  
 101 attitude thing, like, she said this, he said this. Then I was like, ok, you know, we need to like get  
 102 over it, figure it out, and move on....cause what is the point of this. And...I mean that was a long

103 time ago to be honest. But, um...I don't feel like there was ever anything that was detrimental  
 104 that lasted for like more than a day. So um...yeah, I would say if you talked to any principal that  
 105 I've worked under, there would be very few instances where I've had to deal with them, unless it  
 106 was a major behavior. I really try to solve all the problems in the classroom, and get it figured  
 107 out. And if I have to go to the resort of calling the parents and saying, hey, I'm noticing this. Did  
 108 something change at home? Is there something I should know? And sometimes there is major  
 109 things that happen at home that kinda give a little bit more validity to, oh, this is why they are  
 110 acting out, or like...kind of stuff like that, but...generally, I feel like my classrooms have been  
 111 pretty, behaviorally wise, ok. So...

112  
 113 *You mentioned, if you earn students' respect, then often they will behave. How do you go about*  
 114 *earning their respect? Or what does that look like?*

115  
 116 Um...I think making a connection with them, I think getting to know them on a different level  
 117 then just teacher mode. I've always been a firm believer of making that connection. I've  
 118 worked with teachers that wouldn't tell their students anything about them. They wouldn't tell  
 119 them like their first name...they wouldn't tell them anything. Um...I've always found it to be, I  
 120 don't know, very worth it, to share my life with them. I mean, not every detail, but I tell them  
 121 about my dog, I tell them about my kids. I write stories about them. And they are all asking  
 122 me...even parents will say, oh, I heard [daughter's name] you know, got a soccer game this  
 123 weekend. And I am like, oh, I am sure they are sick of hearing about...and they are like, no, they  
 124 love telling me all about it. So it's just like a different connection. It isn't like oh, I'm your best  
 125 friend kind of thing. But it's like, I care about you, and I want you to be successful, so I am  
 126 going to get to know more about you, not your school necessarily. And I want you to know  
 127 about me. I want you to know where I am coming from...um...just even um, when my grandma  
 128 was sick. I would tell them about it, and the kids would come up and like give me hugs, ya  
 129 know? Then, I think, they like truly care. But I feel like that relationship with them and just  
 130 even at [school name] alone, I walk down the walkway, and like twenty kids alone with say, Oh,  
 131 hi Ms. [Last Name], hi Ms. [Last Name], and I'm getting like hugs left and right. So I feel like,  
 132 I've done a good job of like making that relationship outside of the classroom. When you have  
 133 like kids coming back all the time...can I help you? Can I help you? Oh hi! Can I give you a  
 134 hug? Like, you know. That tells me that I am doing what I am supposed to be doing. So...

135  
 136 *Ok. What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? And what do*  
 137 *you think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

138  
 139 Um...well, if a teacher does their role correctly, the administrator should not have to be there. I  
 140 think administrator comes into play on those major, safety behaviors. And um...their job is to  
 141 keep each child safe...so, if one child is disrupting that, then they need to either remove that child  
 142 and figure it out, or work on a plan with a higher level...um...which has definitely been a case in  
 143 multiple situations for me...[chuckles]. Um, I think that a teacher's job in terms of behavior and  
 144 discipline is set up expectations that prevent behaviors from happening. Um...if you know your  
 145 class...and that changes year to year what that's going to look like for sure...just based on what

146 the kids need and how they react...but, I think that if you are aware of what your students need,  
 147 and you are persistent, and you keep with your plan, then um...hopefully those behaviors will be  
 148 very limited and the discipline will not need to happen. I mean, of course, you will always have  
 149 those kids that will push the boundaries, that will always be like, oh I don't care what you say, I  
 150 am just going to do whatever I want to do. Um...and I've definitely had my fair share of  
 151 those...but, 99% of the class wants to be successful. They want to...especially younger grades.  
 152 They may not be able to academically handle it, but they want to make you happy...is what I've  
 153 found. It might be really hard, and they might get frustrated, but that isn't necessarily a  
 154 discipline, it's more of a reaction than a discipline. Or a behavioral issue. So, as a teacher,  
 155 getting to know that about your kid and trying to change that is the role. I feel like, as a teacher,  
 156 if you can figure out what your kids need and change things, and it's not going to be the same for  
 157 each kid, because different kids need different things...um...hopefully your discipline and  
 158 behavior issues will go away.

159  
 160 *What about those few kids? You said, 99% of the kids like want to do what's right and follow the*  
 161 *expectations. How do you work with that 1% of kids that are maybe like defiant, or don't*  
 162 *follow...?*

163  
 164 Well, this year I definitely have one of those. Not even [student name], but just... and I feel like I  
 165 am really working on just having like conversations with him that have like nothing to do with  
 166 school. Like, oh, did you get a haircut? I love your haircut. Oh, what did you do this weekend?  
 167 And he was talking about puppies, and I was like...oh, I am so jealous you get to go see these  
 168 puppies. You know. And just making that connection. And I notice on the days that I have  
 169 those outside conversations with him, that have nothing to do with school, nothing about his  
 170 behavior.... he's much more likely to be successful. Talking to his mom, she's like...he freaks  
 171 out if I look in his backpack, so I don't. Honey, you're his mom. You can do it. You have the  
 172 right to look in his backpack. No matter how much he freaks out...[chuckles]...you know. And  
 173 just like, reassuring her that...don't let him take control of you. He's 7, or 6. And you're an  
 174 adult, kind of. You know. And I've noticed...I've worked really hard this last month of just  
 175 trying to like talk him up as much as I can. Oh, Ms. [Last Name], I did my homework. Oh, Ms.  
 176 [Last Name], can I be your helper? You know, just getting them to do things that make them  
 177 feel special. Not a reward necessarily, but make them feel wanted cause somethings happening  
 178 where they are not feeling wanted somewhere else. And it's helped. It doesn't work  
 179 everyday....and it doesn't necessarily work when they are outside my classroom. But, in my  
 180 classroom, it's been successful.

181  
 182 *You mentioned admin's job is to keep kids safe and to take it to a higher level if needed. Can you*  
 183 *tell me more what that looks like or what you mean?*

184  
 185 Um...in situations where kids are out of control and not safe...um...it is admin or...coming up  
 186 with a plan or... in [student name] instance, having that one on one support, or having another...if  
 187 it isn't a one on one...having another body checking in and able to reach. And if the  
 188 administrator is not there...which is often happening...having someone that either, can come

189 watch my class so I can handle the situation outside the classroom, or coming to help remove  
 190 that child. Um...I have noticed a lot this year, my kids were actually....feeling very unsafe in my  
 191 room. They would flinch...they would be like ahhh...anytime...like, it was very uncertain of what  
 192 was going to happen. And um...I think I just kept pushing and pushing and pushing....this isn't  
 193 what's best for this classroom, it isn't....it needs to change. So um...they came up with a lot of  
 194 different ways to protect the kids....and have them feel safe. Getting him out of the classroom  
 195 within two minutes, all the...like every time there was a behavior. But just, really, being  
 196 supportive of teachers and believing...I think an important thing they can do is...unless they are  
 197 in the classroom, take the teacher's word for the behavior. No teacher is just making up a  
 198 behavior to get a kid out of their classroom...I don't think. That's my personal thing. Like, if I  
 199 go to an administrator, it means it's a real problem, and I need help. Um...and their job should  
 200 be to do as much, or anything that they can, to...help that situation, which is going to look  
 201 different in a lot of things...and um, but I think that...supporting the teacher with the behavior or  
 202 discipline, is a key. Working together is going to be a key ingredient for success.

203

204 *What are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student*  
 205 *discipline? Why or why not?*

206

207 Umm...I am on the fence about suspension. Um.. I, again, think that the kids need to be at school  
 208 and learning. However, in some situation, it isn't safe for anyone involved. Now, I don't agree  
 209 with sitting in the office and playing all day as a discipline. That is not my idea of discipline. If,  
 210 the kid can be at school and actually be an effective student, and try to do something, or be  
 211 expected to do something....that would be a different situation. I don't think that out of school  
 212 suspension...oh just stay home...is beneficial to anyone. Um...a student is like, yeah, I get to stay  
 213 home. The parent is like, crap, my kid's home, what am I going to do with them? Do I need to  
 214 take a day off work? And the teacher is like, oh are they just sitting and playing in the office, or  
 215 are they at home and no one is paying attention to them, and then they're just getting into more  
 216 trouble. So I think the at home suspension is a...or out of school suspension...is not a win for  
 217 anyone involved. Um...if it is in school suspension...um...and I am firm believer of some kids do  
 218 not allow to belong back in the classroom that day, or the next day, depending on what the  
 219 behavior was...um...I think if a child, for instance...I don't know if [teacher name] brought this  
 220 up, but when a child punches you or hits you in the gut, intentionally, as a teacher...I would not  
 221 want that child back in my room in the next half hour pretending that nothing happened. They  
 222 have some real thinking to do of like, why on earth would you think it's ok to do that to me?  
 223 Because I know I would never think it's ok to do that to you. Um...and for a 7 or 8 year old to  
 224 even...there's some deeper issues going on if that's happening. So, figuring out what that is,  
 225 talking with the parents, coming up with again with some situations of how is this student going  
 226 to learn to behave correctly in the classroom...what can I do to help that kid get there, and for  
 227 everyone's sanity, maybe some space is the right thing to do. But not just space in like, go play  
 228 in the office. Cause that, as a teacher, is the most frustrating thing to me, because it's like, this  
 229 kid just destroyed my entire room, with no...now he gets to go play on the ipad. [Laughs].  
 230 Which is really frustrating as a teacher....so....I think there's a place for in house suspension if  
 231 it's run effectively.

232

233 *Tell me what that looks like, like in your own view, of an effective in school suspension.*

234

235 I would think that the student would be doing work that they were missing in class. Umm...to  
 236 the best of their abilities...like, having someone check in on them...and like, and you know, this  
 237 is like 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kindergarten stuff, so it's not like...I wouldn't be giving something that they have  
 238 like no clue...but they should be reading, they should be practicing writing, whether it's writing  
 239 an apology note, whether it's uh...writing a note to the class...I'm sorry you felt unsafe and for  
 240 making a bad decision...or to the teacher of like, I shouldn't do that...next time I will do this. Or,  
 241 can you help me so I can figure out what to do if I get this frustrated in the future? Um...you  
 242 know as a teacher I would be happy to check in on my planning and be like, hey...this is what we  
 243 are doing...do you understand how to do this? And I know a lot of the time the students that  
 244 have behaviors are lower academically, but I don't think that you just...to make it like  
 245 easy...here's an ipad, play on it. Um, there are reading things you can, there's lexia. There are  
 246 things that you can do, but I would...I would make them realize that this isn't like a fun thing.  
 247 Oh, I messed up. And again, during that time, of like having the conversation of like, getting  
 248 down...maybe the principal is talking to them, maybe the counselor is talking to them. What's  
 249 going on? Like, why did we do this? I think it has to be a pretty major offense for them to have  
 250 this happen in the first place, so kinda digging deeper with that child, either the administrator or  
 251 the counselor....of what was behind it or why it might have happened?

252

253 *What are some of those...describe what are some of those behaviors or major offenses, in which*  
 254 *you think a student should be removed from the classroom.*

255

256 Um...I think destroying...destruction of property...not just of like one thing... but of like,  
 257 absolutely destroying...like turning over a bookshelf and throwing things. Um...ripping things  
 258 off the way, like in a big like explosion, I would say. I would say, if a student is um...punches  
 259 another child...um...in order for that child to feel safe, they need to be removed from the  
 260 classroom. I would say probably for the rest of the day, not liking going on into the next day.  
 261 Umm...I think at times verbal...um...and again, it depends on the child and the situation and what  
 262 the plan is for them, but if it was a regular ed, standard Jo Shmoe, and so if they start swearing  
 263 up a storm and start calling teacher and kids names, they need to be removed. Um...I don't feel  
 264 like even like a stealing thing or like...little minor things like oh, I pushed a kid...and knocked a  
 265 kid over...none of that kind of stuff, but like major blow ups, destroying room, vulgar, disgusting  
 266 language toward teacher or students, or the physical harm of another student.

267

268 *And what in your mind, you said, once they are removed for a period of the day or the rest of the*  
 269 *day, what about the process of coming back into the classroom? How would that look ideally?*

270

271 Um...if it was just teacher related...like, if it just impacted the teacher...I would say before that  
 272 they would...before that they would be allowed back in the classroom that there would be a  
 273 conversation with the student, the administrator, and the teacher...saying here's the plan, what  
 274 are we going to do next time? How are you going to fix what you did? Whether you destroyed



275 property or you said vulgar, disgusting things...whatever it is...um...how is that...how are you  
276 going to make everyone feel safe? How are you going to be respectful to the teacher and the  
277 class? Umm...starting now before you enter...what's going to happen now if you can't keep your  
278 promise next time...like what is the consequence going to be next time? And then if a student is  
279 involved, I think it's really important that the other student and the administrator and the...and  
280 the behavior student...meet to make sure that they feel safe and how they are going to respond  
281 to...in the classroom...like no retaliation...like no like bad mouthing, just like...just to make sure  
282 everyone is on the same page and we are starting fresh. I paid my consequence, I'm not going to  
283 do it again...mentality. In an ideal world, that's what would happen.

284

285 *Alright. What are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think efforts at reducing*  
286 *suspensions within your district or school have been effective?*

287

288 Um...I think there's a limit like...if kids...for out of school suspensions, I am all for limiting  
289 them. Like...do your best, if you have the resources, to have in house suspensions. I don't feel  
290 like kids...I don't feel like you should not suspend kids if it is an act that deserves it. Now, if it's  
291 like, three swear words...they swore three different times, you are going to be suspended. Ehh, I  
292 don't know about that. If it's a major offense, I feel that they deserve to be suspended. You  
293 can't just be like, ohh, we are really trying to cut out suspensions, so...uhh...ok, we'll just give  
294 you another warning or whatever. But if it's like minor things that accumulate to if you get so  
295 many write ups you get suspended, I'm not down with that. But if it's major offenses, I feel like,  
296 if there's a need to be suspended, then it should happen, regardless of your desire to cut or limit  
297 the number of suspension as a district or as a school or whatever. Um...I feel like this year,  
298 [principal] has done a much better job of being respectful of that. If kids need to be out of the  
299 classroom, and get a suspension, I feel like she is actually doing a much better job than I have  
300 seen in years past. Which, there are times where kids do not belong back in the classroom after  
301 their behavior. Um...and I think...I think the district...well, the high school at least...I've heard  
302 lots of stories where kids are getting away with things that they should not...only because they're  
303 trying to limit the number of suspensions. So, I don't agree with that.

304

305 *And, when you are saying, the major suspensions, you mean the same kind of major offenses you*  
306 *described earlier?*

307

308 Yeah. Like destroying a classroom, punching, like very aggressive behavior toward a student or  
309 a staff member.

310

311 *What about previous years? When the district first started wanting to reduce suspensions, how*  
312 *did that look within your school?*

313

314 Umm...well, it would be the room destroyed and within ten minutes to an hour, the kid's back in  
315 my class to destroy it all over again. Oh, they're young, it's ok...Umm...that kind of thing. I  
316 think kids would owe a recess or two recesses, and then go back in the classroom, and it would  
317 happen again. So, it was kind of like a never ending cycle of, yeah, this kid is losing a lot of

318 recesses, but the behavior isn't changing. So, I think...parents...parents are to blame...well, not to  
319 blame...parents need to be involved in that as well. I think if parents aren't aware...if parents  
320 aren't included...and some parents don't want to be or don't want to hear it. But I think that the  
321 more the parents are included in it, um...the more impact it has on them...then they are more  
322 likely to help fix the behavior.

323

324 *Um...Ok. Tell me what you know about restorative justice.*

325

326 Um...I don't know a ton. I know that we've been reading books through the last year or two,  
327 trying to get on the same page...talking about...just how the brain works, how it gets...mentally  
328 how you have to approach different situations...getting to know um...just how things work and  
329 taking just the way you talk to kids...everything...to a different level. Um...to change, not their  
330 frame of mind, but just the approach that you're taking. Umm...I haven't done a lot of research  
331 or anything on it, so just based on a few meetings and reading parts of a book. [Laughs]. I  
332 mean, I don't know a ton about it.

333

334 *What have you learned from...how would you describe it from what you've read, or heard in*  
335 *meetings, or what would you associate it with based on what you've heard or what you've seen?*

336

337 Mmm...[pauses]. I don't know. Um...I don't know how to explain it.

338

339 *Just if someone off the street was like oh, tell me what restorative justice is. What would you say*  
340 *based on what little knowledge that you have or have been exposed to?*

341

342 I don't know...I don't really know a whole lot.

343

344 *But it's something that you've heard?*

345

346 It's definitely something that has been pushed a lot in the last few years...a new approach, a new  
347 way of handling so called discipline or not discipline. I think a lot of it is having to know about  
348 the culture or having to know about um...how things physically work and how to change the  
349 way...the way...you approach a situation in order to have different results. Um...I don't know.

350

351 *Just from what you've heard, or read, or know about so far...what are your initial thoughts and*  
352 *feelings about what restorative justice is, or it being at a school?*

353

354 Umm...I think if you can get the buy in, if you can get teachers knowledgeable about it, I think it  
355 could be very successful. Um...and I think if you can get everyone on board, including families,  
356 I think it's like a full circle thing, I don't think it's like an oh...the principal can tell me to do this,  
357 and then I might do it some of the time. I think with any new approach, it has to be...I think,  
358 teachers have to have the background knowledge and the impact or the results that it could  
359 have...and then be consistent with it. Um...I feel that if you just have some staff members doing  
360 it half heartedly, I don't know if it would be successful. I think it has to be something that

361 people believe in and carry through with...umm...year after year. It can't be like an, oh let's try  
 362 this on for a year and see how this works, and then be done. Because I think, unfortunately, a lot  
 363 of the things that we do in the school system are a hit and miss...and you try it for a few months  
 364 and then you forget about it. And then you do something else, and then you do something else  
 365 and then you do something else. Umm...but I think this is like an approach that in reality could  
 366 potentially have a big change for students and how they feel in the classroom, and hopefully it  
 367 would impact their behaviors and reduce that...and them feeling like they have a say. If you  
 368 know them and you know where they come from...that...um...there's reasoning behind things.

369

370 *You mentioned it would require everyone to be on board. What would that take for everyone to*  
 371 *be on board?*

372

373 I think it would take everyone having the knowledge of what it is and what it entails and the  
 374 willingness to...to implement....or to have that frame of mind. I think...I feel like restorative  
 375 justice is more than just implementing, it's a frame of mind and being able to do it without  
 376 thinking about it...it just naturally comes to you...and I think that um...if teachers are not  
 377 supportive of it or don't believe that that's what it should be, and they don't do it, I think that it's  
 378 detrimental to the whole...to the school as a whole...because it's something that I feel it's where  
 379 everyone needs to be involved. It can't just be a few here and there for it to be successful.  
 380 Because those kids interact, even if you're not their classroom teacher...they interact with you or  
 381 with kids in their class. And if they aren't feeling a certain way or things are handled  
 382 differently...um...I don't know, I just feel like it needs to be an all in kind of practice.

383

384 *You mentioned frame of mind, like someone might have a different frame of mind. What would*  
 385 *someone maybe with a different frame of mind, say about restorative justice?*

386

387 Well...I feel like some teachers are just like more of a disciplinarian...like, oh you did this, you  
 388 have to do this. This is what happens...I don't care where you are from, I don't care how old you  
 389 are...I don't care...like, you do the crime, you do the punishment...you know, kind of mentality.  
 390 But with restorative justice, that doesn't fly. I mean, that isn't...So I feel like, depending on who  
 391 the staff members are and depending on their ability to...if they don't have that frame of mind, if  
 392 they are not...uh...yeah. I just think you have to have people who are all willing to be open  
 393 minded about it. Um...I don't know. I feel like there are people in the world that are just very  
 394 old school, and don't change. So, um...help them see the benefits of it and why it would be  
 395 important to try it. Um..

