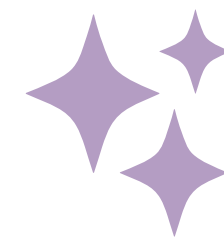




Restorative Practices Collaborative in Santa Clara County





What is it?



Restorative Practices: Explained

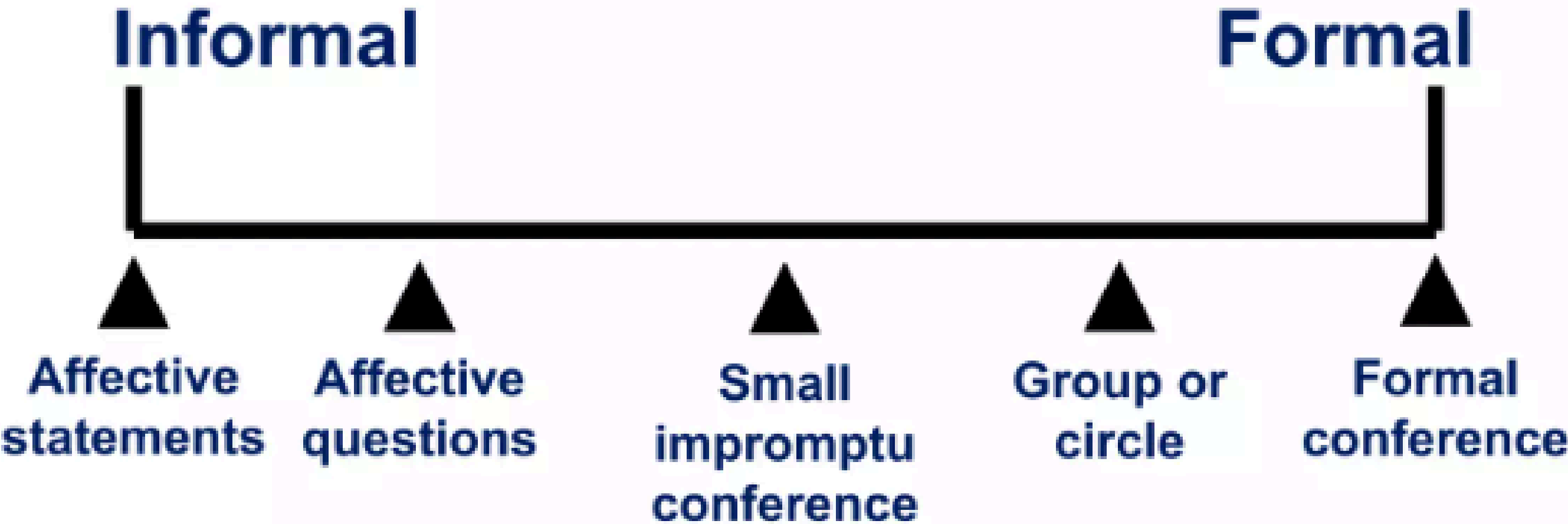
The science of relationships and community.

All humans are hardwired to connect. Just as we need food, shelter and clothing, human beings also need strong and meaningful relationships to thrive.

Restorative practices is a transdisciplinary field of study that examines how to strengthen relationships between individuals and improve social connections within communities. Restorative practices are used in conflict resolution, creating dialogue, bridging gaps across divided groups, and building cultures where all members have a voice, work more effectively together, and become more innovative.

- **In schools**, restorative practices positively impact student behavior and school climate. They create a sense of belonging, minimize harm, and support student learning while cultivating students who are better equipped to navigate complex challenges, self-regulate, manage conflict, and become better citizens. They uncover the root causes of conflict and create a space to facilitate complex conversations to minimize harm, repair relationships, and identify solutions.

