

SFUSD Restorative Practices Language

Embracing Restorative Practices as a common, consistent language among the school staff community is a simple and effective approach to reinforce the core values of community, relationships, responsibility and accountability.

The words highlighted represent the key language of Restorative Practices.

We are a **community**.

Recognizing that the strength and health of the community (among students, staff, and families) directly impacts school climate (sense of belonging and connectedness) and academic achievement. Every member of the community is important and contributes greatly. Each person's actions affect the health of the community in a positive or negative way.

Recommendation: constantly refer to the student, staff, and family groups as a "community", and stress the importance of having a strong, healthy community.

What is the **relationship** like?

Reinforcing the importance of positive relationships is essential to the development of a strong community. Positive relationships lay the foundation for cooperation, skill development and learning.

Recommendation: constantly inquire about the strength of the "relationship/s" between/among students, staff, and families. Celebrate positive relationships, and when challenged, specifically ask, "what is the relationship like between.....(students, yourself and your students, a particular student and his/her classroom peers, staff members...etc)". Self reflect on your own relationships with school community members and ask others to reflect on their relationships.

What happened?

Ask open-ended questions that allow for a genuine retelling of an experience.

Recommendation: do not ask the "why" question. Instead, ask "what happened" when inquiring about specific actions or behaviors.

Who was **impacted** (harmed) by what happened?

For both positive and negative actions, recognizing impact helps to teach that one's actions affect the greater community. It is equally important to reinforce positive impact, as it is to teach that negative behavior harms relationships and the health of the community.

Recommendation: Consider age appropriate language to use in response to students and staff actions/behaviors, reinforcing the importance of positive relationships and community.

What ***needs*** do those involved have?

When conflict or harm occurs, it is important to recognize that ALL parties involved have resulting needs. Often times the needs of those “harmed” and those who “harmed” have similar needs. Giving individuals an opportunity to voice their needs is an important step towards identifying what must happen to repair the relationships.

Recommendation: Using age appropriate language, ask ALL individuals involved in an incident (including the teacher/family member) to share/reflect on what needs they have/had (both during the time of the incident as well as after the incident).

What needs to happen to ***repair the harm*** (make things as right as possible)?

Reinforcing the importance of repairing harm (when one’s actions have negatively impacted the community) is a critical component for the restoration of community/relationships when harm has occurred. Giving those involved in the incident an opportunity to identify what they are going to do to make things right teaches responsibility and holds one accountable for their actions.

Recommendation: Allow for the people involved in an incident to share what they need to see happen in order to address and repair the harm caused by hurtful/negative behavior. Accountability stems from following-through with the identified plan after taking into consideration all that everyone needs to feel satisfied with the situation.