396

397 *Um...if you were to try restorative justice, either in your classroom or your school, what support*  
 398 *would you need?*

399

400 Um...I think I would need...well, I would need a lot more background knowledge...but not just  
 401 um read a book on it. Like, I need person to person like interaction on it...show me what it looks  
 402 like. Um...whether it be through video or whether it be like, oh try it on, this is what this would  
 403 look like in this situation...um...I think I would need time to explore it, time to just try it

404 on...um...before I could go like full heartedly into it. But I think mainly it would be, instead of  
 405 just shoving a book at me, that's not the type of learner I am, so I need um...I need...I need to see  
 406 it in action to see what it looks like before I could really fully...And I don't think we have  
 407 necessarily done that very much.

408

409 *Ok. What do you think needs to be in place, either up front or ongoing, for restorative justice*  
 410 *responses to be effective?*

411

412 Um...I think communication across the board, like between families, between employees,  
 413 between administrators...um...between kids...um...I think everyone needs to be aware of what it  
 414 looks like and what the expectations are. Um...and how it could feel different in hopes that the  
 415 goal is obviously to reduce that discipline and have people feeling like they want to be there and  
 416 feel important. And um...I just think getting everyone...just the communication...of the kids  
 417 knowing, the parents knowing...the teachers knowing...um...and continually  
 418 ongoing...um...seeing like what's working, what isn't. You know, ongoing training, for teachers  
 419 if they need it. Um...kids...um...kids also respecting it...like, if I'm going to respect this approach,  
 420 like, be open minded about, yeah, it's going to look different, but your behaviors need to change  
 421 as well. Um...and maybe how you handle different things, um...I think communication is  
 422 like...with everyone...you know I say over and over again, on the same page, but...so everyone's  
 423 aware about it.

424

425 *What um...What's the downside if everyone is not on the same page or not being consistent in*  
 426 *their practices?*

427

428 Um...well, the kids will get different glimpses of different things, and if it's not...I don't know, if  
 429 you're running a business and two people aren't doing it correctly, it's just a detriment to overall,  
 430 where there's holes, people are slipping through, things are happening. And I feel like, if too  
 431 many people are not following through or not taking on the approach, then kids see that, oh, it's  
 432 not that serious...some of them are doing it, some of them are not. It's not really going to last  
 433 long, so I don't really care...kind of mentality. So, I don't know. Anything is better with a  
 434 strong background. I would say that like the more support you have, the stronger it is  
 435 to...hopefully it will be impactful to a bigger level without...um...without kids slipping through  
 436 the cracks.

437

438 *If your administrator was about to implement this, or going to implement it, what questions*  
 439 *would you have, or what would you say to them, or what would you want them to know?*

440

441 Uh...what is my role in it? Uh...show me more. Um...just so I know the ins and outs of it more  
 442 and what is expected on my end. Um...and how, like how are they going to follow through?  
 443 How are we going to check on it? Uh, is it working? Is it beneficial? Are kids reacting to it?  
 444 Um..or is it...or are we in the same exact boat, where discipline is...is higher...or just the same  
 445 situation. Like, is it being impactful at a school level. You know, just like watching the data,  
 446 keeping the data, is it helpful? How do kids feel? I would say doing surveys. How are the kids

447 attitudes toward it? How are the staff's attitudes toward it? I don't think it is just something you  
448 can turn on and say, ok go. It's going to take time to be impactful at a school.

449

450 *Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your beliefs, your thoughts, your*  
451 *opinions, regarding student behavior, discipline, suspensions, or restorative justice that you*  
452 *would like to share or think would be helpful for this study?*

453

454 I think...the only thing I would say is I think...I think the teachers...I think building that  
455 relationship with families...it is critical. Um...I think the behaviors just keep getting worse, and  
456 worse, and worse as I keep teaching, and it's a problem...and it's like shocking...and I am really  
457 worried like, if my child became a teacher, like I worry for her safety and what her classroom  
458 would look like. Um...so I would encourage that teachers get to know those families...like have  
459 those connections...so they have your back when their kid is having trouble, and can help you  
460 with like, oh, this is what's happening at home, do you notice this at school? Like, having just  
461 that team work is...hopeful...and that's what I like strive to do...try to make those connections.  
462 Um..I wish teachers could have more time to make those connections...not a connection  
463 academically...I'm talking like on a personal level, like oh, how is your family doing? What do  
464 your kids like to do? What do you like to do? What's stressful to you at home? Just, really  
465 getting to know those things. Because being a parent is tough, it's stressful, and if the teacher  
466 can help at school...you know, I tell my kids all the time, like hey...did you tell your mom like  
467 thank you for getting me to school on time today? Like, are you being respectful and  
468 appreciative of all that they're doing for you? Well, try it. You know. So, I just think that  
469 having that connection, both with the child and with the family...non academic  
470 connection...um...it's kind of key to behaviors. And I don't know if that's kind of why I haven't  
471 had many behaviors...um...major. And some of those major kids are just...they are what they  
472 are...no getting to know the family is going to make that better necessarily...so. Um..yeah.  
473 Having connections are huge.

474

475 *Ok, if you were in charge of a school, or designing your ideal response to student*  
476 *behavior...response, or you talked a lot about the preventative side too...what would you say*  
477 *would the key factors you would consider or want in place?*

478

479 Um...if I was running a school...communication, social interaction...um...manners, um...team  
480 building, both as a staff and a student level...um...consistency, knowledge of students and  
481 families. I guess for communication I would say open line of communication...like ongoing  
482 communication. Mmm...yeah, a plan. Yeah, you have to have a plan...it could be individualized  
483 based on students...but have somewhat of a plan...consistency and have people on the same page.

484

485 *Can you tell me more about the team building aspect? You said team building among staff and*  
486 *among students....tell me more about what that would look like.*

487

488 Umm...I would say, just like, different activities...just like trying to get staff to realize just how  
489 critical every little piece of the puzzle is...um, I think in the classroom you need to do that

490 too...like, you're stronger as one whole unit, and if you're not all building each other up...if you  
 491 have one negative nelly, like putting everybody down all the time, or doing things like that...it  
 492 kind of just ruins like the whole...you're negative, I don't really want to produce for you...I think  
 493 if everyone understands how important the team and everyone working together to be  
 494 successful...like, you can't do it by yourself. You need to support, you need the back up...even  
 495 with the students...you need to all be able to work together without like bashing people, without  
 496 like...like, oh I see that's really hard for you, can I help you? Like, with kids...it's like, oh, I can  
 497 help you with that, let me talk to you about it. Just like, knowing that people care and are there  
 498 for you, even if it is really hard, um...I think that's important. Because if you have people that  
 499 aren't...that don't feel cared for or don't feel like they are part of the team, then they aren't going  
 500 to produce for you. And they aren't going to be part of the solution.

Teacher 4 [Pseudo Name Cindy]; Female; 54 years; 20 years teaching  
 12/20/17; 9:30 am; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
 Currently teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 4: My name is [Cindy] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
 6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 So...the policy that I've adapted over maybe...the last four years...is reminder, warning, you're  
 9 out. And I'll explain you're out. So if a student misbehaves I remind them of what they are  
 10 doing and how to make a better choice. If they do it again, in a certain window of time, I say, I  
 11 already reminded you about that, so now you are on warning for doing that. And then if they do  
 12 it a third time, I say, you had a reminder, a warning, and now you need to leave the room.  
 13 However, I've been lucky to have a great teaching partner who I plan closely with, so when I say  
 14 they're out, it means they are just going to my partner's room, to see the exact same lesson that's  
 15 going on in my room, but they've been asked to leave. So, my kids know it. The kids...the kids  
 16 in the other room know it. If that child walks in the other room, it's like, oh that kid got in  
 17 trouble. But they still aren't missing any instruction. That's sort of mine...that's what I like  
 18 about it. As opposed to, wait outside the door. Go to the office. So that's been my kind of go  
 19 to. I think it's effective because I feel like I have pretty good classroom management and I am...I  
 20 usually have a nice classroom community, and I feel like for 95% of the kids, just getting that  
 21 reminder, especially if it's specific, like, Johnny, I'm going to remind you, you blurted out. We  
 22 raise our hand in this class, or whatever. I think that changes their behavior. I think that I would  
 23 see Johnny catch himself and try to raise his hand instead of blurting out. And, if he does it a  
 24 second time, because you know everyone makes mistakes, then well, you had a reminder and  
 25 now you have a warning...you can still mess up twice in a short window. And in fairness, I  
 26 wouldn't send a kid out of the room for blurting. That was just something that came to my mind.

27 So, I think it's effective because I think it changes the behavior. It reminds them of the optimal  
28 behavior.

29

30 *What would you define as that short window of time?*

31

32 Probably one class block, so if it's reader's workshop it's 90 minutes. If it's math, it's an hour. I  
33 usually see it as...as the instructional block, it's not all day. It's like, hey, I reminded you during  
34 the mini lesson, and now we are doing partner work...so, like the 60 to 90 minute window.

35

36 *You mentioned you have a pretty good classroom community. Can you tell me more about what  
37 that means to you, and how you build that or create that?*

38

39 Well I have just been blessed, this year and last year, with loving my classes after 18 years of  
40 teaching. I am super happy. And...uhh...I guess the way I would describe a good classroom  
41 community is kids that feel safe, want to take risks, want to support each other, and kind of are  
42 learning the lessons along the way about how to make good choices. That they are open to  
43 feedback, that they want to support each other. I've had classes on the whole where I feel like  
44 the kids didn't really look out for each other, and that hasn't been my experience the last two  
45 years. I mean, I've had many, many good years, but I just think my window right now is these  
46 last two classes which have just been phenomenal. So, yeah. A place where they feel safe,  
47 happy, willing to take risks...umm...and are open to be willing to learn how to be better people.

48

49 *How do you build that?*

50

51 Well, this is the first year I've taken on, with fidelity, running class meetings. And that's once a  
52 week, and I think this class would have been delightful even without it, but I will say, I think the  
53 class meetings have added a lot to that. Um...maybe prior to that, it was just one on one  
54 conversations, or conversations with the class where I would call them together and say, hey,  
55 there is something I am noticing that's bothering me, or making me feel bad, let's discuss it. So,  
56 now I just feel like the class meeting format is a little bit more...it's a more formal, routine,  
57 structure the kids can count on to bring any issues forth.

58

59 *What brought upon the class meeting this year?*

60

61 Um...it's kind of something that I always wanted to take on, and I know my teaching partner last  
62 year did it and had a lot of success with it, and I know another teacher at our school, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
63 teacher, does it with success. And I just couldn't...when I've tried it in the past, I've just dropped  
64 it because I couldn't...I couldn't own it enough to make it work for me consistently every week.  
65 But I ended up buying a thing on teachers pay teachers that has the four...or for them...the four  
66 elements of a classroom meeting...the greeting, the share, the activity, and the goal. And it's cute  
67 and its age...grade appropriate. And it has like 36 different greetings you can use, and 36 fun  
68 games. And it's all neatly laid out...and I bring it home on the weekend and I kind of rifle  
69 through it and find what I think my class needs, but I think that because the skeleton is already

70 provided for me, it's been easier to take it on. I don't have to come up with a greeting. I don't  
 71 have to come up with a fun game. I don't have to come up with like a describe your weekend in  
 72 five words. Like, they are all there. If I want to add my own thing to it, I can. But it's been a lot  
 73 easier for me to just go get my class meeting kit. Let me rifle through and find the class goal that  
 74 I think would be good for my kids. And then so...and then I also put it in my master schedule,  
 75 uhh..so, it's just consistent. It's there. And this class just completely responded beautifully to it,  
 76 and they look forward to it, and they are great during the time, so...I think it was having the sort  
 77 of pre made kit that helped me, so I could be like, ok I can handle this. I don't need to reinvent it  
 78 every week. And that the kids have really, really enjoyed it. And it's a fun way to get to know  
 79 the kids and hear things about them, that, as close as I am to my kids...I eat lunch with them, and  
 80 they are always in my room at recesses and stuff, I hear things that I think, oh, did not see that  
 81 coming. You know, uh...what makes a good friend? Or what motivates you to do your best in  
 82 school? Or what was a time that you dealt with grief? Or something. They share a lot of  
 83 insightful things that really help me get to know the kids better.

84

85 *What do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student, and how would you define*  
 86 *discipline?*

87

88 Purpose of disciplining a student....would be to redirect their behavior into something more  
 89 conducive to learning, and being a better citizen of the classroom community. Cause I kinda feel  
 90 like that sort of addresses all kinds of things. Whether they are blurting out, or swearing or  
 91 bullying or touching inappropriately...whatever it is, that's going to get in the way of them being  
 92 successful student, and a successful member of our classroom, and a successful member of our  
 93 society...and so, as much as sometimes it used to pain me, not as much now...because I used to  
 94 think I never signed up to be a counselor when I became a teacher, but my teaching partner of  
 95 mine many years ago said, you're wrong. She said that me and I thought, she's right. That is  
 96 kinda my job...so, getting them back on track to be successful in the classroom is I guess my  
 97 definition of disciplining a student...because I guess my ultimate goal is that they're learning  
 98 how to do whatever the lesson is, but also at the same time...which I wouldn't have said this 18  
 99 years ago...like, be a good person.

100

101 *How has um...your definition of discipline, or responding to student misbehavior, changed over*  
 102 *the course of your teaching career?*

103

104 Oh, well, I am sure the first couple of years I am sure my response was...um...that's annoying,  
 105 stop. That's annoying, get out. Go to the office. Like, let the office deal with this problem.  
 106 And...and I thought that was ok. Like, if you would have asked me that like my first three or  
 107 four years of teaching, I would have thought, yeah, that's ok because other kids are ready to  
 108 learn, and this kid isn't, and that's not my problem...and people in the office can deal with it.  
 109 And now, I think completely different. I've made a 180 degree turn. Um...and I also felt like  
 110 when I started teaching, I really, really believed...I am here to teach reading, and writing, and  
 111 math, and science, and social studies...and the rest of that stuff, that is for your mom, your  
 112 preacher, your pastor, your bishop, your grandma, Sunday school...that is not...I did not sign up



113 to do that. And that was kind of my mantra for the first few years. And even, I felt like I was  
 114 pretty successful and my kids really liked me, and I had nice classrooms...I did not see that as my  
 115 responsibility at all, and it really wasn't until I partnered with [Partner's Name], and she was  
 116 like, I don't know where you got that idea, that is absolutely our job. And I thought ughh...like I  
 117 hated hearing it, but I thought, she's right. And I think especially in a low income school, where  
 118 there might not be as much parent involvement, or...well, you don't have to be low income to not  
 119 have good role models, but I think that our kids really struggle there and might not have a lot of  
 120 the good life lessons that I would hope most kids would have, so I've changed significantly over  
 121 the years. So now I see it more as helping form these like good little human beings that like  
 122 know how to make good choices and that you have conversations with and that you have to take  
 123 time out of your day. For example, I always have kids in my room during recess, and part of my  
 124 reason for that is that for me, that's a great time to get to know kids, and talk to them, and have  
 125 intimate conversations that you wouldn't have during a math lesson...and, I think that's sort of...I  
 126 wouldn't say that's what's required of a teacher...but that's what's required of me, I guess, to be  
 127 a good teacher. Like, I guess that's how I view it. Like, I guess, that is what I signed up for, was  
 128 to get to know these kids and figure out why are you so off your game today, and what happened  
 129 to you this weekend, and why are you so worried or frightened...or just tell me something fun  
 130 and lovely about your day. And that makes them feel...and that just gets them back on that wheel  
 131 of then they feel safe, and take a risk, and then they can try harder in class, and then they know  
 132 they have a safe place to fall if they need it, and it just sort of spins into a better world. I guess.

133

134 *What caused...you said, you've made a 180 degree spin since you first started teaching, and you*  
 135 *said your former teaching partner, what else caused that change for you? Is there anything else*  
 136 *you can think of?*

137

138 That was my big ah-ha moment. I think. I mean, I still like liked the kids and had fun and I  
 139 think I was...I had a good classroom community...umm...but I still had that lens of, I am strictly  
 140 here to teach these subject areas. And I just remember being on the playground once with her  
 141 and she was telling some kids about like...something about tying their shoe...and I was like, we  
 142 didn't sign up for that...I'm not helping that kid with that shoe. That was my pivotal moment.  
 143 And she was like, yes we did. And I thought, ughh...that was my turning point I think. (8:57  
 144 left)

145

146 *How did you have to change then, your practices within your classroom? Do you remember, or*  
 147 *recall, the shifts you had to make in your practice?*

148

149 Yeah...it...you know, I would like to think of myself as being somebody that got to know their  
 150 students, but in honesty, I feel like over the last ten years, it's probably getting to know the kids  
 151 in a more meaningful way. And, that takes a ton of time. So even though I was fun and happy  
 152 and would go out to recess and play with the kids on the jungle gym, that's not the same as  
 153 having two kids in to have lunch with you when they're fighting with each other, or they're  
 154 being bullied, or their parents are going through a divorce or whatever. It's a different level of  
 155 um...of communication and understanding and it takes more time and it takes uhh...a thoughtful

156 ear. And some of that stuff is out of my...certainly out of my area of expertise and sometimes  
157 my comfort zone...so then, it also involves like me digesting that information, or discussing it  
158 with partners, a counselor, or friends...with like the best ways to deal with it. It just takes a lot  
159 more time and more thoughtful effort, which is absolutely worth it, but that would be a big shift  
160 in practice.

161

162 *What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline, and what do you*  
163 *think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

164

165 Well I think I kind of answered that previously with the way that I view my role as a teacher,  
166 which is more all-encompassing and involves the whole child as opposed to just the academics.  
167 Um...and...so I feel like...for me, I can only speak for myself...and I caution myself, because like  
168 I have a student teacher this year, and I'm thinking oh my god, if she heard this, she'd quit,  
169 because I feel like it's so much work. But for me, for me to feel like a successful teacher, I  
170 feel...I think the role is being well planned, and doing a good job, teaching good lessons, but also  
171 getting to know your class intimately and their needs and their strengths and that sort of thing  
172 and...and it can be all consuming, but very rewarding. As far as administration goes, you know, I  
173 used to think that the office would just deal with all of the problems that I couldn't, or just chose  
174 not to deal with, and I completely see what a...I mean, that's absolutely not their job, because it  
175 would land on our office manager, who's lovely, but certainly not her job to deal with a kid who  
176 is flipping a table and telling me to fuck off. No, that is not her job. And that's who it would  
177 land on in all my years...in most of my years. So, um...you know, you were lucky if the principal  
178 was there to deal with that sort of thing. So when I send kids out now to the office, it's not really  
179 the administrators, it's the office staff that deals with it. Um...we've had some great changes in  
180 administration, and I feel supported by our current...I don't know what she's called, EA, vice  
181 principal...and she came from a school where that was her...that was her only thing, discipline,  
182 school discipline. So, I feel very supported by her and I would go to her with any problems that I  
183 have, but I don't...I've never had great success in feeling completely backed by any administrator  
184 with any one behavior problem.