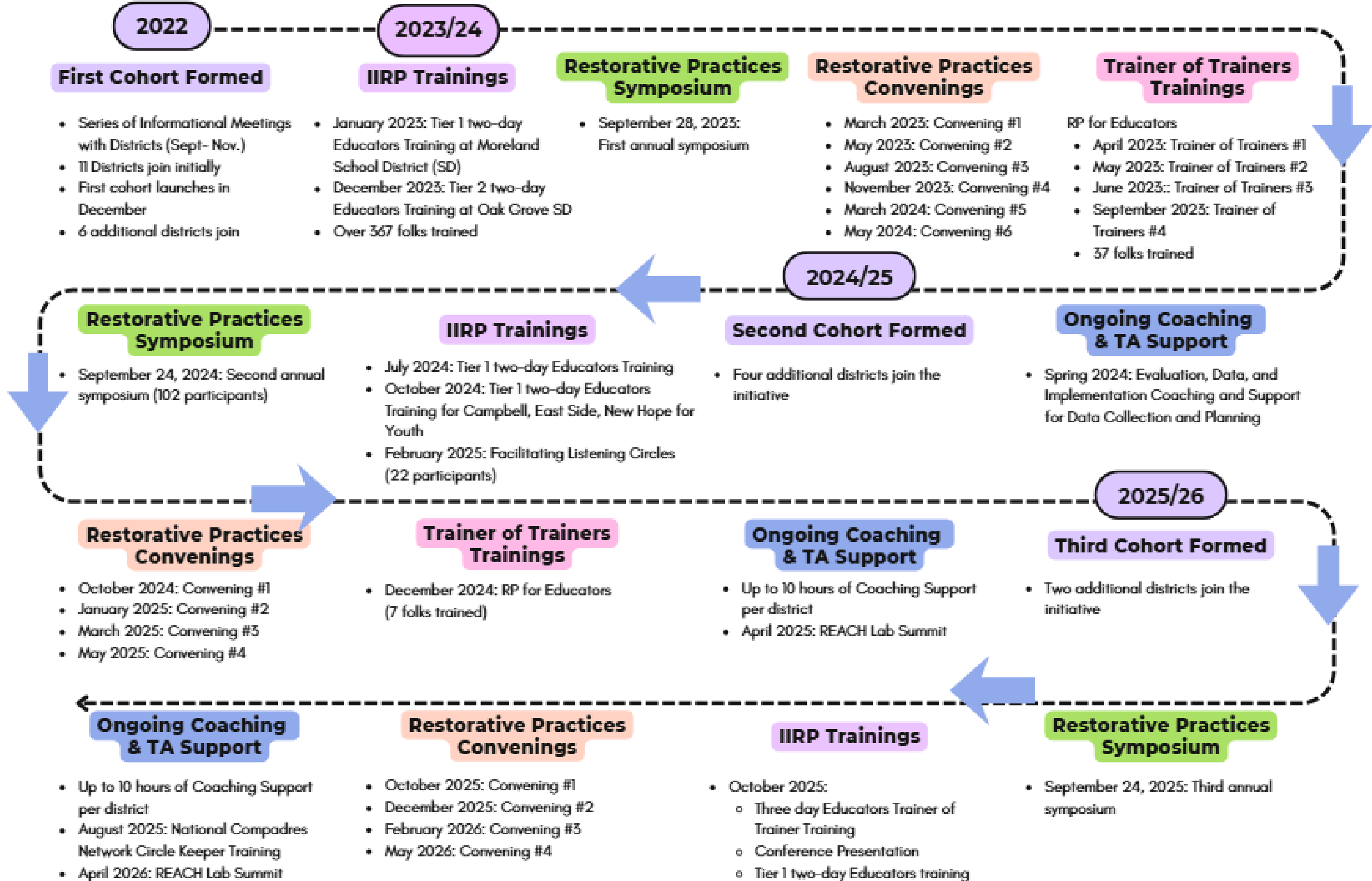
Restorative Practices Continuum





What did we do?

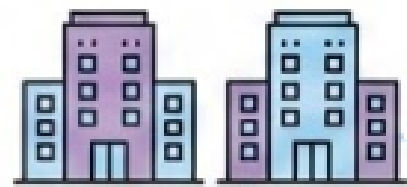
Restorative Practices Collaborative: Timeline



Restorative Practices Collaborative: Reach

Work has been described as transformational and well-aligned with existing school initiatives.

It can all be integrated and adapted for each unique situation - from whole school districts to individual teams and classrooms.



