Using Restorative Justice practices and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) together

Both Restorative Justice practices and PBIS are school-wide approaches that seek to:

- Engage parents, students, teachers, school staff, and administrators
- Enforce positive behavior
- Avoid labeling of students
- Uplift students’ strengths
- Establish a routine

PBIS requires teaching social skills with an equal emphasis as academic skills. Restorative Practices supports this goal. The practice of sitting in circle teaches the entire school community the skills to resolve and prevent conflict in a peaceful, positive, and respectful way.

Restorative Justice practices use Circles as the primary tool to:

- Build positive campus communities
- Prevent conflict
- Replace punitive and isolationist discipline policies such as detention, suspension, and expulsion

Community Building Circle Process:

- Opening
- Introduction of talking piece
- Establish circle guidelines
- Check-in
- Discussion Rounds (ex: how was your weekend? what values are important to you? what do you see for your future?)
- Check-out
- Closing

Harm/Conflict Circle Process:

- Each person involved in the harm/conflict is met with individually to prepare for the circle
- The responsible person comes face-to-face with the person/people they harmed
- The responsible person takes true responsibility for their actions
- The responsible person and the person harmed create a plan for what the responsible person will do to make it right
- The plan is managed to ensure follow through by the circle-keeper
“I do believe that the circle is a good way to help solve conflict because if I had a problem with somebody in the group, then you could just sit down and talk about it in a controlled environment, where it would be easier for us to express our feelings instead of having us turn to violence.”

—12th grade student from Reid High School, Long Beach, California