185

186 *What do you think, like ideally, that an administrator's role should be? It sounds like you shared*  
187 *what your experience has been, but in your ideal world, what would their role be in regards to*  
188 *discipline and behavior?*

189

190 Hmm...well isn't that interesting! Well, I guess over time...like, if you would have asked me  
191 that fifteen years ago, I would have said that they handle all of the extreme behaviors that we  
192 have in our classroom that are taking away from all of the other kids in the class...the learning of  
193 all the other kids in the classroom. But I don't really think that that's what they're role is. But  
194 your question was what would it look like ideally. I guess, a place to go...I think of it more as  
195 their role on the PBIS team...but I think, a place to go to say this is an issue, or a concern I am  
196 having, and not only do I need to talk about it, I need to problem solve, I need support, I need  
197 uh...I need follow through. I feel like that's what's been lacking from every administrator I've  
198 worked under, and I've probably worked under like ten...is the follow through. I think many

199 administrators have an open ear, but the...the um...the going in and saying, not only do I need to  
 200 problem solve, but I need some support here to see me through this crisis, this difficult situation.  
 201 And I have not had that.

202

203 *What would follow through look like?*

204

205 Somebody like...like if I think...like if I am thinking of other examples at our school in the last  
 206 several years...but, oh, I hear you have a situation, a problem...what's going on? Let's try these  
 207 three things. I'll check in in x days. Oh, it's still not getting better? Let's have a conference  
 208 with mom. I'll facilitate. Oh, it's still not getting better, here's how I am going to get you  
 209 support from the school counselor or the outside counseling. Like, never...uh...not just like  
 210 dropping the ball, but like, coming back with some sort of a...a suggested plan. I just see so  
 211 many kids, and like I've said, it's been an amazing last couple of years...but just, super high  
 212 needs kids, and I talk to all those teachers like routinely and I say, what's going on with you and  
 213 that student? What's the office saying? What's admin saying? And it's like, oh you know, we  
 214 need more data until April. And I'm like...well that kid's been at our school since Kindergarten  
 215 and he's in third grade now. How much data could you possibly collect? I feel like it gets  
 216 pushed...pushed off, pushed back. Like, oh, they're having a great year this year, so let's let that  
 217 ride out. And then it explodes and then it's like, oh the year's almost over. Next year it will be  
 218 different, because he'll have a different teacher. I see that kind of thing pushed on a lot, where I  
 219 can think of the teachers and many examples where it's like, that was an enormous problem all  
 220 year long and nothing ever really changed. It was all on the teacher's shoulders. So, support and  
 221 follow through. Actionable support.

222

223 *Ok. So, the next question is, what are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with*  
 224 *suspension as a form of student discipline, why or why not?*

225

226 I don't think...oh, maybe in my career I've had one kid suspended...like in school suspension.  
 227 And...I guess I don't...just suspension as a stand alone, I don't image that it's terribly effective  
 228 because either the kid's suspended and is home for three days, which is probably a dream for  
 229 most kids, or they're in the office, doing nothing that's really going to change the behavior. I  
 230 think if suspension entails something...involved like...ok, this is significant enough that you  
 231 should be suspended, then there has to be a conversation after that about, ok, we've gotta get a  
 232 good team in here, like mom, support system, classroom teacher, and come up with, like how is  
 233 it going to be different once suspension is over. But just suspension as a stand alone, I can't  
 234 imagine...I can see how a rare occasion where it's like, that was all that kid needed to get right  
 235 back on the...on the right path. But, when I think about older kids, like 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I  
 236 can't imagine that it's um...successfully going to address the behavior that got them suspended.  
 237 Which is not to say that I don't think that there are some things that happen, where I think, I  
 238 can't believe that student is allowed to stay in that classroom. I know you interviewed someone  
 239 who has a...a really significant behavior in their classroom where security has had to come and  
 240 remove the student, and it takes two adults to like take the kid out of the classroom, and there's  
 241 lot of like violence and aggression...and then, you know, an hour later, that kid is right back in

242 the classroom. And I think well, that's not ok. I don't think suspension is the answer, but you  
243 can't just put a kid right back in the classroom without having some sort of a...a plan, a detailed,  
244 actionable, thoughtful plan. And I see that way too often. And of course, I've only been at our  
245 school, but I've seen that a lot where...you know...the kid had some calm down time, but then  
246 goes right back into the classroom and I don't think that's changed a lot of their behavior or  
247 addressed the needs of the other kids in the classroom.

248

249 *Why...um...you said you've seen this a lot in your time at [school]. Why do you think that's the*  
250 *case? Why do you think that's a pattern, where once an escalated student is removed, they then*  
251 *go back to the classroom very quickly afterwards?*

252

253 I think...and I hate to be a finger pointer...but I will point the finger at the administration. I feel  
254 like I've often seen administration, by that I mean the principal...that maybe, just doesn't know  
255 the right thing to do and doesn't have the...or utilize the resources available to them. Um...I  
256 don't think our counselor at our school is very effective, and so when I think about a kid being  
257 physically removed by security, I immediately think, wow, there's something big going on there.  
258 We need a counselor, we need a therapist, we need a psychologist, whatever. Like, this is out of  
259 my area of expertise as a classroom teacher, what's happening here? But, I don't think we have  
260 a very strong team to address that sort of situation. And like, I've been on the PBIS team for the  
261 past three years, and we never even talk about that kind of thing on PBIS...which is kind of why I  
262 went on it in the first place was because I was so frustrated by some of the extreme behaviors we  
263 saw at our school, and I thought, well...put your money where your mouth is, and get on that  
264 team. And we never talk about it. And so I feel like there's...I think...it seems overwhelming or  
265 out of the principal's area of expertise, or she doesn't have a really um...remarkable team to pull  
266 on, or doesn't know how to utilize the district resources to say, we don't know what we are  
267 doing, this is crisis mode, we need some help, get someone in here. And, and I love our school  
268 and we are very small and very familiar with each other, and I think so...and often times it often  
269 gets put off, you know, like pushed off, by saying, well, Ms. Smith is such a great teacher and  
270 she'll get Johnny in her class and she'll turn everything around. And it goes right back on the  
271 teacher, and then, that just is an extra burden on the teacher. And I feel like, like the  
272 administration is not clear on how much that affects all the other kids in the classroom. They see  
273 Johnny going back to Ms. Smith's room, and that's the end of that story. But, there's 26 other  
274 kids in that classroom who saw that kid do whatever it was that happened. And as many teachers  
275 at my school have said, it's like they're in...what's the word...oh, it's like they are going to  
276 school in trauma everyday. They are seeing tables flipped, and biting, and hitting, and hearing  
277 profanity and...on a daily basis until the child's removed. And then the kid comes right back.  
278 And I don't know, but I know in a couple of cases, where there's no conversation about why that  
279 kid is coming back. So I feel like to answer your question, I think that maybe the administration  
280 is overwhelmed and they don't have enough support systems and you know, I think of somebody  
281 like [former principal], whatever people thought of her, she knew where to go...I don't know if  
282 work the system is the right expression, but she knew where all the pots of money were, she  
283 knew where the good, you know, where she could get that answer. So I feel like, at least she  
284 knew how to use her repertoire of resources, and I feel like...I've had several...most principals at

285 our school have been first year principals, and maybe they just don't know, and it's  
 286 overwhelming, and they have so much on their plate, and they just...I just don't know where to  
 287 go with that. That the sense at least that I get.

288

289 *Umm...tell me more about what it would look like to address the needs of the other kids in the*  
 290 *classroom?*

291

292 Well I think about...like...um...I had a student last year that was pretty high needs, and when he  
 293 would be pulled out for services, that's when I would...we didn't have class meetings last year,  
 294 but we would have an informal class meeting where I would sort of talk about, here's what we  
 295 are seeing, or I know that this is irritating to you, or I've heard a student complaints, so let's talk  
 296 about how we can um...be successful in this classroom and with this student and still have a good  
 297 year, and not let these things bother us. And um...to be thoughtful enough to know that you have  
 298 to deal with the other kids in the classroom who are seeing this repeated behavior, that, you  
 299 know...anywhere else would be absolutely unacceptable, whether it's, you know, I had a kid last  
 300 year that would crawl around on the floor and get in the fetal position and cry and yell at me, and  
 301 the kids had to just keep right on working through that. And I don't think that's normal. So...to  
 302 at least to have the courtesy to say to the kids, like, this doesn't look normal, but how can we  
 303 best deal with it? And take the time to do that. And I probably wouldn't have thought to do that  
 304 in my first couple of years of teaching, and now I see it as a critical...as a critical piece,  
 305 cause...well, this year's been an easy year for me, but that's not the norm.

306

307 *Um... I want to ask you a follow-up question about something you said about joining the PBIS*  
 308 *team. Um...why, so you said you joined because you wanted to be a part of the conversations*  
 309 *about the high needs you were seeing in your school, why don't you think it's talked about on*  
 310 *that team, if it is such a high need across the school?*

311

312 They use the tiers, and it's like, it's tier three the top of the pyramid...that's the, ahhh, kids. So I  
 313 routinely hear them saying like...our role, or our number one focus, or our whatever is to deal  
 314 with the tier one or two kids...the kids that are blurting out, the kids that are chewing gum, the  
 315 kids that are running on the playground...like getting written up in the cafeteria for throwing a  
 316 pea. And it's like, ok, I get that. We have like our FYI's, we have our revisit classroom  
 317 expectations, lunchroom expectations...I get all that, I get all that...I get that. But like, I already  
 318 know how to do that. And I would say that about 85% of the teachers at my school know how to  
 319 do that. Oh, let's review how to behave on the playground, in the lunchroom, in the  
 320 bathrooms...but, what I don't see teachers getting support with, which I think is the most  
 321 overwhelmingly, burdensome, difficult, challenging, energy sucking thing, are those high needs  
 322 kids. And, it's always...well, that's tabled for later...or that's a tier three, or that involves um...or  
 323 if it's that's the sort of other, special land where we are going to have to get together with more  
 324 people that aren't a part of this team, and get...and in my mind, I think get the parents involved,  
 325 but that's not what I am hearing PBIS say...but it's like, oh that's tier three, that's not what  
 326 we're...we're here to make sure kids are safe in the lunchroom and on the playground. And I  
 327 don't disagree with that at all, and I think that's a great initial...everybody needs that lens for

328 their school...I just get frustrated that there's people on that team, you know like... [teacher's  
 329 name]...who routinely came in with a grievance, and it wasn't just her saying poor me, it was  
 330 poor all of us, because all of us are dealing with this...and it was just completely um...pushed off  
 331 into the corner. And I thought, why...and would hear oh, this isn't the venue for that, or this isn't  
 332 the time, or right now we need to talk about FYI slips, or right now we need to talk about recess  
 333 rodeo, or right now we need to talk about tier one or two. And this is...I mean, I've been on  
 334 PBIS before, but this is my second year in a row, and we still don't talk about those high needs  
 335 kids, and certainly the rest of our staff doesn't know, because people will say, what's going on  
 336 with Johnny? And I've heard more than one support professional, in addition to like  
 337 teachers....like library and music...say I don't know, no one's told me. And I think that that's  
 338 really frustrating.

339

340 *Is there a venue for tier three concerns?*

341

342 I don't...you would think I would know, you know, I'm on PBIS...I mean, I think the answer  
 343 would be...So I mean, like I represent 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> on the team, so if [teacher name] had a  
 344 significant concern, I would be her rep, she would come to me...she would say I'm having a  
 345 problem with Johnny, I would say bring it to the PBIS team. We'd sit down...but that's I think  
 346 what's supposed to happen...but I haven't seen that happen in two years.

347

348 *Um...what are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think the efforts at reducing*  
 349 *suspensions within your district or your school have been effective?*

350

351 Actually, I don't think I can really speak to that...because, when I think of reducing suspensions,  
 352 I think of that as more middle school, high school...and I don't really know a lot of kids that get  
 353 in house, or in school suspension, and I don't hear that as a big concern. Certainly, as I said  
 354 earlier, I don't think suspensions are going to help change the behavior, for whatever got the kid  
 355 suspended....so I'd like to see something in addition or in place of that, but I don't really have a  
 356 big stake in that game.

357

358 *Do you think it has any role in addressing the concerns you mentioned earlier around kids*  
 359 *coming right back to the classroom after a major escalation has happened?*

360

361 I hear that a lot at our school, more from paras, but a few teachers...like, I can't believe they are  
 362 letting Johnny back in the classroom after that, he should be suspended. I've heard that for  
 363 years. Um...and I probably would have nodded in agreement at some point...but now, just  
 364 talking this through with you, and if I'd been pushed on it, I would probably say,  
 365 well...suspension isn't really enough. There has to be more to that conversation. Um...so, yeah,  
 366 if some kid did something outlandish in the classroom and they were removed from the  
 367 classroom, there has to be some sort of actionable plan that involves the teacher, and the family,  
 368 and the administration...and what that is...can't...I don't think can just singularly be a suspension.  
 369 Like, oh, you have to stay home for two days and then you can come back. And just  
 370 miraculously everything will be changed after you spend two days at home.

371

372 *Alright, tell me what you know about restorative justice.*

373

374 Virtually nothing. The only thing I know about restorative justice is what I read in Touching  
375 Spirit Bear. So based on that absolute nothingness of knowledge, I...I think of it as, something I  
376 have sort of alluded to before of...of a network or a group of people that are there to address the  
377 problem and you know...try and consider why...what's going on, what happened, what are the  
378 repercussions, what will help them go down a different path? We are all sort of here to handle,  
379 understand, deal with the situation. As opposed to an attacking situation, like Johnny did this, so  
380 we are kicking him out for two days. It's like, this is what we are seeing from Johnny, can we  
381 have a discussion about it, um...sort of a more open circle of communication that includes the  
382 student.

383

384 *How did you learn about that from Touching Spirit Bear?*

385

386 Oh, the whole thing is about a kid that gets...beats somebody almost to death in high school...and  
387 is either going to face juvenile detention slash jail, or can be part of this restorative circle on an  
388 Alaskan island where he has to go for a year. And prior to going to the island, he is with his  
389 parole officer, his parents, the kid that he abused, and that kid's parents, and one of the elders  
390 from the tribe in Alaska. And they sit together and they all get an opportunity to say how the  
391 event affected them, how they feel about it. Everybody's voice is heard. Um...and then after  
392 that, in the book, the kid goes away, but still has this, what I'll call a mentor or role model, to  
393 help him better understand his anger and what prompted him to do things. You could call it  
394 almost a therapist position, although the guy in the book is not a therapist, he's like a fisherman.  
395 But, you know, an opportunity to sort of delve into issues that the student was facing, and learn  
396 how to rely on himself and figure out what he thinks is the appropriate consequence for his  
397 actions and so forth.

398

399 *Have you head the term restorative justice used at all at your school?*

400

401 Yes.

402

403 *Tell me more.*

404

405 We have a principal that's been there for three years, and...I think if you asked her what her  
406 disciplinary beliefs are, she would she believes in restorative justice. Her first year  
407 there...she...didn't want to introduce too many...too many new things to the school, so no one  
408 was trained, it was sort of a buzz word we heard. The second year she was there, I joined PBIS,  
409 and we continued to hear about it from her, but with no definition. And I think the frustration for  
410 our staff was like people would go and say, ok, this is the issue that I am having with Johnny and  
411 she'd be like well...we need to deal with that on a case by case basis, because if you knew the  
412 Johnny was coming to us from a homeless shelter every day...and, I don't know if that's our  
413 principal's definition of restorative justice, but the message it sent to the staff was...everything

414 needs to be dealt with on a case by case basis and we want to be respectful of the individual  
 415 student, we can't put everybody in a box, we don't want a flow chart or a matrix, that's not who I  
 416 am, that's not who I want us to be. It's sort of a one on one incident. And I...and I think that was  
 417 the lens that a lot of us....not the lens, but that's how it landed on a lot of us. And I wasn't like,  
 418 super...well I guess I was, resistant. She never really defined it, so a lot of staff members felt  
 419 frustrated because it was like, oh it's different for the kid in Ms. Smith's class and the kid in Mr.  
 420 Jones' class and it's different for the kid in...you know every kid, every situation is going to be  
 421 this unique, own situation. But we don't know what that means or what that looks  
 422 like...and...and it also seeped across the school because the lunch lady and para educator and the  
 423 music teacher and the librarian...like they had no idea, and still don't have any idea, with what's  
 424 going on with some of the kids that we're dealing with on a one on one, restorative basis. And  
 425 so I think there's a lot of frustration around that. So then, now in her third year, because I've  
 426 been on the school leadership team for the last couple of years...that came up. And it was sort of  
 427 an uncomfortable conversation...but we had our school leadership meeting at my house over the  
 428 summer, and because I sometimes sort of lack a filter when I'm talking, I said, you know, we  
 429 keep hearing about this, but we don't know what this is. And people are frustrated, and I am  
 430 hearing that a lot from people. I'm hearing that a lot from para educators...and so she  
 431 recommended a book. I could get you a title, but it's something about the carrot and the stick.  
 432 And...bought copies for all staff members at the end of last school year I guess...and that was to  
 433 be a book study we would do...but we've never...we all got the book, but we never discussed it,  
 434 we've never had a book group. Does that mean I can't read it at home on my own and get a  
 435 better understanding? No. Have I done that? No. You know, if she said, at the staff meeting on  
 436 Wednesday we are going to discuss chapter 1 and 2 and come prepared...I would be prepared.  
 437 But, just giving someone a book doesn't make anything happen. And so I think...I can imagine  
 438 her being asked, and saying like, what? I bought everyone the carrot and stick book, and they  
 439 should all have a better understanding of what it is. But, I would be surprised if any of the  
 440 teachers in my pod that I work with have read it. And not cause...I'm sure it's good and it's a  
 441 small book, but that's a low priority for me right now.

442

443 *If you had to guess what the definition of restorative justice, or what it is in a school setting,*  
 444 *based on what you've been told or what you've seen as being defined as restorative justice*  
 445 *practices within your building, how would you describe it?*

446

447 Based on my incredibly limited knowledge...I would imagine that that is a setting in which  
 448 multiple people are present to discuss relatively severe or critical issues that are happening and  
 449 possible solutions or steps to take. But I kind of see it as not punitive, but...more of a discussion  
 450 period where lots of people are present....the counselor, the teacher, the mom, the older sibling,  
 451 maybe the kids that were affected it...and it's more of a dialogue...a conversation...as opposed to  
 452 a, oh you just got written up with a conduct report and you're suspended for a day.

453

454 *Do practices or things that are being defined as restorative within your building align with that*  
 455 *definition? Do the responses that are happening fit with that description you just gave, where*  
 456 *multiple people are involved and...*



457  
 458 No. No. No. I feel like it still ends up with maybe our assistant principal handling it and then  
 459 maybe sending an email that says this is what I did...you know...this is how I dealt with the  
 460 situation with Johnny. He'll be back in your classroom at 2. And certainly not...I feel like the  
 461 big...the big unfortunate thing at our school is that so many people feel left out of the loop...you  
 462 think about the specialists that these kids go to, and the playground supervisors and the  
 463 lunchroom monitors, and like, they don't have a clue. And I know this because I talk regularly  
 464 and closely with a lot of these people, and they're like, we have no idea what the plan is for  
 465 Johnny. And I can tell that they are frustrated and maybe if they were part of that conversation,  
 466 and part of the plan, it would really change their demeanor with the kid and their attitude...just  
 467 about being at work in general.

468  
 469 *What are your thoughts or feelings about restorative justice, based on your knowledge or*  
 470 *definition of it, and whatever practices your building may be using and defining as restorative?*

471  
 472 Well...I don't think I've seen an example of restorative justice in my building, and only have my  
 473 example for literature. But...I am completely open to it, I would just like to know more, and  
 474 have more of a formal understanding and I feel like as a teacher, that cares deeply about my  
 475 building, that that should be in a whole staff lesson, instruction, like...I can't imagine that it's  
 476 something you could introduce and show a you tube video and be done in thirty minutes. And I  
 477 think sometimes that is the way of many administrators...and this seems to me like, oh, over the  
 478 summer we're going to do a one-day retreat all around restorative justice or something...so that  
 479 everybody has an understanding and everyone knows what it is going forward, and we're better  
 480 prepared, and we've read the book, and we get to discuss it as a group, and we've heard how  
 481 different that looks for a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher as opposed to the lunch lady, as opposed to the  
 482 playground monitor. Um...so, my feelings and thoughts around it are, I'm wide open. I just  
 483 don't know what it is. And there certainly hasn't been a lot of follow through at my school,  
 484 except for buying everyone a book about it, and saying we are going to do a book study on it and  
 485 then that...uh...drops off the face of the earth.