3 symposiums



6 train the trainer trainings

6



IIRP trainings offered



14 convenings



17 participating school districts



56 train the trainers trained

122



hours of coaching support offered



941 trained in IIRP restorative practices for educators (plus **8** CBOs)

In just three years, the Restorative Practices Collaborative

has reached roughly half of the County's school districts with the potential to impact



256

schools



9,284

staff

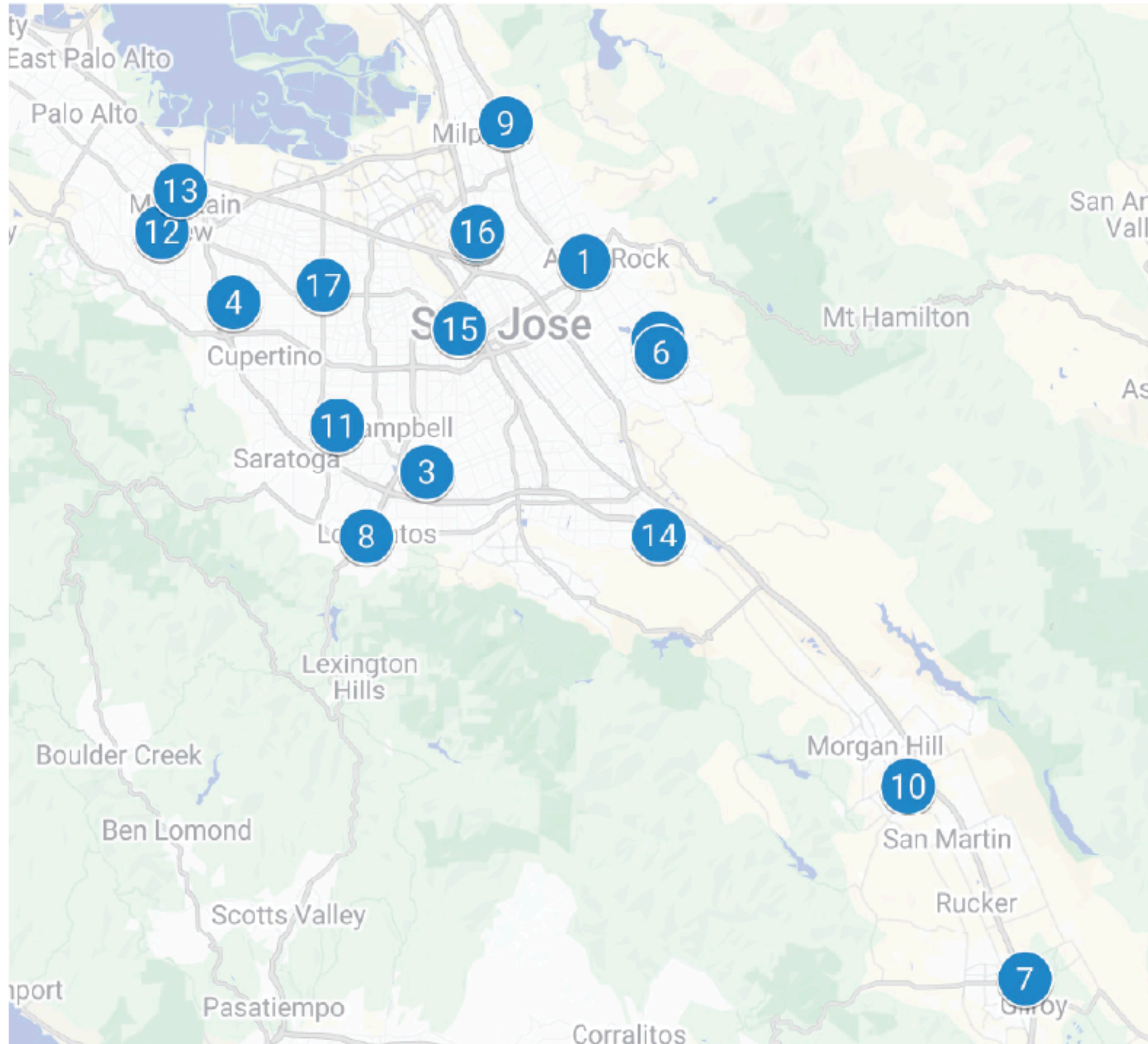


172,036

students

Data source: CDE DataQuest, 2024-25

RP Collaborative: Participating School Districts Map



- 1 Alum Rock School District
- 2 Berryessa School District- at 16
- 3 Campbell Union High School District
- 4 Cupertino School District
- 5 East Side Union High School District- by 6
- 6 Evergreen School District
- 7 Gilroy Unified School District
- 8 Los Gatos Elementary School District
- 9 Milpitas Unified School District
- 10 Moreland School District
- 11 Morgan Hill Unified School District
- 12 Mountain View Los Altos School District
- 13 Mountain View Whisman School District
- 14 Oak Grove School District
- 15 San Jose Unified School District
- 16 Santa Clara Unified School District
- 17 Santa Clara County Office of Education

Who is involved?