486  
 487 *If you were to try restorative justice, either within your classroom or within the school, what kind*  
 488 *of support would you need?*

489  
 490 I...well...that's tricky...because the first thing I think of is a counselor. And knowing nothing, but  
 491 I think that I would want the support of a counselor. But I have no faith in our  
 492 counselor...and...uh...I just think she does a really poor job...so...if I had...so I would think a good  
 493 counselor is someone I would want on my team. I would think either the vice principal or EA or  
 494 principal or somebody would be somebody I would want on my team. I would certainly want  
 495 somebody like a teaching partner in my grade band that I value their opinion and their feedback  
 496 and um...to talk things through.

497  
 498 *What about to get it up and running, what kind of support would you need?*

499

500 Training. Some sort of formal training. I know someone had told me about a training that they  
501 went to for a few days that they really liked...and I can imagine...like, a professional person  
502 coming in and saying, this is what it is, this is what it looks like. Let me tell you about it. Let  
503 me...please come prepared having read this book or this article or whatever. But it's...you know,  
504 it's like learning a new math program. You can't just drop it in someone's lap and expect it to  
505 happen.

506

507 *What do you think needs to be in place, either up front or ongoing, in order for restorative*  
508 *justice responses to be effective?*

509

510 Well...I can imagine a team, and at our school I would imagine the PBIS team, but maybe a spin  
511 off of that team...or somebody, or a small group of people that are knowledgeable, that have been  
512 to the training...you know, I can imagine, in my situation...maybe like a primary teacher, and a  
513 teacher in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and a teacher in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and the school psychologist...people that feel quite  
514 comfortable with their understanding of restorative justice and how it's implemented with  
515 different age groups and children and different noticeable behaviors. And then....like meeting  
516 routinely with that team. I think you need a place to go, to say...where's the...where do I go for  
517 the answer? Yeah, I would imagine a team, and I could think that could be part of the PBIS  
518 team, maybe it's a separate part, but it would have to be people that know what they're  
519 doing...and...maybe I don't know what I'm talking about, maybe they don't have trainings in just  
520 restorative justice...but people that are knowledgeable and that I trust what they're telling me,  
521 instead of people just saying, oh, well we do restorative justice and brushing that off.

522

523 *I want to go back to something you mentioned at the beginning, which was around...you were*  
524 *talking about how you've done a 180 degree turn in your response to behavior or your thoughts*  
525 *around student behavior. You talked about your shift, and your light bulb moment, and like*  
526 *shifting your practice. Um...what would you recommend to teachers, or say to teachers, who*  
527 *maybe are of the same kind of attitude or thought process, that you had earlier in your career, if*  
528 *you were trying to kind of help them shift their ideas around it?*

529

530 Probably the same thing that [teaching partner's name] said to me, which was...you know, they  
531 spend seven hours of their day with us, they probably see...those kids probably see us more than  
532 they see their own parents or whoever their care giver is...and you're modeling these behaviors  
533 for them, and you're teaching them like...how to deal with crises and little moments  
534 and...and...it's just...it's part of what...I hate to say this...it's part of what you signed up for.  
535 Because I didn't think it's what I signed up for when I started. And maybe it's not at other  
536 schools... but I think like, right now I have a student teacher...and I think that, if she...and she  
537 doesn't seem like I was when I first started...but if I saw that in her, I would say, oh...you know,  
538 when that student stole that thing out of that kid's desk, that's a moment for us to like have a  
539 conversation. That's a moment to have a conversation with that student and say, tell me a bit  
540 about this. And I'll always be on your side and I want to support you, but you need to be honest  
541 with me. And the whole gear up that went into the conversation that I had with that  
542 student...and....you know, I thought about it at home that night, and on my way to school...and I

543 took my planning time to interact with these two students...and there was a lot of thought that  
544 went into something as simple as like a squishy toy being stolen. Which, years ago, I would  
545 have just been like...just don't bring your stupid toys to school. But that's not really the point.  
546 The point is that she stole it, and then lied about it...so how can we help her...figure out like why  
547 that was a bad choice, and what is she going to do to make it up to that student, and what is my  
548 conversation with her going to look like? And...this could be a real pivotal moment in her life,  
549 and...I've been trying to be metacognitive with my student teacher and tell her my whole thought  
550 process behind it and...and...so I would do that. I would do exactly with what I've been doing  
551 with my student teacher...which is, this is an opportunity to you know, help this student...instead  
552 of saying, don't bring your toys to school.

553

554 *If you were to come back to school and your principal was to say to the staff, we are starting*  
555 *restorative justice. What initial questions would you have, or what would be running through*  
556 *your head?*

557

558 I'd say um...I think we need to know what that is. I think we need to start a book study on the  
559 book that you bought for everybody....I think we need to be really...um...intentional and  
560 open...we need to meet consistently to talk about what this is, what it looks like, what it looks  
561 like in different situations...um...how we, as an entire staff, can get on board with this, so that the  
562 behaviors that I see in the lunchroom and the playground and in the library and in music and in  
563 the classroom...like...I think we should all be on the same page for that. It can't just happen in an  
564 isolated moment in the classroom...with nobody else knowing what's going on. And...I don't  
565 know what goes on, so....you better tell me what it...or give me...and I've been given the  
566 resources...but carve out some time in the busy schedule that all educators have...and say, not  
567 only did I give you the resources, but here is the time. We are going to delve into it...we are  
568 going to understand it...whether that's a two-day training in the summer, or every staff meeting  
569 for two months is going to be devoted to the book study. Something needs to be...a plan needs to  
570 be in place to help everybody understand what it is, what it looks like, who the support is for it.

571

572 *Um...if you were in charge of a school, or at your school, and you could design your own*  
573 *response to behavior, and resources weren't limited, and you could design what you think would*  
574 *be the most effective response to behavior, what would some of the key things you would*  
575 *consider of have in place?*

576

577 I just...I often think about....the parents. Not their lack of involvement, but their lack of  
578 understanding of what's happening. I can think of so many examples in my mind right now,  
579 where I think...if your mom, dad, whoever...saw this behavior on a daily basis, what would they  
580 say? What would they think? I feel like the parents need to be a more integral part of supporting  
581 the high needs kids that we have. Um...but...I feel like we need to have a trained...in my dream  
582 world...some sort of really good trained specialist, that, that's their job. That's what I would  
583 imagine the school counselor would have done...like, ok Johnny, here's the behavior we are  
584 seeing, and security has hauled you out three times this year...and I need to get you in here, and  
585 Ms. [Teacher's Name] and somebody from NAVOS or whoever...a big support network to try

586 and understand what's going on there. And, I definitely think a link to home...and as much as a  
 587 lot of it does happen in the school and some parents will say, whatever happens at school, stays  
 588 at school...I think that if you really want to have success with that kid, there would have to be  
 589 some really intentional link with the parent. I would want them in on it. I would want a good  
 590 counselor. I would want someone trained on restorative policies...and I realize that would take a  
 591 lot of time and money, but that...it would be...a critical element of a successful building.

592

593 *Is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs, thoughts, opinions regarding*  
 594 *student behavior, discipline, suspensions or restorative justice that you would like to share or*  
 595 *think would be helpful to this study?*

596

597 Um...I think...I mean...I just love, love, love my school and all the teachers there. And not a year  
 598 goes by that I don't see two, or three, or five super high needs, extreme behavior problem kids,  
 599 and it all lands on the teacher....and there's very little support. And I feel like this has happened  
 600 to myself...very little support from administration or PBIS or whatever the team is that you  
 601 would hope to go in. And...it...I think it just crushes teachers. I can think of so many teacher  
 602 who've said like...I'm out, I'm done...this is the third time I've had a kid like this, or I've gotten  
 603 no support from the office...and, I, I would rather be doing something else. I see how much it  
 604 wears on teachers, and...and it...and it wore on me. I mean, I took a whole year off of teaching  
 605 because I felt like...I love this job, but I am completely on my own here. And...I've gone to the  
 606 school counselor...and I know it's not all her fault, but I really can't bare her...and her idea of  
 607 supporting me was like touching base with a student once every three months to say, how's it  
 608 going? And I thought, that is not what I'm looking for here. And, just very little support...and I  
 609 can think of teachers...and it just kind of breaks my heart. It just wears them down...it's a big  
 610 energy suck...and I see that...and I feel like I work with some of the best educators I could even  
 611 imagine...devoted, hard-working, and thoughtful...and they're completely exhausted...by the...by  
 612 what's going on in their classroom and the lack of support. And...maybe not knowing what to  
 613 do, where to turn...I mean, my partner this year is a second year teacher. She is really struggling  
 614 with a kid, and I don't think....I mean, I think I'm the only place she's gone...and it just wears on  
 615 you every single day...and I think that that's a real disservice for future and current educators. If  
 616 we want people in this field, that's usually the number one turn off I hear. It's not the  
 617 paperwork, it's not the staff meetings...it's...you know...I'm exhausted. I can't take another year  
 618 like this, I can't take another class like this, I can't take the lack of support. I can't believe this  
 619 kid is still in a gen ed classroom after being at our school for four years. That kind of thing. So,  
 620 that kind of, that kind of weighs heavy for me.

621

622 *That support...how would you define that?*

623

624 I mean, at our school, I feel like they'll point to our LRC teacher...is that what she's called...and  
 625 they'll say, oh, well she's going to teach a social skills group for 15 minutes once a week and  
 626 that's going to take care of that problem. Or they are going to go see our counselor, who I feel is  
 627 not very effective...and often sends kids back to us saying like, oh, I just couldn't get through to  
 628 him. Or, I can't work with her anymore, she's too difficult. [laughs]. Like, that's your job.

629 So...having a good team of people to go to, that would of course include the teacher in that....and  
 630 the follow through. I think the follow through kills us a lot of times at our school. There's some  
 631 great ideas and great intentions and lovely people...but if you don't follow through on  
 632 something...then...why introduce it in the first place?

633

634 *Ok. Perfect. Thank you!*

Teacher 5 [Pseudo Name Danielle]; Female; 49 years; 11 years teaching  
 12/27/17; 2:00 pm; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
 Currently teaching 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 5: My name is [Danielle] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
 6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 Um...I guess I respond in a variety of ways, depending on...to be truthful, like, how, like...if I am  
 9 at the end of the rope with my patience or if it's up until that point. Until I lose my patience,  
 10 either I ignore them, or I redirect them, or...um...compliment someone else who is doing the  
 11 desired behavior. Sorry, I feel kind of nervous...this is like a non-job interview. [laughs]

12

13 *Oh...no worries.*

14

15 Um...if I've reached the end of my rope, that sometimes I am probably a little more snappy than I  
 16 would like to be, and probably more consequence oriented than I would prefer to be.

17

18 *What do you mean by more consequence oriented?*

19

20 Um...just I guess...like, more punitive. Like...you're going to stay in from recess, or, you need to  
 21 stop that or move away from that or you need to leave right now. You know, something like  
 22 that.

23

24 *Ok. Um...how...do you think your response is effective and how do you know?*

25

26 Most of the time I think my responses are effective with tier one and tier two-ish kids. With the  
 27 tier three kids, not always so much. They often times need more than just the general classroom  
 28 management that I provide. So then I try individualized plans for them...sometimes there are  
 29 parts of that that are successful, and parts of that that aren't. Figuring out people's motivations is  
 30 super complicated...and kids often have more than one function going on, so that's also very  
 31 complicated to try and figure out...what form you need to meet their function.

32

33 *You said, tier one, tier two, and tier three...everyone has different kind of definitions of those*  
 34 *terms. How would you describe what tier one, tier two, and tier three means?*

35  
 36 To be honest, the tier two and tier three are a little bit fuzzy to me...because over the years with  
 37 different leadership, from different PDs about PBIS...I am kind of fuzzy on what...I don't know  
 38 the specific definitions of two and three, because they've gotten blurred by my leaders'  
 39 um...what's the word I am looking for...their understandings of them, or their portrayals of them.  
 40 So...I couldn't actually tell you the book definition. But tier one seems to me to be...kids that are  
 41 able to succeed with just small reminders, with the school-wide behavior management systems,  
 42 positive reinforcement...um...plus the positive behavior school wide, like wish tickets. So that's  
 43 to me what tier one is. Tier two are the kids that need that little extra, and tier three kids are, to  
 44 me, the kids that have a lot more severe behavior...that need an individualized plan. Sometimes  
 45 the tier two kids do too...that's why I'm not really sure. I have a couple of kids that need  
 46 individualized plans right now, and I don't know if they are technically tier two or tier three...all  
 47 I know is that they are super disruptive and kids don't feel safe and can't teach with them being  
 48 that disruptive.

49  
 50 *How would you describe some of those tier two or tier three, whatever they might be, behaviors*  
 51 *that you see in the classroom?*

52  
 53 They really depend on the child...like, the ones that are most fresh in my memory are the ones I  
 54 have currently...um...a lot of attention seeking behavior...whether it's screaming, crying, yelling,  
 55 being aggressive toward other children, like hitting, kicking, throwing things, tipping over  
 56 desks...um...that sort of general acting out.

57  
 58 *You said sometimes kind of leadership defines tier two and tier three, and it's not always clear*  
 59 *necessarily on what those are...um...are there specific plans in your school in place, for like, for*  
 60 *instance, this is a tier one student, and this is something they did, and this is something we did in*  
 61 *response. Or, this is a tier two or a tier three, and so here's our tier two or tier three response.*  
 62 *Are those tiers used to describe just the behaviors and the students, or are they used to describe*  
 63 *the response to the behaviors as well?*

64  
 65 I guess a little bit of both. Um...we're still using a request for assistance. And it seems like each  
 66 year the leadership learns a little more about what they are supposed to be doing and their  
 67 expectations from the district...so I feel like that process has changed in the past couple of  
 68 years...and...with our new EA I am realizing that...um...there may not be as many things in place  
 69 as we thought that there were. At least, she is having a hard time finding functioning systems  
 70 that are already in place that have to deal with...um...so, when you bring a child...when you need  
 71 help, you put in the request for assistance...and I feel like if, you do need help...like, I actually  
 72 had a meeting...but I don't know if it was the tier two meeting or the tier three meeting...and I  
 73 asked, and the people involved weren't really sure...[laughs]...because they are on both  
 74 teams...so...um...that definitely was in response to the student's behavior. There was less of a  
 75 label on the child and more of...these things are happening, this is the route we are going to take.

76

77 *And that route was...it sounds like...meeting with the teacher and the people to...*

78

79 To create a behavior plan.

80

81 *Ok. What do you believe is the purpose of disciplining a student?*

82

83 Well...I guess it depends on how you define discipline. I would hope discipline also means  
84 education...like, I don't want a kid to just be...like...with my own son, I don't want to have him  
85 do something wrong and get in trouble for it. I want him to understand what he did...and that it  
86 was not the right thing, and how to do that differently next time. And what does he need to do it  
87 differently next time. And if there are consequences...some things are really...they need some  
88 consequence...some things are natural consequences...like, if you push kids around all the time,  
89 you aren't going to have any friends. Natural consequence. But other things are more difficult  
90 to have an automatic natural consequence to them. So I guess for discipline...I would want the  
91 child to understand what they did wrong, and know what to do right the next time, and if  
92 possible, make amends for it somehow, depending on what they've done.

93

94 *Tell me more about making amends. What does that mean to you?*

95

96 Um...if you were angry about something and you tore up the kid's paper next to you just because  
97 you were pissed off and that kid happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time...then you  
98 would apologize, and maybe you would help them like, get a new paper, or like help them  
99 recreate what they had done. Something to acknowledge the fact that you made a mistake and  
100 try to help the person out who your behavior impacted.

101

102 *Ok. Um...*

103

104 Whether that means cleaning something in the classroom because you chose to draw on you  
105 know, all the desks, or...helping a student with something you broke of theirs...it could mean  
106 different things depending on the situation. Something to make up for what you did, that's kind  
107 of how I view it.

108

109 *Ok. Do you find that kids naturally know how to do that?*

110

111 No. Definitely not. I mean, they know how to say I'm sorry, but often times that is not sincere,  
112 and not well done...

113

114 *What have you found to help them through that process, in making amends or being sincere in  
115 their apology? Have you found anything in particular that has been helpful?*

116

117 Waiting until they can think about it rationally...waiting until they are calm...when both people in  
118 the party are calm. Like, if they have done something to someone else, they need to apologize to

119 them, and the person they need to apologize to needs to be ready for that conversation as well.  
120 So I guess, waiting until both parties are ready to have the conversation. Prior to the  
121 conversation, definitely talking to the person that needs to apologize and asking if they  
122 understand what they did and why that was hurtful...if it was hurtful to the person, and why it  
123 was hurtful....and what they are going to do next time. And usually practicing the apology with  
124 them. Often times, it works the other way around. Usually, the person who is transgressed  
125 against comes and you have to practice with them on like...telling the person what they did and  
126 how it made them feel.

127

128 *Do you find that is easy or hard for kids to do?*

129

130 For both kids, hard. Some it's easier...or easier than others. Like some kids aren't able to keep  
131 their emotions out of it as much. Some kids have a really difficult time  
132 apologizing...sincerely...or.... um... initiating.... requesting an apology. It comes out more...sort  
133 of antagonistic. Like, if I've done something to you, you might be pissed off at me...and when  
134 you want an apology from me, it still sounds like you're...you know what I mean. So, it could be  
135 difficult both ways.

136

137 *Um...do you find that kids have the words to express how they're feeling...or is it more prompting*  
138 *from a teacher or someone?*

139

140 Naturally, I don't think they have the words. I mean, some do, if they have people in their lives  
141 that talked to them about this before. Usually, you are coaching them and giving them words, or  
142 teaching the words in the classroom. Sometimes they use things from the social skills  
143 curriculum that we use.

144

145 *Alright. Um...Ok...what do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline?*  
146 *What do you think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

147

148 Um...I guess they're similar. I guess the role of a teacher is to support the student...help  
149 them...ideally help them learn ways to make positive choices and learn how to get what they  
150 need through positive avenues...and to be able to figure out, because each kid is different. And  
151 to help them understand that their actions have consequences to them, and not even that you get  
152 in trouble, but when you do things to other people, that is going to change the way that other  
153 people perceive you. I guess to teach them that their behavior is not in a vacuum. Like, what  
154 you do does affect other people. Children are very egotistical and self-centered, and have a hard  
155 time...so developmentally, a certain amount can really stick with a child.

156

157 *What about an administrator?*

158

159 I think an administrator needs to support the student...both the student and the teacher.

160

161 *What does that look like?*



162  
163 Um...being able to recognize what the students' behavior is...maybe coming up with alternatives  
164 to try and support them...but doing it in a way that supports the teacher, not doing it at cross  
165 purposes with the teacher.

166  
167 *Can tell me more about that? Maybe like an example of either working in conjunction with or*  
168 *working at cross purposes?*

169  
170 Yes. In my experience, I had an administrator that definitely worked at cross purposes. They  
171 had good ideas and how to make it...things to try in how to help the student...how to help support  
172 a student's behavior...but would make changes to the plan and not inform everyone. So, for  
173 example, like I would be doing the thing that we had last agreed upon, with fidelity, and  
174 then...get in...well...trouble is a strong word...but clear displeasure....that I was doing that because  
175 why didn't I do this? Because now we are doing Z instead of Y...but I didn't know we were  
176 doing Z instead of Y. So, I think over the years I just learned to not bring my problems to the  
177 administration because it was more....not only did I have to deal with difficulties in the  
178 classroom, but then...I just needed....I wasn't really getting any support, it just made it harder.

179  
180 *Ideally, what would support from an administrator look like then?*

181  
182 Working together and changing the plan...together.

183  
184 *What about responding to behavior? What would that look like ideally from an administrator?*

185  
186 Um...I guess to validate the teacher's experience and the students' experience around the difficult  
187 behavior.

188  
189 *Ok.*

190  
191 Not to minimize it...to recognize...that it's actually happening and realize...I feel like a lot of time  
192 teachers feel like the behaviors don't get supported...they just get minimized.

193  
194 *Um...what about like, let's say you call the office and need support because there's something*  
195 *going on in your classroom...and someone from the office comes in. What would like, be ideal*  
196 *for them to do? Both in the moment and then maybe the follow up as well?*

197  
198 In the moment, to take your word for it, that you do actually need help, and to respond as  
199 efficiently as they can. Uh...and then afterwards to let you know what they did with the child...to  
200 let you know if there were any consequences, if there needs to be any follow through, or saying,  
201 oh, I've already taken care of this.

202

203 *What um...so let's say, you mentioned a few behaviors like throwing down desks, or physically*  
204 *aggressive toward other students, what would you like administrators to do in those kind of*  
205 *circumstances?*

206

207 To separate the child who is having destructive behavior from the rest of the kids. To give both  
208 parties a break.

209

210 *And then um...when should that return happen and what should that return look like?*

211

212 I guess the return should happen when they're calm...when they're able to re-enter and have  
213 some expectations around re-entering. It's hard to put a time frame on that, because it's different  
214 for different people.

215

216 *Yeah. But kind of that...those factors are in place...the student is calm, there are expectations in*  
217 *place, what it's going to look like when they walk back in the room, how you might re-enter...*

218

219 And the child knows there is a consequence that's already in place, or the teacher needs to talk,  
220 just so the child knows what the next step could be, or is.

221

222 *Ok. Um...back when you were talking about the making amends piece...who do you think is*  
223 *responsible for leading the kids through that piece? Do you think that's teacher, administrator,*  
224 *both?*

225

226 Um...I would say both, because there are some problems that are small enough that an  
227 administrator would not need to get involved in the process of making amends....and other  
228 problems that are big enough. I just feel like if the problem is big enough that an administrator  
229 had to be involved in solving it, it...it might be appropriate for the administrator to also be  
230 involved in helping the child make amends.

231

232 *Um...one other thing...you mentioned that you thought one of the roles of the teacher was to*  
233 *teach them...to teach students that your behavior impacts other people...you said that their*  
234 *behavior is not in a vacuum. How do you do that with kids? What does that look like?*

235

236 I don't really have one big plan for that. Um...definitely through conversation...whether it's in  
237 the moment, or whether it's through other teaching opportunities. I think whether it's you're  
238 reading a book and there are similar behaviors in the book that kids exhibit, and using that as an  
239 opportunity to talk about it...when this character did this...these people...just to try to work it into  
240 life as many ways as you can. [pause]. And...I don't know what an actual restorative justice  
241 system would look like, but I would hope that it would be...there would be...um...a component to  
242 it...an educational component...whether it be a social skills curriculum or...just some  
243 intentionality around teaching kids or people that what you do impacts other people and it  
244 impacts you as well. I don't know what that would look like, but I guess I would just hope that  
245 there would be that piece to it.

246  
247 *Um...what are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student*  
248 *discipline? Why or why not?*

249  
250 It's tricky. Like, some behaviors, it seems like they're pervasive...and....not getting better.  
251 Sometimes...and this feels terrible to say...but sometimes, if a parent is not involved, suspension  
252 helps them get involved...because it impacts their life...then...it kind of wakes them up sometimes  
253 and... they become more involved. [pause]. I don't think suspension should be a choice for just  
254 like...average, every day behavior. Like, if you physically hurt somebody or if you have a  
255 gun...you know, those kind of big things are suspension...suspension worthy.

256  
257 *What about the difference between in-school suspension and out of school suspension? What's*  
258 *your take on those things?*

259  
260 I think if it's managed well, in school suspension is preferable. There definitely has to be a  
261 system to deal with children that are being suspended in school...not just parked in the office.  
262 Like, there has to be an actual space and a human that's available. And specific plan and pieces  
263 on what you should actually do while in a school suspension. Like maybe a counseling piece,  
264 and maybe a homework piece...I don't know what that would look like though.

265  
266 *If you were designing your own, like if you could design what in school suspension should*  
267 *include, or should look like, what would you, what would you do?*

268  
269 Um, like I was saying, there would be a specific place for it. Just a space so you're not like, oh  
270 gosh, this person is suspended today, what room is available today? Where it's not like a... not a  
271 of the moment trying to figure something out, like there's a specific place, so that's not a barrier.  
272 I just worry that without having those things figured out, those barriers will either make the  
273 suspension not happen or make it not very productive. I mean I would rather have the child at  
274 school, because many times when they are at home they are not actually getting anything school.  
275 They might be doing something more harmful, or being subjected to something that's more  
276 harmful, not being at school. But to answer your question...ideally, it would nice if there was  
277 someone they had to talk to...like a counselor...not even necessarily about that thing that they did  
278 that got them the suspension, but I think that should be part of it...but just someone to talk to  
279 about who they are, like what's going on, like trying to dig deeper into this person and their  
280 behaviors. Some emotional support I guess.

281  
282 *What does it look like now?*

283  
284 I don't know what in school suspension looks like right now.

285  
286 *Is it something that your school does?*

287

288 Um...I think. I like...none of my students have been suspended this year, so...I mean I think that  
 289 there's some kids that have been sent home, like suspended from school for the remainder of the  
 290 day. I'm not sure if some kids have had in school suspension. You would think I should know  
 291 that, but I don't. [chuckles]. I know our district does, but I don't know like the expectation at  
 292 each school. I know the expectation is people aren't getting suspended out of school...that it's  
 293 dealt with in the building. But not if there's really good systems in place. I mean, clearly not at  
 294 my school, I don't even know about it.

295

296 *Um...what are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think the efforts at reducing*  
 297 *suspensions in your district or in your school have been effective? Why or why not?*

298

299 Personally, I don't know. I don't have any experience. They said it's effective.

300

301 *Who's they?*

302

303 They meaning the district. But I also know that people can look at...can be creative...people can  
 304 take numbers and pitch it however they want to, but I don't actually...I don't know if it's as  
 305 successful as they say that it is.

306

307 *Is that a topic of conversation that is ever brought up in your school? Student behavior,*  
 308 *discipline, consequences...anything around suspensions?*

309

310 Just that the district has a push to eliminate the suspensions out of school.

311

312 *But it hasn't come up in terms of, what are we going to do in our building?*

313

314 Not that I'm aware of.

315

316 *Ok. Alright. The next question is, tell me what you know about restorative justice.*

317

318 I don't know a lot. I've never read anything. What I do know I've pieced together from  
 319 conversations. I... feel it's probably a model that...that doesn't just believe that consequences  
 320 have to be punitive...the consequence can be any sort of response or solution to the problem. I  
 321 think people get fixated...and it's easy to do...I've found myself doing that...when someone's  
 322 doing something negative that impacts other people, then you want something to  
 323 happen...something visible, tangible, to happen to the person that's causing the disruption. But  
 324 that doesn't always change the behavior. It makes the rest of us feel a little bit better...while  
 325 they're getting the consequence for what they've done. But that's not necessarily going to be the  
 326 thing that makes the person change.

327

328 *You said you can piece together from conversations....when have those conversations happened?*  
 329 *Within your building?*

330

331 Yeah, I'd say at school.

332

333 *What's been said about it?*

334

335 That it's more of an approach on building relationships with the person and getting the  
336 person...who's exhibiting the behavior....I don't know...I guess this is my own take, I can say that  
337 anyone's told me this, but my own feeling would be that that person would start to take some  
338 ownership of their actions...and also get supported in their actions...supported in their behavior.  
339 To realize what they're doing, and to talk about why it's happening and what they can do to  
340 change it. And so I feel like it's more relationship based and less consequence based.  
341 Consequence in the usual sense of the word.

342

343 *Has it been brought up at all as a staff or as PBIS team or...anything like that? Like, how has it*  
344 *been brought up in conversation before?*

345

346 Um...this year it's been brought up um...I think at a leadership meeting...and I think it's been  
347 mentioned on the staff... there's a book that a few people have been asked to read...we haven't all  
348 read it yet...a book about carrots and sticks. I haven't read it, so I can't really tell you about it.

349

350 *Who's leading the conversation?*

351

352 I would say our EA.

353

354 *So the book was not for everyone?*

355

356 They mentioned it to everyone, but I don't think there was money to purchase one for  
357 everybody...so I think there's been copies that you know have been pushed around.

358

359 *Was there ever a you must read this, or we are going to talk about this, or was it more of a, here*  
360 *is this book if you would like to read it?*

361

362 I feel like that maybe the leadership team, which I am a part of, was supposed to read it...but I  
363 don't even remember if I was ever given a copy...so much happens before school.

364

365 *Just in what you've learned or heard or know about restorative justice, what are your initial*  
366 *thoughts and feelings about it?*

367

368 I feel like it's something I would like to learn more about. I wish it was something we could try.  
369 I mean, I don't really know what all it entails, but I like the idea of a system that helps develop  
370 relationships with kids and it digs deeper into why they are doing what they are doing...cause  
371 it...it seems that behavior is usually trying to solve something else, and figuring out what that  
372 thing is, is the part I'd like to see us focus on.

373

374 *What do you feel like you guys focus on now?*

375

376 I think we focus on what the problem is, but I just don't think we have the resources, because a  
377 lot of the problems are things that happen at home, like, that are sourced from a child's...from a  
378 child's life. So...unless the child is in counseling, it's difficult to try and fully address all the  
379 things that they may need. I mean because if...they're in foster care and their dad's in jail,  
380 there's not a lot that one teacher can do to fix that...like you need a team.

381

382 *Who would be on that team, ideally?*

383

384 Ideally, like, the child would have a therapist. And not the school counselor, but an actual  
385 therapist that they see with some frequency...whether it's out of school or on the premises,  
386 whatever, however it could work out...because I just feel like there's so many kids that need  
387 emotional support from a good therapist. So I think a therapist. And I think like, a PBIS sort  
388 of... including the teacher and other people that are trained. And I don't know what that training  
389 would be, but some sort of skills and strategies to try things. And ideally, if the parents were  
390 willing to get involved with it too...some things they can try at home. Or a caregiver...you can't  
391 count on that though, but that would be ideal.

392

393 *Ok. If you were to try restorative justice, either within your classroom or within your school,*  
394 *what support would you need?*

395

396 I would need to know what restorative justice looks like, because the restorative justice that I've  
397 heard about from the news...from things we've talked about...all are for older kids...like, one of  
398 the kids that have some behavior issues in my classroom...I had mentioned to the EA that I was  
399 hoping to do like, because she's had some experience with restorative justice, and I was eager to  
400 try that, and...she'd also read the carrot stick book, and felt that while those things were valuable,  
401 they wouldn't be appropriate for this child, because this child just wasn't um mature enough. It  
402 seems like for some of these practices, there has to be a certain level of maturity. And that's  
403 what I'd have to understand...like, I don't know...I just have no idea what works and at what age.  
404 Because prior to that, the things I'd been hearing, I was like, oh you can just do this for  
405 everybody. But it's true, this particular child doesn't take ownership of anything, he doesn't see  
406 outside of himself. He really feels that his needs...that everyone is there for him. So I could  
407 understand when she said that having...that trying to have a conversation with someone else just  
408 wouldn't be effective because he doesn't...he thinks that we're all here for him...and he doesn't  
409 see the problem with his choices.

410

411 *Did she or anyone else have any ideas on how to help him learn that? Learn how to take*  
412 *ownership?*

413

414 It was more like, well, what can we come up with instead? So we've come up with other ways to  
415 address his behavior.

416

417 *Um...*

418

419 I think she does have conversations with him about how he wants to be perceived...like how he  
420 thinks people perceive him...so I think she's trying to do that. Yes, you know, she's awfully  
421 busy, so she doesn't always have the chance to tell me all the things she's been working on with  
422 him. So, I mean, I don't know everything. I wouldn't expect for her to repeat to me everything  
423 verbatim that she says to him...but I do think she talks with him about that.

424

425 *That is kind of after he's done something and working with him afterwards?*

426

427 That, and there's just times that he's just checking in with her. There's usually other times, not  
428 necessarily so much when he's in trouble.

429

430 *Ok.*

431

432 This particular child is an attention seeker, so when's he's in trouble we...uh...limit the amount of  
433 attention he gets...because he's figured out if he acts out and gets attention...and one on one  
434 attention, even though it's negative, is more desirable than the attention being shared with other  
435 students. So most of the times the conversations happen with him just checking in.

436

437 *Um...what do you think needs to be in place, either up front or going, for restorative justice  
438 responses to be effective?*

439

440 First, some education, and a consistent definition of what restorative justice is. It seems very  
441 nebulous to me...like, I don't know if there's one um...one definition, one system of it...or if  
442 restorative justice is just this broad term that people can use however they want to. I sort of feel  
443 like restorative justice right now is like the same thing as...like when you go shopping, things are  
444 labeled as natural. That can mean such a wide variety. I want there to be...I would hope and  
445 want restorative justice to have a ...um...what's the word? Legitimate definition. Something you  
446 can look at and say, oh, that's not actually restorative justice because of this. But maybe it is just  
447 a nebulous word, just a catch all, but I would hope it wouldn't be. I guess for, I think for it to be  
448 effective, it should have some sort of...criteria that it meets. I want it to have criteria so that it's  
449 not just words...that people use. Because that's what I feel like it is right now, it's just words that  
450 we use because we don't actually have a definition, have a system.

451

452 *When you say we, are you referring to it being used at your school?*

453

454 In my building.

455

456 *Ok. So, education around what it is...what else would you need?*

457

458 Systems for how we expect it to be used...like in the various grade levels...and what sort of  
 459 behaviors. I am also curious like for which sort of behaviors it is most effective, and best  
 460 supporting.

461

462 *I'm curious...kind of going back to you saying it needs to have a legitimate definition and criteria*  
 463 *it meets rather than just kind of words we are using...has it been tied to certain responses in your*  
 464 *building? Like, this happened, this is what the response was...this is restorative, or this is not*  
 465 *restorative?*

466

467 Not in my experience. Maybe in other people's experience, but not in mine. It's just more like  
 468 the label, like the label, like we should do restorative justice. We need to have a focus on  
 469 restorative justice. I'm not really sure what that looks like.

470

471 *Ok. If you were designing like...you are the leader of a school or the leader of a classroom, and*  
 472 *you were to design your dream response to behavior, both on the preventative and response side,*  
 473 *what would be factors you would consider or want in place, given that you would have any*  
 474 *resource you needed?*

475

476 On the preventative side, I'd want a leader who...I guess has a definition...just some sort of...for  
 477 these...what behaviors constitute certain consequences, what behaviors constitute certain  
 478 responses...and systems in place to deal with them...clear systems that everyone knows to access.  
 479 And I'd also want to be...um...universal...not like when teacher A calls the office for a behavior,  
 480 teacher A is denied, but when teacher B calls the office for the same behavior, teacher B is  
 481 willingly helped. Like, I'd want consistency...so the teachers feel supported and the kids are  
 482 supported. And I guess I don't mean that there's like this list of behaviors, and when you do this,  
 483 this happens to you, but just some sort of, when this happens, and you're experiencing difficulty,  
 484 this is what you can do to get ideas, this is what you can do to get support. And these five things  
 485 are our next steps. And in my dream world, I guess, there would be financial supports at the  
 486 schools, so kids that have really severe behaviors are not impacting all the other kids. I know  
 487 that sounds horrible.

488

489 *What would the financial support be for in that situation?*

490

491 Either to be able to put that student in an alternative setting, or to have someone to support the  
 492 student in their behavior. Like one of my dreams would be that each building has one or two full  
 493 time behavior techs...so that they could help do behavior plans on site...and help support kids.  
 494 I'm not saying the teacher shouldn't be involved in it, but an experienced...because when you do  
 495 have them to support a behavior, you only have them for a certain window of time, and that time  
 496 is not always enough time to figure out what's making the kid tick, or how to fix the behavior.  
 497 And during that window of time...um...a lot of it is put on the teacher to do, even though the  
 498 behavior tech is there...and it's really difficult to teach and manage behavior at the same time.  
 499 So for behaviors that are severe enough and require a tech, my hope would be that the  
 500 tech...could stay in there and support and be the primary one doing...the positive reinforcement.



501 I mean, the teacher needs to be involved in it too, but for some kids...the request is like every 30  
 502 seconds you are doing something to reinforce the child, and that's very difficult to do and teach a  
 503 lesson. So anyway, my hope would be that there were behavior techs on site that could...follow  
 504 through with the child until there's some improvement, or change...somehow help their behavior,  
 505 whether it's resolved, or it's not...to know what the next step would be. And I'd also hope that  
 506 there's more training for the teachers. We keep getting all these things about um...kids that have  
 507 experienced trauma and adverse childhood experiences...which I fully am on board with and  
 508 believe in...but nothing on the practical end of what we do as an educator who has a child in your  
 509 classroom that has trauma. Have you actually...what do you actually do in your classroom, what  
 510 do you need to change...I know for each child like the different trauma leads to like different  
 511 needs for them...but I keep hoping for answers. I mean, this is just an aside...but we had this one  
 512 training...and it was several sessions, and at the end, she asked us to brainstorm idea...I was like,  
 513 are you kidding me? I thought that was why you were here? Like, I already know that ACE's  
 514 are real, like you didn't need to spend six hours convincing me about ACEs. Like, I know they  
 515 are real. Spend six hours trying to help me help kids with ACEs. It would also be nice to have a  
 516 counselor on site, all the time. An effective counselor.

517

518 *Alright. Um...the last question is just do you have anything else you would like to share about*  
 519 *student behavior, discipline, suspensions, or restorative justice that you would like to share or*  
 520 *you think would be helpful to this study?*

521

522 Ideally, I would love to see parent education as part of the process. I feel that parents can  
 523 have...a tendency to want to see concrete punishment of a child who does something wrong to  
 524 their child. I think having them understand the shift would be important to success. If they don't  
 525 believe in something...chances are good their child won't believe in it either.

526

527 *Ok. Perfect. Thank you.*

Teacher 6 [Pseudo Name Leslie]; Female; 43 years; 16 years teaching  
 1/7/18; 12:00 pm; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
 Currently teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 *6: My name is [Leslie] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.*

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
 6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 *I'm just going to ask a question. When you say misbehave, like is it that they're not doing their*  
 9 *work, or is it...*

10

11 *However you would define it.*

12

13 Ok. I really don't feel like my students outwardly misbehave in the classroom. Like...I...I feel  
14 like we spend a lot of time at the beginning of the year writing rules together, practicing them,  
15 and then...you know we do morning meeting every morning where we do a review of our  
16 guidelines and we learn habits of mind...and like emotional tools and...so I feel like for the most  
17 part, the kids are usually pretty, you know...well behaved in the classroom. When they do  
18 something like, you know break a digital citizenship rule, right like they do something  
19 inappropriate online or something like that...then I usually will talk with them individually and  
20 I'll go over like...these are our digital citizenship guidelines and you broke this one. What do  
21 you think should be the consequences...what's a logical consequence for that? And they can  
22 usually come up with their own consequences...and that's basically what they do. Like  
23 sometimes it's oh, I'm going to come in and do community service for whatever guideline I  
24 broke. Or, I'm going to write an apology letter. I kinda let them come up with it...um...in the  
25 classroom. So...so...that's how I would respond. Do I think it's effective? Yes, because it's not  
26 me doing the...you know...giving the consequence, right. It's them. And I spent a lot of time  
27 this year at the beginning of the year talking about ok, what's a logical consequence? And we  
28 practiced. Like what would a logical consequence for this? What would be a logical  
29 consequence for that? So at this point, they know, and like, I don't even have to assign their  
30 logical consequence, they just know and do it.