Leadership and partners have included **experts and practitioners in the field** such as:

Jennifer Del Bono, M.Ed., Restorative Practices Consultant/Coordinator, Del Bono Group.

Ashley Boleware, MA, Mental Wellness Professional, Prevention Program Analyst II, County of Santa Clara

Patty Marquez Singh, founder of Forward Joy Consulting, Certified Restorative Practices Facilitator; National Compadres Network trainer.

Diana Wilson, LCSW, with over 25 years of experience in various roles including school-based services, acute mental health, and the integration of mental health with restorative practice.

Dr. Shashank Joshi, MD, FAAP, DFAACAP, founding member of the **HEARD Alliance** which partners with the restorative practices team in support of mental health integration.



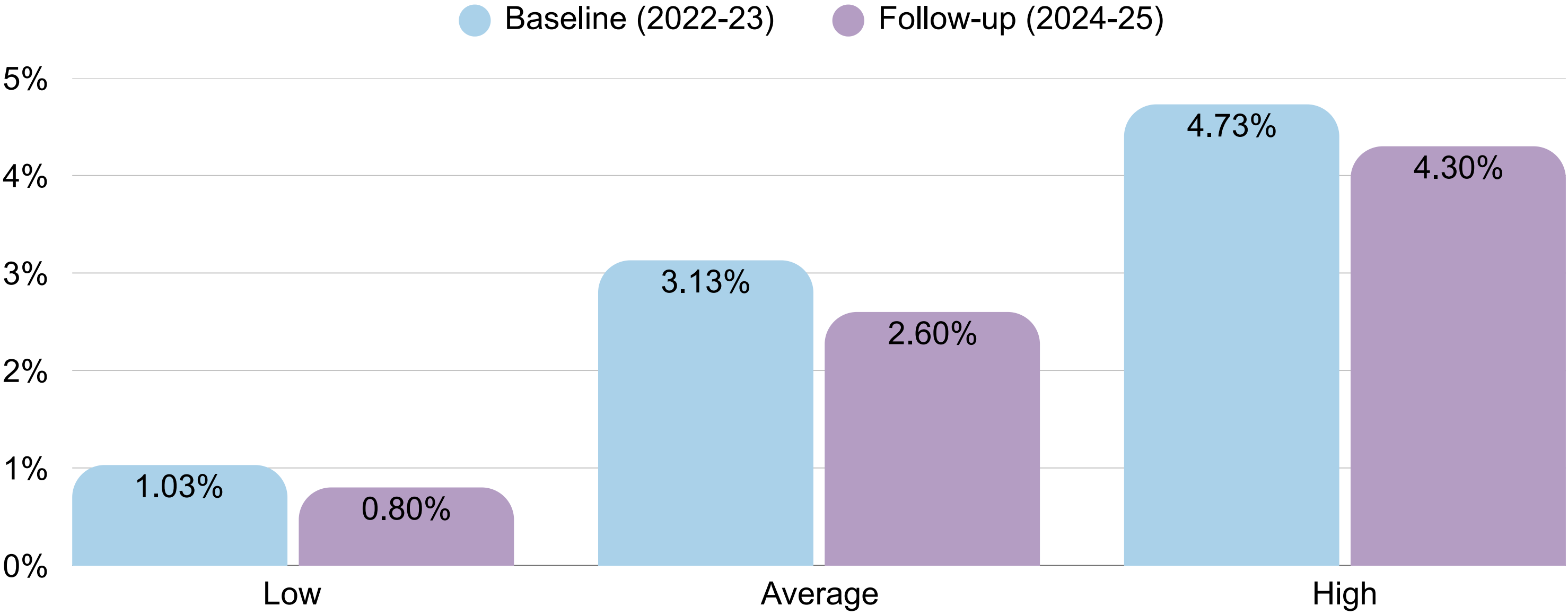
What changes have we seen?



Cohort 1 Overall Suspension Rates

Baseline suspension rates were collected for the 11 districts in the first cohort from the year prior to their engaging in the Restorative Practices initiative (2022-23). Follow up rates were collected from the most recent year available (2024-25) which would be one year after they engaged.

The lowest, highest, and average suspension rate for the cohort decreased after just one year of engagement.