31

32 *Uh, would you say, so you said, typically they don't often misbehave...and you spoke to a lot of*  
33 *proactive pieces it sounded like that you've done at the start of the year to kind of prevent the*  
34 *misbehavior...would you say that throughout your 16 years of teaching that that's been your*  
35 *pattern, where most kids have not really misbehaved? Or, has your response changed over time*  
36 *at all?*

37

38 I think in my first couple of years of teaching I definitely...it was a lot more...you know, teacher  
39 controlled. And then I just did a lot of reading...and...thinking about management...I read a lot of  
40 Alphonse Kohn books, I don't know if you're familiar with him...and uh...just came to the  
41 realization that I don't...I didn't think more authoritative...approach worked, and was too  
42 stressful for me. You know, it's just too much on the teacher. And so I kinda went in the  
43 opposite direction, and I thought maybe that was a little too loose, and so I've just kind of found  
44 a happy medium. But I feel like this year, more than any year...I mean, I've taken away all  
45 rewards...I don't give points, I don't give rewards, I don't do anything. I just...every single  
46 morning we do morning meeting. And every morning we tackle some...you know, we are doing  
47 this toolbox of emotional tools, and we looked at that...or we learn about growth mindset stances,  
48 or we learn about habits of mind and...so I just feel like building that community... when a  
49 student doesn't follow a guideline, they almost feel like a sense of...guilt...that they've not done  
50 what they're supposed to. Um...I don't know if that's effective...like, it's not like I am making  
51 them feel guilty, but you can tell that they feel bad. So, yeah...I feel like this year...I've probably  
52 gone more back to my roots of really taking away all rewards and...no carrots and sticks at all.  
53 No. Nothing. And I've sort of done a little...I've always...other than the first few years of

54 teaching, I've always done it that way...but I think this year I've gone even more in that  
55 direction. Like, I may have done in my tenth year of teaching.

56

57 *Ok. You said the more authoritative approach doesn't really work. What do you mean by that?*  
58 *Why don't you think it works?*

59

60 I mean, you're not teaching the kids how to self-manage...you're not teaching the kids how to  
61 like...emotional regulation tools. You're not teaching them how to make their own decisions,  
62 how to realize like, oh, I did this, so...well, this is going to happen because it's a logical  
63 consequence. Or like, hey, we have a community here and if I don't do this it's going to affect,  
64 you know, everyone around me. If you're the one assigning the punishment and making  
65 decisions for them...then they're never going to become...you know, they're not going to become  
66 productive, healthy citizens when they go out in the world.

67

68 *Ok. What, in your morning meetings...and I know you mentioned a few things...but what kind of*  
69 *things are in that, or what's like the flow for that?*

70

71 So, every morning, like...morning meeting has four components. There's a greeting, so they  
72 greet each other every morning. Um...we gather in a circle, and first we do a greeting.  
73 Sometimes it's like a game greeting, sometimes it's a greeting in another language...um, you  
74 know usually at like the beginning of the year I try and greet each other in each of their  
75 languages. Um...you know we do sign language, we make games out of it...but every morning  
76 they greet each other, and you know I'm a part of the circle too. I greet them when they are  
77 coming in, but then I also greet them in the circle. Then we do a share...and they share  
78 something about...themselves or about their feelings or it might be a mood meter. We'll call out  
79 where we are at on the mood meter...but they're sharing with like...with their partner. And then  
80 sometimes we share whole group. Then we do an activity. Sometimes it's...it's usually a game,  
81 but it's usually a game based on learning something from the game. So, either we are learning  
82 about teamwork, we are learning about the habit of mind communicating clearly, or they're  
83 learning about persistence...or there's usually...and so after that, we do a debrief. Ok, how can  
84 we apply this to our day, to our academics, to our you know everyday school life. Um...and then  
85 I...then there's a message, where I...I have a letter that I read to them. And it's just...I say, keep  
86 this habit in mind, somewhere along the lines of, keep that habit in mind as we do this, this, and  
87 this... and...um...here are some things upcoming today. Just, you know, wrapping up.

88

89 *How long do those take about?*

90

91 Uhh...probably longer than I'd like it to, but I just feel like it's worth it. About 10 to 15 minutes.  
92 I usually go through it pretty fast. You know at like this point they know the drill.

93

94 *Ok. Um...what about outside of your class? Like, within your classroom you are kind of*  
95 *describing this community and not seeing a lot of misbehavior. Do you see the same thing when*  
96 *they are not in your classroom?*

97

98 Uh....gosh, man, I'd love to. I'd love it that wherever they go, they just like carry those things. I  
99 mean the specialists usually say my kids are well behaved, or oh wow, they're so much better  
100 this year than they were last year or whatever...so, in some respects, yes. But one area where I  
101 really feel like they just don't do well, especially this year...I have a lot of emotional  
102 boys...dramatic boys...is at recess. That's where it's just...you know, every day something new  
103 happens. Maybe not every day, but it feels like it. Something new happens and it... I just find  
104 myself thinking, how can this like extend to recess? Yes, I can go out and you know play games  
105 with them, but really, they need to be able to do this on their own. Especially when they have a  
106 lot of free time. Like, you know, in more structure environments, they tend to do fine...when  
107 they have all this free time...that's....that's the struggle. So, in specialists, yes. At recess...not  
108 always.

109

110 *So, if something happens at recess, what's the response like? Is it on you, is it on someone else?*

111

112 It's usually handled by whichever recess...like, it might be an FYI, one of the supervisors out at  
113 recess...or, it's handled by the EA.

114

115 *And when you say handled, what happens?*

116

117 She usually will call them in, and...you know, have a conversation with them...and, she kind of  
118 uses a restorative method...she doesn't like, it's not about punishment. She has them think about  
119 what they did, who it affected, and what can we do next time. She kind of has them, you know,  
120 go through like a problem-solving process. With them, she talks with them about it.

121

122 *Ok. Have you had students in the past in which, you know, like the model you follow doesn't*  
123 *seem to be successful?*

124

125 Yeah, maybe one. [chuckles].

126

127 *Tell me about that a little bit.*

128

129 Um...I just...he just was so....I don't even know what the word is...he was just so far gone. That,  
130 I mean, he probably misbehaved less with me [chuckles]...but it just was not satisfying for me.  
131 Like it wasn't...like, I usually feel like the kids are...you know, we are in there together, we get  
132 our work done, we help each other out...it's like, we are serious about what we do, but we also  
133 have fun, and we play games and...he just...could not...get with any program. So it was...it was  
134 bearable, but it was not enjoyable. But I think that particular year was tough in general. I had 30  
135 boys. And so many of them were kinda crazy. And that's the thing, when you teach 6<sup>th</sup>  
136 grade...and these things haven't been done year after year after year...it's like...starting at square  
137 one. It's hard to teach 6<sup>th</sup> grade when they come with so many bad habits. Like, I've done 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
138 and 4<sup>th</sup>...I've done 5<sup>th</sup>...and I felt like, definitely my 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders...like, behavior was rarely  
139 an issue.

140

141 *Um...what do you think the purpose of disciplining a student is? And how would you define the*  
142 *word discipline?*

143

144 So...I'm kind of...I don't...

145

146 *And maybe not just within your classroom, maybe within a school.*

147

148 Yeah, I mean...I feel like, for me, if I'm going to have a conversation with a student about them  
149 breaking a digital citizenship guideline, or acting in a way that was inappropriate...then, the  
150 purpose is that they...understand...why it may not be appropriate, and who it affects, and how this  
151 isn't going to help them in their...life...no, not in college, not in...their jobs, not in their personal  
152 relationship. So, like, my purpose is...so if I'm disciplining a student, for me...it's...oh yes, you  
153 made a mistake. And yes, you need to learn from this mistake, and do things differently...and if  
154 you keep doing the same thing over and over again, it's not a mistake. It's just a bad habit, and  
155 you've got to...you got to get rid of that bad habit before it's too late, you know. So, I...I feel like  
156 it's to help them be...like, we want them to grow up and like have a job and have healthy  
157 personal relationships, so I think like, that's my purpose in doing that.

158

159 *What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? And what do you*  
160 *think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

161

162 I think for me it's...you know, in my classroom, it's...it's...it's all me. Like I don't feel like the  
163 administrator should be involved in that. Unless it's like something dangerous. But I'll be  
164 honest, in my 16 years of teaching, I've never had a kid like throw anything or throw a desk,  
165 or...I've like never had those things. You hear about it every day and all the time, but it's  
166 just...it's just never happened to me. And I'm not sure if it's because like I teach 6<sup>th</sup> grade, or  
167 I've taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade for 10 years and...but...even is 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>...I've never had a  
168 student...who that many crazy things...so, in that respect, I feel like I should deal with it. The  
169 only time where that was a real challenge was that one year...[chuckles]...with that one  
170 kid...where I was like, I'm at the end of my rope. I don't have enough patience to deal with this  
171 child. But you know, he is probably the only one in 16 years where I've had...had to  
172 have...administrative help with that...where I've actually went to the administration and said I  
173 need help. But really, for the most part I think it's my job in the classroom. In specialist, I feel  
174 like I should help the specialists if the students are not behaving and hold them accountable, so  
175 like...deal with it...like also bring it up in my own space. And then...yeah, I feel like an  
176 administrator should get involved when it's just really out of control and disrupting the learning  
177 of everyone else.

178

179 *What does that look like? When you think the administrator should be involved, what do you*  
180 *think the administrator should be doing?*

181

182 Um...that's tough, but...I don't think the administrator should be...I think the administrator  
183 should take the time to...problem solve with the child and decide...like hey, does this child need  
184 extra support? Like, therapy, or...come up with a behavior plan...help come up with a behavior  
185 plan. And other than that...I don't feel like it should be babysitting, like they come to the office  
186 and they hang out and eat pretzels.

187

188 *Alright. You said, most of this involves yourself and that you deal with most everything in your*  
189 *class in terms of student behavior...um...when you think about student behavior, what all does*  
190 *that encompass? Like, when you think about student behavior in general, what do you think*  
191 *about on both the proactive and the reactive side?*

192

193 So...I feel...I...I feel like this year I am doing a lot of proactive. So, like every morning we are  
194 doing some morning meeting lesson that has to do with like some form of social and emotional  
195 learning. And then even in...you know, my reading or writing, we are constantly  
196 practicing...conversation skills, and how do you show someone that you...like...but yeah, we've  
197 been...I taught them behaviors of effective communication. They've conducted interviews and  
198 learned all about like, how do you show you care when you are interviewing someone...how do  
199 you...you know...so we spend a lot of time working on social skills throughout the day, and in  
200 morning meetings, when I like specifically teach habits of mind and the tools...or...regulating  
201 your behavior or growth mindset stances...but then I bring it up all the time...like all day I refer  
202 back to it. And then we recycle the same habits of mind, you know. Like, ok, we learned about  
203 listening with understanding and empathy, we're going to bring it back again and do another  
204 activity with it. So it's just...like...I feel like every day we do social and emotional learning  
205 and...and in everything that I do, I'm teaching them social skills and conversation skills  
206 and...collaborative skills and team work skills. So...I don't know if I answered your question.

207

208 *Yeah, that's great. I am going to go back to something else you said. Um...you were saying that*  
209 *in your 16 years, you haven't really had any of those explosive behaviors happen, like throwing*  
210 *desks type behaviors...but, you hear about it everyday. Can you tell me more about what you*  
211 *mean by, you hear about it everyday?*

212

213 Well...in some of the lower grades, like 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 1<sup>st</sup>, grade, Kindergarten...even 3<sup>rd</sup>  
214 grade...we've had some kids who really...you know, are coined high flyers...and well, they kinda  
215 go nuts. [chuckles]. I don't know how else to describe it. They throw things, they scream, they  
216 you know, recently one kid like hit the teacher...knocked her cell phone out of her hands, like  
217 physically lunged at her. He likes her...he did it because he was angry. So...I've never really had  
218 any student...attack me or anything like that, but I hear about it, especially in the younger  
219 grades...all the time.

220

221 *Ok. So, knowing that you are not a teacher in those classrooms, but, if you were...I'm going to*  
222 *go back to the previous question. What do you think the role of the teacher is and what do you*  
223 *think the role of an administrator is?*

224

225 Well I think that's really...I mean, that's like scary and disruptive...so I feel like the  
226 administrator...should definitely step in and get involved. I also think that...as a  
227 teacher...what...you put forth a certain...like, I very much make them responsible for their  
228 behaviors...and decisions...I put a lot on them, right. Like, I make sure there's a lot of autonomy  
229 in the classroom. But, in the end, they know...like, don't mess with me. I mean, one kid  
230 did...but even that...it was just...just me being tired. So I think...you can...be...warm and  
231 collaborative and whatever...but, you also as a teacher need to assert yourself and say, hey, we  
232 don't mess around in here. So, I think it falls on both. You can't be their best friend...you can't  
233 be their buddy...but, you know, it's that warm demander in that book culturally responsive...you  
234 have to be that. I think I've done much better this year at the warm part...[chuckles]...I've  
235 always been the demander part. And I've made...I mean, we get along...I've always gotten along  
236 with my students for the most part...but I'm doing better with the warm part this year. I guess  
237 what I'm saying is, yes, it falls on both. If the kid is totally out of control, the administrator  
238 needs to step in. But I also feel like, you can control that if you have that sort of assertive  
239 stance...and...the sort of certain persona of...I'm not here to mess around, don't mess  
240 around...You know, the kids might say, oh, you're scary...right...but I think it's more...it's  
241 more...it's more along the line of, oh, I know I can't mess with you. [chuckles]

242  
243 *And in that situation, you said the administrator should step in and help with that....similar to*  
244 *what you said earlier about when an administrator should step in, or does it look any different?*  
245

246 Um...I don't feel like suspending kids or...I don't feel like that's going to help...or expelling the  
247 child...is gonna help, cause then what? They're just going to go to another school and do the  
248 same thing. So, we certainly need to...we just need to give that kid a lot of extra help and  
249 support. I don't think...it just can't fall all on the teacher. Just cause we've got too many other  
250 students. I mean, ideally, we have two teachers in the classroom and we meet all their needs  
251 emotionally and academically, but that's never going to happen here in the United States, or  
252 anywhere. So...I don't...is it going to look different? They are going to need more support. But  
253 should it be this sort of harsh punishment, like suspension...I don't think so.

254  
255 *With that...what are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of*  
256 *student discipline? Why or why not?*  
257

258 I mean if a kid brings a gun to school [sighs]...then that's really...[sighs]...that's very serious.  
259 You can't...I mean, something serious has to happen as a result. But, you can't...again, you  
260 can't...just expel the kid and say, ok, they're just going to do it at another school. Like, I feel  
261 like something needs to be done to help the child. The problem is, at schools, we just don't have  
262 enough resources to deal with that, you know...not at school. Like, in real life, we don't have  
263 enough resources to deal...we don't have enough police to deal with...we don't have enough  
264 mental health counselors...it's just...so I think it's just an unfortunate result of our society...I  
265 don't know if it's just here in the United States, or everywhere, I don't know. Um...I think  
266 suspension only when something really serious happens and you're...and they're endangering the  
267 lives of other kids. You know, you do not want a child to come to school and shoot other people.

268 So, that's really serious...yes. Suspension. But suspension because you know a kid didn't follow  
269 rules or...no. That's ridiculous. And then suspension because a child brought marijuana? You  
270 know, I don't know. That's a tough one, especially since...yeah, marijuana is not legal for  
271 anyone under 21...or is it 18...or 21...um...that's a tough one. But yeah, I believe suspension,  
272 used only sparingly, for really serious situations.

273

274 *So you said bringing a gun to school...what else would you consider really serious?*

275

276 Um...like, you know, seriously physically assaulting someone, you know. Like...hurting them,  
277 like they end up in the hospital. But I mean, I don't even know if suspension would help there.  
278 You know, you suspend a kid, they're at home...they play video games, they come  
279 back....so....the idea of suspension is just maybe...just maybe to get the message across, like,  
280 dude, you really messed up. This is serious. But, it needs to be followed up with...lots of sort of  
281 problem solving, and maybe visits from...like, we had a child who pulled the fire alarm and...our  
282 principal brought a...why can't I think right now? A fire marshal...to come and talk with him.  
283 And I thought, that was good. Because you can actually talk to the child about, hey, when you  
284 do that, it costs us money, we're taken away from other people who actually need us...like, that  
285 kind of stuff. So, I don't think suspension actually solves anything...but maybe, just sends the  
286 message of wow, this is very serious.

287

288 *Ok. What about in school suspension? What are your thoughts on that?*

289

290 Yeah, if it was in school suspension and they're getting the visit from the fire marshal, and  
291 they're talking to...you know, getting some really....having good conversations with people about  
292 how what they did affected this and...that might mean later on in...later on in life this might mean  
293 this. Yes. But, in house suspension where they're just sitting and doing work in the office  
294 instead of in the classroom...I don't really understand the purpose of that. Cause half the time,  
295 they aren't doing the work and they're goofing off...I don't really think that's useful.

296

297 *What are um...your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think the efforts at reducing*  
298 *suspensions within your district or your school have been effective? Why or why not?*

299

300 I agree with reducing suspensions, especially for...stupid, you know...little things. I don't know  
301 if it's been effective. You know, like when you read the PR it's like...oh, we've gone from this  
302 to this...and...I don't know how to measure if it's been effective. Like, how does one measure if  
303 it's been effective? Does that mean...that the kid has...it would be effective if the child has  
304 changed their behavior. It's not effective if it's just like, oh, we've reduced suspensions just  
305 because we aren't suspending kids anymore. Right? So...if it changes behavior, then yes. But I  
306 have no idea if within our district, reducing suspensions has meant that they're doing other things  
307 in place of that...or, if it's just...we aren't going to suspend you. So, if it was we're doing  
308 something in place of that, then, yeah, I would think it would be effective. If it's just, we're not  
309 going to suspend anymore, then...I don't know if that's effective.

310



311 *What about in your building? Have you seen anything or...*

312

313 I don't feel like we've had a lot of suspensions this year...and....I don't know if it's been  
314 effective. I don't know. I do know that like changing behavior takes a lot of time...like you  
315 don't suspend a kid and do a few things and it's done. Like, it takes a lot of time. I found myself  
316 getting frustrated somewhere around November because we were doing all this like social and  
317 emotional stuff mumbo jumbo every morning...every morning....and they were still getting in  
318 trouble out at recess...and I was like, why is nothing working? And, I think, I just realized, you  
319 know, it takes time. They've been this for what, like 5, 6, 7 years of their school career. It's not  
320 going to just...because Ms. Baroudi is doing some social emotional lessons every morning.  
321 Maybe at the end of the year it will get better. I've noticed some...I've noticed some  
322 improvement, like regulating. Like, I have one student who has not gotten into any altercations  
323 in the last few months, at all...he just like walks away, and is like practicing some of the things  
324 that we've learned. So yeah...I don't....I don't know if it's been effective at our school. If it  
325 changes behavior it would be...but I don't know if it's changing behavior.

326

327 *I am going to go back to when I asked you about the effectiveness of suspension, and you said,*  
328 *you know, just sitting in the office, you don't really understand the purpose of that. Is that*  
329 *something you've seen within your building, where someone is in school suspension...*

330

331 Yeah. I mean, in school suspension has been, we give them a bunch of work...and they sit in the  
332 office and they get the work done for half a day...and that's about it. I do know that two years  
333 ago when I had students that brought in marijuana to school...well, we don't even know if it was  
334 marijuana...it could have been oregano...whatever it was...they sat in the office for half the  
335 day....and as far as I know, I had to give them a bunch of work and they did it. And they didn't  
336 do it well. I mean, at least they would do it well...or better...if they were with me. [laughs]. I  
337 don't know.

338

339 *Do teachers in your building talk at all about suspension or discipline?*

340

341 I have not heard anything...not this year at least. This year seems a little bit calmer than last  
342 year...in terms of behavior and kids in the office...a little. I think if you were the ladies in the  
343 office you might not agree, but...it seems a little calmer. Like, I see less screaming and throwing  
344 chairs in the conference room. You know, when I go to the office during planning, I don't hear  
345 all the drama that was going on last year.

346

347 *What was going on last year?*

348

349 Like, there was one student...he was a Kindergartener and he'd been in the conference room and  
350 he'd take chairs and he'd throw the against the wall and he'd go nuts and scream and shout.  
351 There's a lot less of that going on this year. And he...he has one on one support. And I've  
352 noticed they've worked hard...and I think it's helped.

353

354 *Ok. Tell me what you know about restorative justice.*

355  
356 So...I feel like...so the books that I've read...I usually use this series of books called the  
357 responsive classroom...and to me, that's more about restorative justice than disciplining. So, you  
358 know...you write the rules, the guidelines together. There's logical consequences...you give kids  
359 the tools to manage conflict. You know, you help them make the right decisions when they  
360 break the guidelines... it's not about punishing them or keeping them in at recess...it's rather like  
361 changing behavior...helping them be aware of their behavior and why it may not work...in the  
362 classroom, in school, in society. Um...I...I know that...I read this book, no more carrots and  
363 sticks...and it just said, rewards don't work. I mean, giving points for this...oh, if you do this, I'll  
364 give you this. That doesn't work. It needs to be I teach them...give them the tools so that they  
365 can be emotionally, socially, and academically successful, you know. So...I, I don't know if  
366 restorative justice is something else...you know, they're always like changing the jargon in  
367 education, but to me it's more about...it's not that you're punishing a student, but rather you're  
368 working with them to change their behavior. And also understanding where they're coming  
369 from, and kind of tapping into that as well. So like, culturally responsive teaching as well.

370

371 *Ok. Has there been any conversation in your building about restorative justice?*

372  
373 Yeah. So at the beginning of the year we read the...or...during the summer...they asked us to  
374 read the culturally responsive teaching and the brain. And then...I loved the book, I thought it  
375 was great. So...there were a lot of great book recommendations in the book, so I went and  
376 bought the carrots and sticks book and...then I realized I had a ton of the books that were  
377 recommended in her book...like the responsive...like it's like this responsive classroom series of  
378 book. So, like I do every summer, I just kind of went back and re-read them. So for me,  
379 it's...I've...I was very conscious this year about, ok...no more punishment and rewards. Like, I  
380 know that doesn't work. Or, it works to a certain degree...but it's not going to help the kids in  
381 the long...in the end. It's going to make my classroom, like...you know...I can control it how I  
382 might want it, but it's not...it's not going to impact them. I don't know about...I don't know  
383 about other classrooms to be honest. I feel like we read books and we discuss them, but then  
384 there's no real follow up. And so, we read this culturally responsive book, which I loved, and we  
385 did all this work at the beginning of the year, in our DID days...but there's been...there's been  
386 PBIS follow up, but not really this sort of restorative practice and the responsive classroom. I  
387 don't know what's going on in other classrooms...I don't know what systems are being used. It's  
388 not the same in every classroom. And I'm...I'm thinking...newer teachers might be using the oh,  
389 change a color...from green to red...I don't know what the colors are...[laughs]...I've never used  
390 that so. I don't know. But...um...yeah, so. I know I've talked...I know I've thought a lot about  
391 it. And I know with my student teacher, we've talked a lot about it, because we do...he has to  
392 slowly start taking things over so now he does the morning meeting, so, we're always talking  
393 about it. I...I don't know that I've had conversations with other teachers about it.

394

395 *So, as a building then you....read the culturally responsive teaching in the brain book at the*  
396 *beginning but nothing really since then?*

397

398 Well...they gave us carrots and sticks...or no more carrots and sticks...and that is all about  
399 restorative practices...and, they gave everyone a copy. And I already had one, and I had read it,  
400 but...and I...but we haven't discussed it. Like, there's been no, please read this...we are going to  
401 discuss this. None of that. Or we are going to start implementing this...so...none of that. So, I  
402 don't know if it's coming up...in January...I have no idea. So I think the word restorative justice  
403 is thrown around. The word restorative practices is thrown around. They have us read these  
404 books. But then there's no follow up. There's follow up for me because I believe in it and I like  
405 to read and you know...it's just...but there's no follow up for the whole staff.

406

407 *What are your thoughts and feelings about restorative justice? You talked about it a little bit*  
408 *already but...*

409

410 I mean, yeah, like I said, the first couple of years I didn't do that. It was like, this isn't...this  
411 doesn't feel right...like giving points or changing...well, giving points, I went back to that later  
412 on in my career because I once had a year where I had so many boys and they love competition,  
413 and that was a way to kind of motivate them...but, I wouldn't do it today. You know...and uh...I  
414 did it last year...a little bit. Um...so no....yeah, I totally...I totally agree with it. I think you can  
415 have restorative practices, but still hold like strong, clear expectations. You can do both, you  
416 know. It should be both. It shouldn't just be all restorative without any of...without that other  
417 part. Yeah...I'm totally for it. I don't...punishment, like I said...we'll get complacent kids, but  
418 it's not going to help them be better human beings. It's not going to help them be more  
419 independent. It's not going to help them with their relationships. So, I don't...plus it doesn't feel  
420 right. [laughs]. I just feel guilty. I don't need that kind of guilt every day. And, I'd rather put it  
421 on them. Not in a bad way...but like, hey, this and this...you broke this guideline, why is that a  
422 problem? How are you going to fix it? What are you going to do about it? Why is it important  
423 that you do this? Like...you know...

424

425 *It sounds like you are incorporating some things already, but what would you say... but if you or*  
426 *if someone else was implementing restorative justice in your classroom or school wide, what*  
427 *support would you need or would you think that teachers would need?*

428

429 Um...I would love...I'd love for us to do similar things...like, the support that I would like is, let's  
430 do similar things so that it's not a new...a new teacher with new expectations every year. Let's  
431 do similar things, because in the end it will be better for the kids. Um...I would love to have  
432 conversations with other teachers like, how's this going? How's it going? And what do you do  
433 for this situation? And how do you deal with this? And I'd love to do more reading about it. I  
434 mean, I bought a bunch of books and I read them, but....I mean, it's hard to read like five  
435 different books about the topic and then like...implement everything on your own. It would be  
436 nice to have other people to try it out with. And so, like, I am trying it out...I've been trying it  
437 out...and every year I kind of change things a little bit and try something new...revert back to less  
438 restorative practices and then go back to it. But I think I'll stay here...I don't think I'll go back to  
439 any sort of rewards system. I haven't had to this year. Maybe with a different class, I don't

440 know. But this year, they don't work for points, they just work because they know it's going to  
441 help them in the end, you know.

442

443 *Um...what do you think needs to be in place, either up front or ongoing, for restorative justice*  
444 *responses to be effective?*

445

446 Well...I think everybody needs to understand what it is exactly. Or, maybe not exactly, because I  
447 think it's a lot of different things, right? But, so...if you're going to give us a book and ask us to  
448 read it, we should be held accountable for reading it and then we should have discussions and  
449 then we should think about how are we going to make this happen at our school, as a whole  
450 school. And...but that requires administration to really...like...come up with...well, not just  
451 administration, the leadership team...come up with a good yearly...not just year long, a several  
452 years long plan. And if it starts slow, great. Like, this year, we are going to read, we are going  
453 to discuss. We are going to try a few things out. We are going to think about what worked, what  
454 didn't. Next year, we're going to put these things in place. Yeah, there needs to be like a plan.  
455 Just like for me in the classroom, I'm not just like, oh, today I'm going to try this. Maybe I'll do  
456 this. No. I have a plan, like...and here's my reading unit. It's this, and this, and this, and then  
457 this. But there's not plan for that, so...there's just talk of it. Here's a book. This is what we  
458 want to do at this school. But I feel like most PD is done that way. I haven't been at any school  
459 in 16 years that has done it...has done like ongoing PD about the same topics...and really taking  
460 us through this whole cycle of learning of learning, practice, come back, revise, discuss, revise,  
461 try again.

462

463 *Uh...Let's say you were talking with a teacher who is not in the same place as you are at with*  
464 *these types of things...and is more maybe on how you described it as the authoritarian side.*  
465 *What maybe kinds of things would you say to that person...like, in having a conversation. Like,*  
466 *let's say your school is implementing...does decide to implement what you are doing, or similar*  
467 *things, across the school...and there are people who are...who are opposed to it, or maybe not at*  
468 *the same readiness level. What are some important things you would share with them or would*  
469 *want them to know?*

470

471 I think I would probably give them a book to read. The teacher across the hall from me is new  
472 and his management was...he was relying on yelling at the kids to do what he wanted. And  
473 so...the administration went in and said, oh, this and this need to happen. But, I just gave him  
474 this book that really spoke to me when I first started teaching...when I first started thinking about  
475 doing...you know, changing my classroom management. And it's part of that Responsive...it's  
476 called The Rules in School. And so I...I'd say hey, my first couple of years, management was a  
477 struggle. You know, I...it was like I...I felt like I needed to control everything and I felt like...and  
478 it was just much more authoritative. And I realized that...that's just not going to benefit the  
479 kids...and that it was putting...and that it was very stressful as a teacher. I mean, who wants to go  
480 to school with that every day. You want to go, you want to enjoy teaching...have that  
481 relationship with the kids, and...um....so...hey, here's a book that really helped me. And it's a  
482 very readable book. It's not...It's a very practical book. So...I think I would...I think in the end I

483 would say, it's better for the kids. It'll be better for you. You'll have a longer and happier career  
484 if you...if you really focus on the classroom management. And...I'd also say classroom  
485 management is really important and...I don't even know if classroom management is the right  
486 word anymore. You know, like that sense of community that you have...and the relationships  
487 that you...that you have with the kids is really important and will really set the tone for the rest of  
488 the year. If...you know...if you don't figure it out earlier enough in the year, or earlier enough in  
489 your career, it's going to be hard. It's going to be a tough job. I think I would say you want the  
490 kids...you want to give them the skills and tools that they need so that they can be successful  
491 human beings in school and in life and...the other way is not going to give them those skills.  
492 You are just going to be controlling them so they do what you want them to do.

493  
494 *If you were...if your school was going to do something school wide around this, what would you*  
495 *think would be important for your administrator to consider, or to know, or to be thinking about?*  
496 *Or in any building?*

497  
498 Well...I think our particular administrator like throws the word restorative justice  
499 around...and...she clearly has some understanding of what it is...but I don't know that the staff  
500 does. And just giving us a book to read...and having no follow up or discussion, is not going to  
501 make anyone else buy into it or even understand it. So, first of all, yes. Give us some books to  
502 read. Have discussions. Have some PD about it. Have some discussions about...what do we  
503 think? How do we feel? I mean, most schools, since the beginning of our...since the beginning  
504 of our school systems in the United States, have used a system of punishments and rewards...like,  
505 that's classroom management. That's Pavlovian...you know...So...to just expect that people are  
506 going to change overnight...the kids too, cause it's a different way of thinking about it for them  
507 too, you know. Um...is...and just using the words is not going to be helpful. You have to  
508 have...you have to do readings, have discussions, have buy in...and then come up with a good  
509 plan for setting this into place. None of which has happened. And that word...of that  
510 phrase...has been thrown around now for like year three. You know, it's been year three of like,  
511 oh restorative justice...restorative practices...ok. And what are you doing to make it happen?  
512 And what does it mean exactly? And you know, so...I don't know.

513  
514 *Um...do you think your administrator would say that as a school you are doing restorative*  
515 *practices?*

516  
517 Probably. But, I think sometimes our administrator...I think, like, sometimes she might say like,  
518 oh yeah, yeah that's what we are doing, or that's what we are working on...without really  
519 understanding that...that it's not that simple. [laughs]. It's not just a matter of telling the PBIS  
520 team, ok, this is what we are doing. Or telling the leadership team. And no training. I don't  
521 know...or maybe she's more aware? I don't know.

522  
523 *What do you think her definition of it is?*

524

525 I think her definition of it is...is that there are...well, in conversation with her, her definition  
526 is...well...maybe she's evolved a little bit...but I know, two years ago, it was...no, we can't have a  
527 set of consequences that are going to be the same for all the kids. No, we can't have this plan  
528 that says, if a kid does this, here are some things that are going to happen. That's not restorative  
529 justice...and you know, it really has to be on a case by case basis and like requires conversation  
530 and blah blah blah. I mean, that's what she would have said two years ago. I think she's a little  
531 more aware now because I think she has done more reading. But, I don't think she knows how  
532 to make it happen at the school...because, there hasn't been any conversation at the school, as a  
533 staff. There hasn't been any...and it's still...and I was on the PBIS team and there would be like,  
534 these arguments. We'd spend our whole time...our PBIS 45 minutes in the morning...arguing  
535 about the list of...no, we can't have like, if a kid does this, we respond like this. No. No, I don't  
536 like. I don't want. I don't agree with that. It needs to be on a case by case basis. But, the  
537 problem is, with the case by case basis....not that I disagree with that. I don't disagree with that.  
538 I agree with that...yes, not all situations are the same. And yeah, you want to treat them like  
539 human beings. You want to help them. But, there has to still be a plan, something in place,  
540 some training, you know. It's going to take a long time...to like train teachers how to also  
541 be...how to do this. How to have conversations about this...how to find the time to do this. So,  
542 you know, I don't think...I think her definition of restorative justice has maybe evolved from  
543 year one or year two, but...but she hasn't expressed that or shared that or...with the staff.

544

545 *So then what does it look like in practice in your building right now?*

546

547 Nothing. Ok. Ruler. Ruler. Ok, so we do RULER, so I guess that's restorative. Yes, that's  
548 true. We're teaching kids how to regulate...how to identify their feelings and regulate their  
549 emotions. So, yeah, I can see that Ruler is part of our toolbox...our toolbox of restorative  
550 practices...but...yeah, it hasn't been strongly identified. Like, if Ruler is our restorative practices,  
551 then, she needs to do a better job with following up with that as well...because charter, we're  
552 good. Mood Meter, we're good. Meta Moment, some of us. Blueprint...like, if our blueprint is  
553 going to be our problem solving...what's the word...framework...then we should be practicing  
554 blueprint. We should be doing it at PDs. We should be uh...asked...ok, I want you to do the  
555 blueprint framework with a student...in the next couple of weeks, and then when we meet again  
556 on Wednesday we are going to talk about how it went, you know? Like, there's just no follow  
557 up. This is the initial training of what these four components are, but no follow up. So, ok...I  
558 think that maybe her definition of restorative practice is...we are doing Ruler.

559

560 *Are any responses to behavior being defined as restorative? Are there situations that have*  
561 *happened where a response is done and then it's either labeled, oh that was a restorative*  
562 *response or that wasn't a restorative response?*

563

564 Well the blueprint is more...is more problem solving...right. But, no. So I think our EA...I've  
565 seen it happen. Like, there was an incident in PE between two students...two of my  
566 students...and the PE teacher, and myself, and the two students, and her...we went through this  
567 problem solving framework. And I liked it. I thought it was great. Each of us could talk about

568 how we saw the situation, or how we felt about the situation...you know. And then we came up  
569 with a plan and then we checked in a couple of weeks later. And that issues has...has not come  
570 up...there was one more issue, but then, after that we met again, and then it was gone. So, I  
571 would say that's restorative practice right. I don't know if she used the words restorative  
572 practice, but she said, this is not about punishing you...I'm...I'm going to using this process as a  
573 way to have you think about your behavior...think about how we're going to change it...and think  
574 about how we're going to support you.

575

576 *What about other teachers? Have you heard anything from other teachers about restorative*  
577 *practices?*

578

579 No...I guess I need to talk to other teachers more. [laughs]. No...no I haven't. I feel like the  
580 teachers I talk to, kind of handle their own behavior issues, you know. Like the teachers I hang  
581 out with or talk with, they just handle it on their own. I feel like the EA...I feel like that's her  
582 approach. And it's great. I love it. Compared to last year.

583

584 *Tell me more about last year.*

585

586 Last year we had an EA that was...not good. And she was...not qualified for the job. And she  
587 didn't how to deal with behavior issues or how to talk to the kids. Nor did she know how to deal  
588 with adults. Yeah, she was very ineffective. And, I think she did some damage to relationships.  
589 She was a mess. Very ineffective. Like, she'd talk to the kids all sweet and everything in front  
590 of everyone....then you'd see her behind closed doors talking to the kid like...like they were a  
591 piece of dirt. It was like....umm...multiple personalities. It was like, be one way. Don't be that  
592 way and pretend you are this way, when you are really this way. I feel like the EA this year is  
593 very...she's firm, but she's nice...and she has this problem solving, sort of restorative justice way  
594 of dealing with....when kids break rules.

595

596 *The last question is...is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs, thoughts,*  
597 *or opinions regarding student behavior, discipline, suspensions, or restorative justice that you*  
598 *would like to share or that you think would be helpful to this study?*

599

600 I think I've said a lot. [laughs]

601

602 *Ok. Thank you so much.*

Teacher 7 [John]; Male; 23 years; 1<sup>st</sup> year teaching  
1/9/18; 5:30 pm; Interviewed by Kaitlyn Spore  
Currently teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

1

1 *KS: Ok, to start, can you state your name and acknowledge that you are being recorded.*

2

3 7: My name is [John] and I acknowledge that I am being recorded.

4

5 *Ok, so the first one is, when a student misbehaves in your classroom, how do you respond? And*  
6 *do you think your response is effective? And how do you know that?*

7

8 Um...so...I guess like...initially, I would try to...um...respond um...so I think about this as like my  
9 goals of what would happen. I would want my response to be something that is effective.

10 Um...so like, redirection to try and get are...redirect whatever behavior they are exhibiting or  
11 showing. And I don't know, it's like...it changes...a lot, like depending on where I am and  
12 what's going on in the class and who's doing it and stuff like that. So...um...stuff like...talking at  
13 the carpet while I am teaching a lesson, that's kinda like a whole class reminder...like, oh  
14 remember, we need to make sure our voices are off. And...so yeah, like...I have some of these  
15 posters up that like say these are the carpet expectations or whatever...and I kinda try to reference  
16 those throughout that. Umm...if it's like...sometimes even it can be effective for a little bit,  
17 sometimes it isn't you know. It depends on like the time of day, and what's going on. [laughs].  
18 Like it can be effective but...um...the kids I am working with right now need a lot of those  
19 responses and I don't know if like the reminder of that is particularly effective in that scenario  
20 with them. Um...and I guess, the talking at the carpet scenario, I would know it was effective if  
21 kids kinda stopped talking...so...that one's kind of an easy one to see if it was effective or not.  
22 Are there like other kinds of ones?