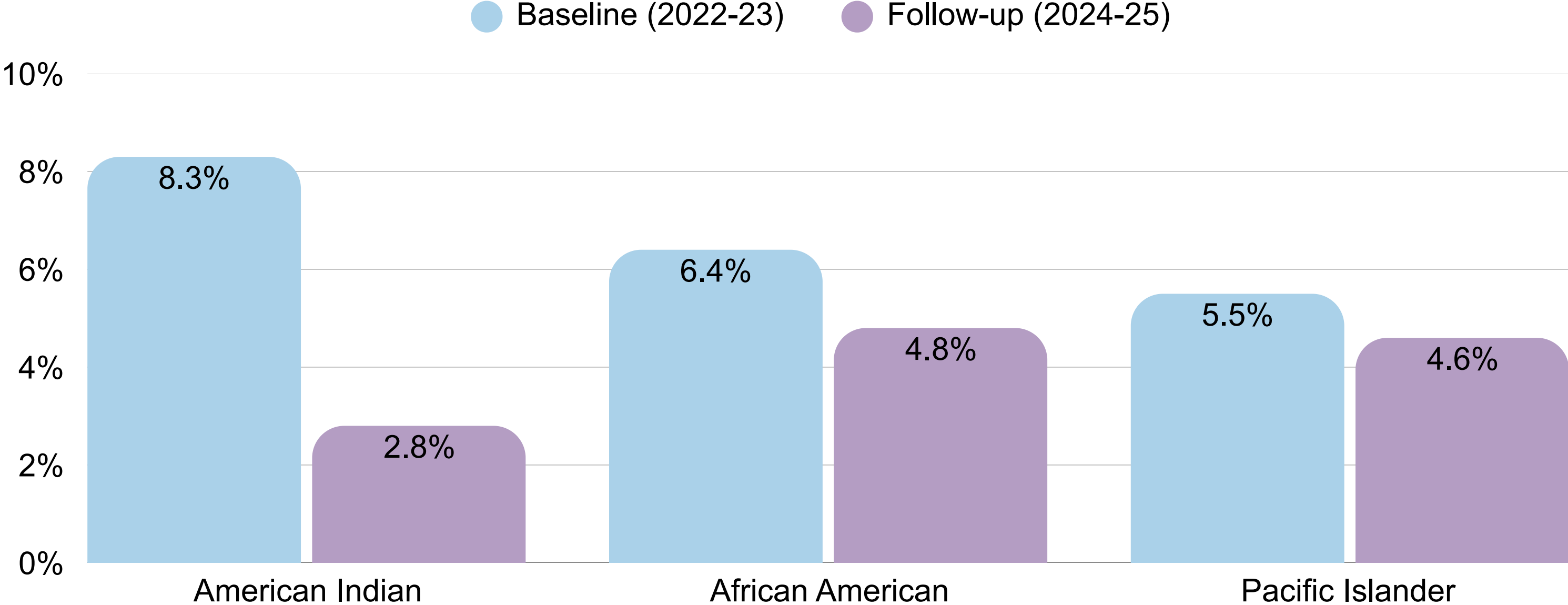


Data Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest

Cohort 1 Suspension Rates by Race/Ethnicity

Here we show the racial/ethnic groups with the three highest average baseline (2022-23) suspension rates for the 11 participating districts in our first cohort.

There were decreases in the suspension rates for all three groups by 2024-25.

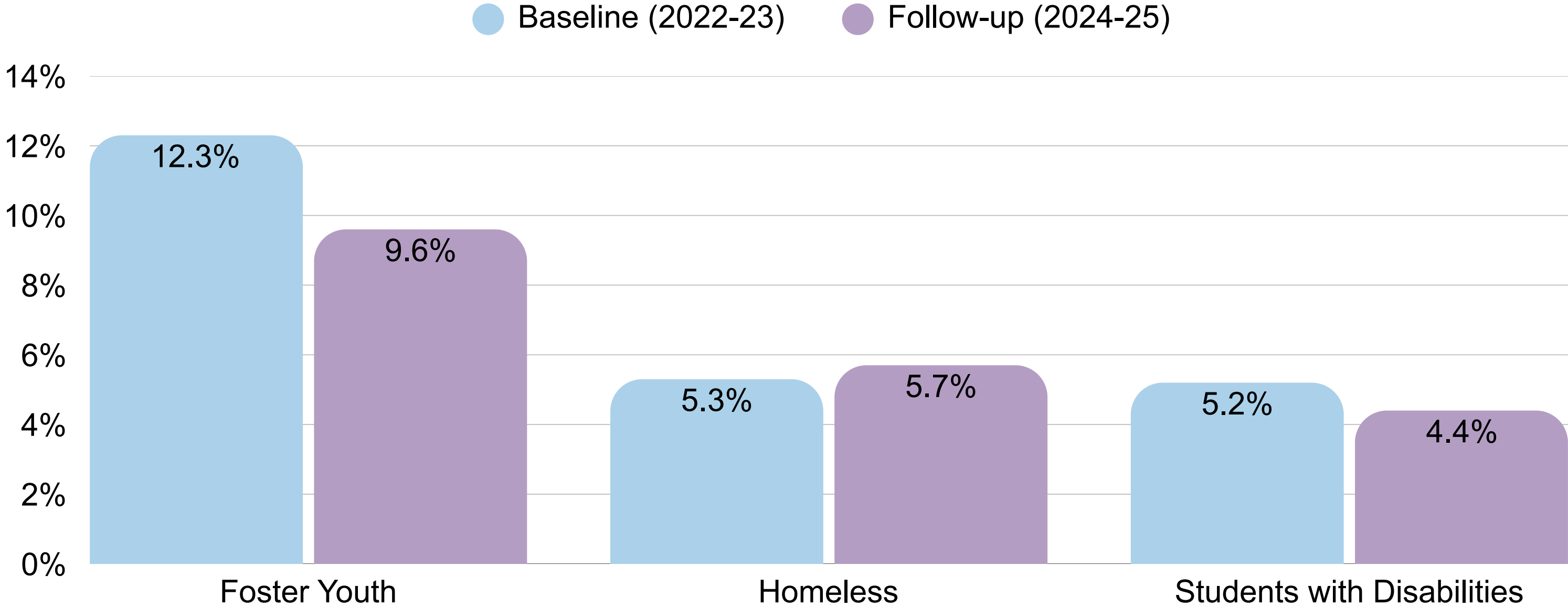


Data Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest
*Not all districts serve all racial/ethnic groups and some group sample sizes are very small.

Cohort 1 Suspension Rates by Subgroup

Here we show the other student subgroups with the three highest average baseline (2022-23) suspension rates for the 11 participating districts in our first cohort.

There were decreases in the suspension rates for two of the three groups by 2024-25.



Data Source: California Department of Education, Data Quest
*Not all districts serve all student subgroups and some group sample sizes are very small.



Case Studies

Audit

Case Study 1

Addressing Challenges as a Team

Using RP Circles

A youth group was experiencing issues related to misbehavior among some members, which included name-calling, body shaming, and the use of racial slurs. This behavior was reported to the school's administration. In response, an RP-trained staff member led a series of six weekly circles with the youth and staff to discuss these inappropriate behaviors.

Circles Encourage Vulnerability

In the RP circles, members got candid about how the name-calling was affecting their self-esteem.

Lasting Impacts of RP

Students felt closer and more connected after participating in RP circles. Results were so impressive that the school later conducted a similar exercise with another group that was experiencing difficulties. The circles have been transformative. Youth are now much more respectful and supportive of one another, describing themselves as “family.”

School leadership and staff have embraced RP

School administration is supportive of implementing RP and trusts that the process addresses root causes of conflict. All school staff are currently being trained on RP and anticipate completing training by June 2026.

“The impact is anecdotal, we see how problems are resolved, how sports teams support each other better, and show better sportsmanship during competitions. Also, students feel safe sharing and listening to others.”



Case Study 2

Going deep with training children.

The first participants left the training with a very different perspective.
Restorative practices is proactive. It is not “soft” or just old-school mock trials.

Students manage their own recess supervision.
Los Gatos 3rd - 5th graders formed the student council PAWS Patrol. They wear restorative practice questions on their vests and take responsibility for behavior management. Adults observe this and are amazed. “It’s great the staff are being trained, but it’s really about the kids.”



If 3rd - 5th graders can do this, so can adults.

Staff can use the same version as the kids. Every staff member wears badges with the same restorative practice questions that the students use. Everyone is using the language even if they don’t realize they are practicing restorative practice yet. Teachers have so many things on their plate, so many balls in the air. But they are already doing this. “This is the plate.” It doesn’t make them feel like they were doing anything wrong; it validates their intention and just tweaks it, giving them a common framework and shared language.

It has been one of the most profound changes observed in decades.

It is best to be seen in action first, then you can put a name to it. At the district’s strategic planning meeting all 30 people on the committee wholeheartedly recommended training for EVERYBODY in the district. It is not just an initiative – it is an expectation.

One critical element is that this work cannot take place in a vacuum.