23

24 *Um...just like in general...any kind of misbehavior...whether it's minor or more severe.*

25

26 Yeah, like, with the minor behaviors...um...I am working on kind of ignoring some of those...you  
27 know that don't seem to like...only be effecting like that one kid, that doesn't seem to be  
28 affecting...I don't want that to be something that takes my attention away from the rest of the  
29 class. I mean, you could try something like, give them a look, like hey. You need to stop that.  
30 Um...if it is between a couple of kids, try to separate them would kinda be my first step with that.  
31 Um...if it's like one kid that's misbehaving and seems to be getting like very amped up. I'm  
32 trying to use...like we do the Ruler...and I'm trying to use that...I'm trying to use like the meta  
33 moment poster I have and like have them go over and like stand with it and kinda look at it and  
34 let them think through those steps. Um, I would say that isn't like super effective because I don't  
35 think I've like really...walked through the steps with the kids on that, and so like...that is kind of  
36 like on me and teaching that and how I want to see that in my class. Um...so yeah. I guess, the  
37 easiest way for me to know if my redirection, or whatever my response was, was effective is if  
38 the behavior stops...and if they...um, I don't know...I guess I have a low expectation of having  
39 them stop for the moment or for a period of time, but it doesn't like cease completely, you know.

40

41 *Are there set consequences, or is it more of the redirection and talking with them?*

42

43 It's more of the redirection and talking with them. Consequences...um...you know, like, I've  
44 called home a couple of times over a few like long standing things. Um...I...I don't really like...I  
45 don't really try and keep kids from recess or stuff like that. Um...I mean, it's also part of like my  
46 break time too. And sometimes I think you know that like I need to reset and feel better about it.



47 Like, so I can get back. And a lot of kids...they are in second grade, they need recess. And so, I  
48 don't have...well, the system we are doing...we are starting to do this data collection sort of thing,  
49 like a... like, they are like minor notes...like if there's a minor misbehavior, they're like notes.  
50 Like if you do a minor redirection and you write it down and like what you did, then you give it  
51 to the EA. Um...so she can kinda collect the data throughout the classrooms. But I  
52 don't...there's not really any action that goes with that. It's like, if you want it to be handled by  
53 someone else, like the principal or something, then you can check that, but...minor things that  
54 you have a conversation with the student and you just send it. But yeah, I don't really have  
55 many consequences.

56

57 *Um...so the next one is, what do you think the purpose of disciplining a student is? And I also*  
58 *want to ask, how would you define discipline?*

59

60 Um...I mean I guess...discipline seems more like...more of like this hard core thing, like you need  
61 this discipline...um, so I...I like...I mean I think like the purpose of discipline a student at school  
62 is that you want it to stop, you want them to behave. But, like...the word discipline seems kinda  
63 like...like Draconian or something. Um...so, yeah.

64

65 *What do you think is like the purpose of re-directing student behavior?*

66

67 Um...to...have them change their behavior to the desired behavior. Um...you know, sit with their  
68 body calm facing the speaker, to not be using the time on the carpet to like tie and untie their  
69 shoes and talk with the person next to you. You know, stuff like that. The purpose is to...for  
70 redirection or reminding is to change their behavior to what you expect them to be doing.

71

72 *Alright. What do you think the role of a teacher is in student behavior and discipline? What do*  
73 *you think the role of an administrator is in student behavior and discipline?*

74

75 I think the role of the teacher in student behavior and discipline is um...I think a lot of that is like  
76 the culture of the classroom and like the...expectations of having the way that your classroom  
77 works as a community known and...yeah, known by all the students and probably for all the  
78 student to know it. So like, as a teacher I need to be like...diligent in the getting the students to  
79 know what are like appropriate behaviors. So I guess, there are appropriate and inappropriate  
80 behaviors, and they should know like what the appropriate and the inappropriate behavior are  
81 and like what they look like in the classroom. And in different aspects of the school. So like,  
82 walking in a line, the appropriate behavior looks like this...the inappropriate behavior is like this.  
83 And then like, knowing that the appropriate behaviors...the reason we want to see the appropriate  
84 behaviors is because like...they will....you know...they are expected to lead to more positive  
85 things, like you have more time to do this if we...if we are displaying the positive behaviors it  
86 means we are ready to do this and we are ready to go, whereas the inappropriate behaviors are  
87 the ones that need that redirection and take that time. Which I think as the teacher, it's important  
88 to have the students and...to have the students and have everyone in the class like know what the  
89 expected behaviors are. Um...and....um....I think the...like, the teacher's role is

90 like...discipline...things that aren't disrupting the learning or aren't interfering with others in the  
91 classroom are like things that hopefully you can handle, like you can handle in the classroom.  
92 Like, you know, different things you can...you know different consequences and things like that  
93 in the classroom. Like, you know, like...you have to walk back with me from recess to talk about  
94 whatever you were doing wrong and how you are going to change it. You know, just like taking  
95 the time that was wasted or used in a poor form or a poor way to like, talk about what you did  
96 and figure out maybe like a quick plan to maybe not do that. Whereas, the administrator role in  
97 student behavior and discipline...I think the administrator should kind of set like the whole  
98 school culture and have kind of like those guidelines for success or whatever. You know, kind  
99 of have that whole overarching thing of what behavior stuff is like expected in the school.  
100 Because it could be different for every teacher, like every teacher is not the same. Teachers  
101 handle things different ways or handle different...have different changes or tweaks to things. But  
102 the overall whole school culture or...like...I think the administrator just needs to come up with  
103 the plan for like the whole school so we can see that all. Then I think like discipline for the  
104 administrator is like...that...the more extreme behaviors and misbehaviors in class that...like have  
105 a pattern of going in...that aren't like a one time thing where like this kid is just upset in the  
106 moment and did something...they show like a pattern with struggling or not showing like the  
107 mass behavior that you are expecting. That would be something the administrator...the  
108 administrator would be more involved with or deal with more.

109  
110 *Ok. When you say they would deal with it more, what does that mean? What does that look like*  
111 *ideally? Like, if you wanted the help of an administrator with something with a student, what*  
112 *would you ideally want that to look like?*

113  
114 Um...I would that to look like a...meeting...like meeting with the student, kind of hearing like  
115 what they...what's going on with them. Umm...I would like...suggestions from the administrator  
116 on ways to like help the student in the classroom and how to work with them. So kind of...more  
117 of like see support from the administrator in working with kids that need extra support. Um...I  
118 also think that...they could do more communication with the parents. Um, I guess teachers, we  
119 should be communicating with parents too...you know, but...like the more larger issues...that  
120 belongs in the administrator category I think. So yeah. I guess I would like...to...like, you go to  
121 the administrator with the issue...and like asking for help...for that to like come back with like  
122 open communication with the administrator. Maybe the family too, and maybe like start a team I  
123 guess for the kid.

124  
125 *You said at the beginning of that question that like whatever your expected behaviors were in*  
126 *your classroom...how do you as a teacher come up with that? Are those expectations within the*  
127 *classroom different than whole school? How does that work? What is the process of defining*  
128 *those expectations?*

129  
130 So...the whole school expectations are posted and talked about in the classroom. You know, we  
131 kind of have like those four...things we look for at [School Name]. And then...within  
132 those...those kind of help...well some of the...some of the buzz words with that, like...show

133 respect and language in there...so you know, um...I would say that...like...um...for me...the...the  
134 behaviors that you expect to see in the whole school kind of help me implement what I want to  
135 see in the classroom. But then, like...and then it kind of gets to where like...I play with them a  
136 little bit...and I can see what like works in the classroom and what...and like what  
137 really...um...like what works in the classroom. Like, do they need to change a little bit? Do  
138 they...need to um...need to change at all or something like that.

139  
140 *Are classroom expectations in each classroom across the school...are they similar or different?*

141  
142 They're...they're different. You know we have like...we have a charter. I started like a month in  
143 so like I'm still catching up. But, yeah, every classroom has a charter. And they generally hit  
144 the same things...like...I want to feel safe. I want to feel respected. Things like that, and how to  
145 feel those ways, things like that. And what...what to do to get back to feeling those ways. And  
146 then I guess...so the charters are pretty similar...in most senses. Um...I guess then...then it's just  
147 the teacher's own like personal...and what they...what they expect it to look and sound like in  
148 their classrooms.

149  
150 *Ok...you also said something about your classroom culture and community. How do you build*  
151 *or establish your classroom culture?*

152  
153 Uh...I mean...I think it's an ongoing thing of like...I mean, you have to build a relationship with  
154 these students...students have to build relationship with themselves in the classroom. I think it's  
155 like a lot getting to know each other and like...um...like...there has to be a level of trust in the  
156 classroom...especially like, from student to teacher they have to be like...able to trust that you  
157 are going to like...be consistent and...you know there for them, and care about them. Um...and  
158 that you like them. I think they need to know that you like them. Um...yeah. So that they can  
159 see that...that you have...that you have all this care for them and that you...that you want them  
160 to...you know you want the classroom to be a community where people can talk to each other  
161 and share things...and stuff like that. And not be...and not be... and not be not be something. A  
162 place like, where people feel comfortable to be themselves and to like...if you don't want to do  
163 something...if you don't want to like share this part about you, you don't have to. It's just...just  
164 like things like that. I guess comfort is a big thing in there.

165  
166 *Ok. What are your thoughts on suspension? Do you agree with suspension as a form of student*  
167 *discipline? Why or why not?*

168  
169 I don't know. I feel like...from kids I've known, people I've known...that have gotten  
170 suspended...a lot of people that get suspended are kids...are people that need to be in school.  
171 And like...I think it's...it's not just a ...it's not just a school thing that they are acting out against.  
172 I don't know...I don't really like...I don't really agree with it as a form of student discipline. I  
173 think it's...it's a pretty severe form of punishment to get kicked out of school for a couple of days  
174 for doing something. I think...there's like in school suspension where like the kid will spend the  
175 day with like the EA or something...and they're doing work and they're at school. And it's not

176 like...you're not here because....you did something. But I guess, like, you want them to  
177 know...like if it's a severe thing that resulted in a suspension, you want them to know that  
178 like...that's not acceptable. But also, like, it seems like.... you're like 8 or 9 or 10. It seems like  
179 a lot of punishment for that.

180

181 *Ok...um...you said that...that you think that sometimes from what you've seen, that the kids that*  
182 *are often suspended are the kids that should be in school. Can you tell me more about that?*

183

184 I mean like...kids who are...acting out and um...that...might not have a lot of like structure or  
185 security or consistency outside of school...they find that at school. And then...you know...I've  
186 heard that...that kids act out...because they trust the people that they are acting out in front of and  
187 that they trust that they care...and don't want them to do that. Um...and I think that...if that is the  
188 case...like...they aren't thinking like that far ahead. They just like want to see someone care  
189 about them....and so....they act out...in over the top ways that lead to that.

190

191 *Is that something you've seen with kids you've worked with?*

192

193 Um...not like...personally worked with. No one in my class yet. Just...like...kids at schools I've  
194 been at. Things like that, yeah.

195

196 *Um...ok...Can you tell me a little bit more about what in school suspension looks like in your*  
197 *building? You mentioned that maybe that would be a better...I don't know if you used better...*

198

199 A more agreeable way...

200

201 *Yeah. More agreeable than out of school. Can you tell me what that looks like or what you*  
202 *know about it?*

203

204 Yeah...um...what I've seen...I know the kid spends the day with the EA...and is doing work while  
205 they're there. I'm assuming they are talking too...and meeting. Maybe their parents come in and  
206 they meet...things like that. I guess I don't really know too much.

207

208 *So it hasn't been defined or explained of like, this is what we do with an in school suspension?*

209

210 No. No, it hasn't.

211

212 *Ok. Um...what are your thoughts on reducing suspensions? Do you think efforts at reducing*  
213 *suspensions within your district or school have been effective?*

214

215 Um...I don't know much about the efforts at reducing suspensions within the district. I've just  
216 heard like...about like...zero out of school suspensions or whatever...by...by like whatever year.  
217 But...um...I mean I think that working to reduce suspensions is something to work for. I think  
218 that's a good...a good....a good idea or goal. Or a good plan to work for. Um...I don't know. I

219 guess like efforts at that like being ineffective if you're like....solely...your whole goal is like not  
220 to suspend kids and to like...keep them somewhere. Things like that. Which I guess like in  
221 school suspension could end up coming. Like just keep them in school and just do this. But  
222 like...yeah...I don't really...know...I mean, I'm for reducing suspensions. But, other than that, I  
223 don't really know too much about reducing them...or what the efforts are.

224  
225 *Has it been brought up at your school at all? You said you read something about a goal for out*  
226 *of school suspensions.*

227  
228 Yeah...but...it hasn't really been talked about. I mean...I know that...that discipline is  
229 something...well not discipline, student behavior...student behavior is something that is...come up  
230 in like...union meetings. And that's something that like the union reps and the [Principal's  
231 Name] are talking about. Um...but I don't know where those have gone really.

232  
233 *Ok...um...so...can you tell me a little bit more about that? Like, student behavior has come up in*  
234 *union meetings...my first thought when I hear union is like...something of concern. Are there*  
235 *concerns about student behavior?*

236  
237 Yes. So yes...concerns in several...several...I think it's several grade levels about student  
238 behavior....in the classrooms and like...some teachers have been physically attacked by students  
239 and...kind of...like...what the...where the policies are on like...here's a teacher that is hit in the  
240 classroom...and what are the policies on keeping a teacher safe in the classroom...or keeping the  
241 students safe in the classroom...and like, what sort of...work can we do with that. So, yeah.  
242 That's the gist of it I think.

243  
244 *So some concerns around the behaviors teachers are seeing and some concern around safety?*

245  
246 Yeah....definitely concerns around safety.

247  
248 *Ok. Any other things related to behavior that's been brought up school wide or anything?*

249  
250 None that I can think of right now.

251  
252 *Ok. The next question is...tell me just anything you know about restorative justice.*

253  
254 What I know is what I briefly read online a little bit ago...[laughs]. Um...but it is...when two  
255 parties are not getting along and have wronged each other somehow...bringing them together to  
256 have conversations and discuss solutions. Um...um...that's kind of all I can think of.

257  
258 *That's fine. Have you heard that term used at all in your building?*

259  
260 Not in this building. I think I heard it when I was in school...because it seemed familiar.

261

262 *Um...ok. So...just with that um...knowledge that you have...what are your initial thoughts and*  
263 *feelings about restorative justice?*

264  
265 Um...I mean I think it...it...I like the sound of it. It seems like...like...if you are getting more of  
266 the people involved...if you are getting more than just the people...if you are getting the people  
267 around them that like...you know...know they care about them...then...you know...you build a  
268 bigger team for that. As long as it is very structured. I can imagine that kids and...parents...come  
269 together...and not having the most productive meeting that way. I guess it could be like...very  
270 emotional. So having it be like very structured and well known...like what's going to happen and  
271 what like...the steps and the ideas around it like...are. Um...seems like it would be...it could  
272 be...like...you know like pretty profound or heavy or have like a lot more meaning than just like  
273 meeting with two kids and talking to them or just like calling a parent on the phone. It seems  
274 like...it seems like it would be pretty powerful.

275  
276 *Ok. Um...let's say you were going to try it in your classroom or your school. What kind of*  
277 *supports would you need?*

278  
279 Um...I would definitely want to read a lot about it. Like...have like a shared book that like the  
280 whole staff reads or maybe...you know...send articles to families and things like that. So that  
281 way everyone else has a chance to read and kind of like, get their head around the ideas and  
282 what...and what restorative justice is. I think that would be first and then maybe like...reaching  
283 out to families and doing like workshops or something. You could do like teacher parent  
284 conferences or something like that...that you could really make it known that this is what the  
285 school is going to try, this is how we are going to do it. Um...like...like here's the plan. Here's  
286 language around it. Here are the words that like we use with restorative justice. Like here's the  
287 role of each person. Having a very strong grasp of what it is before trying it...because I think a  
288 lot of things like...well...it's my first year, so a lot of things...I'm like what? I am trying to do  
289 that...but really, there are just like too many things in my head right now.

290  
291 *Right. Ok. Um...this is maybe a similar question. What do you think needs to be in place, either*  
292 *up front or ongoing, for restorative justice responses to be effective? What would you need as a*  
293 *teacher with this kind of new thing?*

294  
295 Definitely like...readings and stuff about it...videos...like ways to learn about it.  
296 Um...having...people who are well...well-knowledged in it...maybe do some of those readings or  
297 teachings or things like that to have like experts. I think kind of...ongoing...like...like ongoing  
298 reminders of what it is...what's going on...ongoing...I mean I think of things like this you really  
299 need to like...frontload it. So you have like all of the information at the start so you like know  
300 what it is and you know what it is and are in agreement of what it is. And then like, continuing  
301 to touch base and see that everyone knows...and remembers what it is. I feel like that's the  
302 positive way to go.

303

304 *Ok. I'm curious...so being a first year teacher...what's been communicated to you...is there a*  
305 *behavior or response plan at your school?*

306  
307 Um...yeah...it is...um...PBIS is the acronym. I don't know what the acronym stands for. There's  
308 three tiers. Tier one I think is like the lowest...like your classroom...like all the things you handle  
309 in your classroom. Like talking on the carpet. Tier two is like...um...the um...this starts to be  
310 more um...more people working on it. Like...you might have a behavior chart or something like  
311 that. And then like...tier three is the more severe needs. This is like needs one on one or  
312 something like that. I think that's the way it goes. And so...and I think that...the...from my  
313 understanding...the goal is to like move kids away or move kids down the tiers if they get up  
314 there. Like work with them...like you have a behavior chart and you've shown for like six  
315 months that you are improving so you can move...like down. I think that's like the goal of those.

316  
317 *How would you get the support if you had a student in your class and you felt like you needed*  
318 *more than what you had? How would you do that?*

319  
320 Um...reaching out to...to [Principal's Name] or [EA's Name]. You have to like...there are like  
321 documentation things you need to do...like...document on something like when it's happening.  
322 So you have some data to bring to the....there's a PBIS team at school with like some different  
323 teachers and people. You have to have some data to bring to that so they can kind of like start to  
324 formulate a plan with that. But I think like...yeah... the principal or the EA would be who I think  
325 you would go to.

326  
327 *Ok. Let's say there's an altercation in your classroom that is something big, or that you would*  
328 *need help in the moment...um...what's the protocol or process that your school follows?*

329  
330 Um...probably call the office for help. That's my understanding.

331  
332 *And then what happens? Do you know?*

333  
334 And then...the EA usually comes to the classroom. And then...if the student needs to leave,  
335 she'll take them out. And we have like pods...so she can like talk to them in the pods. She's  
336 usually the one I see answer the call.

337  
338 *Ok. Um...if you were a leader of a school, and you were going to design your dream behavior*  
339 *system, both on the preventative and response side...what are some key factors you would*  
340 *consider, or some things that you would really want in place? Given that you have any resource*  
341 *you need.*

342  
343 Um...I guess like...I guess I would like to um...consider like...who the students are...like, what are  
344 their experiences with the behavior. Like...or like...common expectations they have or like  
345 common expectations their families have. Like...what are they kind of used to in that sense.  
346 And...um...I think kind of like...have...like...the whole like school...like have buy in from the

347 staff. Um...I guess having like...kind of taking advice and bits and pieces from like everyone  
348 involved. Like...what do teachers need to see in their classrooms...to have them like...feel  
349 successful. What do students and families want to see in the classrooms to have them like feel  
350 successful...and...I guess kind of ongoing evaluation of that and seeing if things are working or  
351 not. The willingness to adapt.

352

353 *Alright. My last question is...is there anything else you would like to share about your beliefs,*  
354 *thoughts, or opinions about student behavior, discipline, suspensions, or restorative justice that*  
355 *you would like to share or you think would be helpful to this study?*

356

357 I can't think of anything.

358

359 *Is there anything you would want an administrator to know while they are thinking about or*  
360 *designing their plans around student behavior or discipline?*

361

362 Um...I think showing that things look different at different ages...at different age groups. I  
363 started the year at 6<sup>th</sup> grade and then moved to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, so there was a big shift in like what I  
364 could expect the kids to do....so that took a while to get used to and kind of...figure out. So I  
365 kind of...like...yeah...Like different...like age appropriate or developmentally appropriate things.  
366 Like what would that look like at different ages or grades or developmental stages. Yeah.

367

368 *Ok. Alright. Thank you so much.*