“Just knowing that the County has a collaborative has helped me to maintain it. I can reach out to anyone on the team. That support factor has been huge for us.”

Case Study 3

“It impacts everything”

Restorative Practices is proactive, not reactive.

“For so long it felt reactive. Restorative Practice is riding the wave of prevention. Life is smooth when you are riding the wave. When you are going against the current it is much harder.”

It’s contagious. Once people see it in action, they know it works.

It started with a slow roll out as circles during summer school. Now, they can’t get enough of it.

It’s not a hard sell.

“Teachers are inclined to roll something out if you give them everything they need.”
It’s simple to create the tools: lanyards for every teacher, signage, handouts.
It’s not heavy lifting.

It can be moving...

“Some of these circles are so intense. I see that relief on their faces.”

And transformative.

“They may feel like they have to act so tough. Giving them that safe space to express is one of the most amazing things. These guys will actually shake hands at the end, and then you see them playing football together two weeks later.” [these were kids who were going to be separated from one another - had put in a no contact order]



Case Study 3

Restorative Framework & Tools

RESTORATIVE QUESTIONS

TO RESPOND TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING OF AT THE TIME?

WHO HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT SINCE?

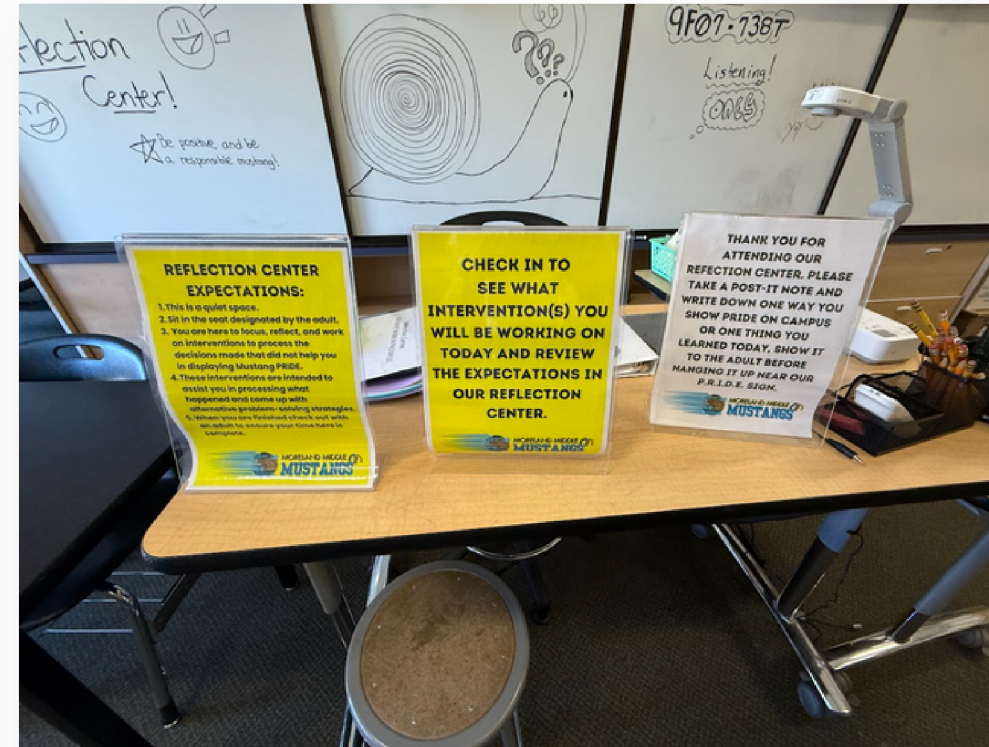
WHO HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY YOUR ACTIONS? IN WHAT WAY?

HOW COULD THINGS HAVE BEEN DONE DIFFERENTLY?

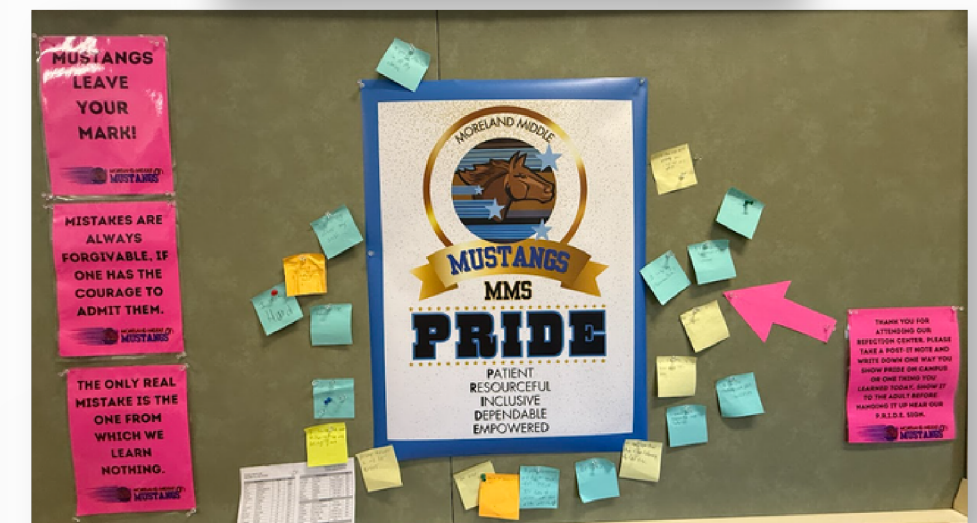
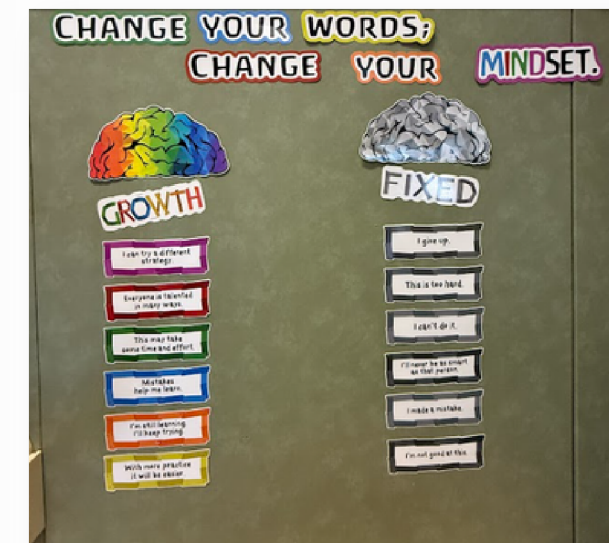
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU NEED TO DO TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT?

Moreland School District

In-Practice Application: Reflection Center

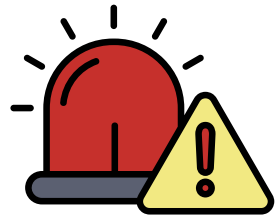


Building School Culture & Mindset



Promoting Growth, Accountability, and Belonging

Overarching Themes from Case Studies



Schools and districts **needed something more** to address behavior, especially after COVID.



Restorative Practice has been that something more.

If you see it, you will know it:



- It builds off of what schools are **already doing** and gives it a language
- Addresses both **risk and protective factors**
- **It works!**



Keys to success include **strong leadership buy-in** and approaching the work as a **collaborative**.



What has the impact been?



“

“Both facilitators were extraordinary!!!! The space and people were held safely due to their expertise. Thank you for the fresh and more comprehensive way to think, utilize, hold and explain RP.”


-August 2025 training participant

”



“I have especially enjoyed the ongoing support from being a part of the partnership with County Behavioral Health. Having the convenings, the networking, and the opportunities for further training have been so meaningful for me. When we began this collaboration, our momentum was slow, but having the support of the cohort helped us stay consistent and optimistic as we slowly grew interest. It remains a vital lifeline for this work.”



-Santa Clara Unified School District





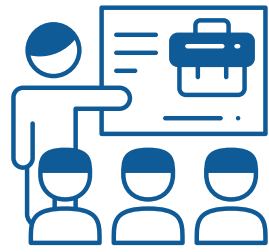
“Teachers report increased confidence in managing behavior in the classroom, stronger relationships with students, and a greater sense of consistency across campus. Students are demonstrating improved communication skills, greater accountability, and an increased willingness to repair harm when conflict occurs.”



- Moreland School District



What's next?



Existing cohort districts will continue to train staff and integrate practice with mental health and culturally-responsive training opportunities with National Compadres Network.



There are still half of the districts in the County to engage.



We will wrap up the 2025/26 cohort year with remaining activities (i.e., RP Convening in May, REACH Lab Summit in April).



Training is also beginning to reach community-based organizations who work in tandem with the school districts (i.e., Youth Community Service, LATI, HEARD Alliance, New Hope for Youth, & Forward Joy).