

As schools work to achieve more equitable learning opportunities for every student by challenging the imbalance of power and privilege, raising marginalized voices, and striving for just outcomes, there is a growing movement to adopt restorative practices and many states are adopting policies in support of this. According to the [Learning Policy Institute](#), there is a growing body of research that indicates restorative practices “improve student behavior, decrease fighting and bullying, reduce office referrals and removals, decrease disciplinary disparities, improve school climate including relationships between students and teachers and student feelings of connectedness to school.”

These are Great Schools Partnership’s guiding beliefs which we believe are essential to implementing effective and equitable restorative practices within school communities. Without deep understanding of the guiding beliefs, the technical adoption of practices will not create more equitable outcomes for all students.

As teams engage in this process, we encourage anchoring in "[The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education: Fostering Responsibility, Healing, and Hope in Schools](#)", which we used as a resource to inform our own tool development.

## Guiding Beliefs

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### 1. We are all connected.

- a) **Invest in Relationships:** Relationships are foundational. Foster strong connections between staff and students within the school community in order to support a positive and inclusive learning environment that nurtures students' academic and personal growth.
- b) **Hold Space to Listen and Share Using Circles:** Facilitate community building and restorative circles to promote open communication, collective problem-solving, and mutual understanding. Circles help build cohesion and address issues collaboratively, enhancing the sense of community.



### 2. We are all worthy.

- a) **Value every community member:** Recognize that all community members including faculty, families, and students share a sense of respect, dignity and mutual concern that strengthens the entire community. Each individual actively works to strengthen and sustain this shared belief within their own context.
- b) **Enact Equitable Solutions:** Ensure fairness and inclusivity, addressing the diverse needs of students and staff. RP seeks to provide balanced resolutions that consider the needs of all parties involved, supporting equitable education.



### 3. We are all learning and growing.

- a) **Center Continuous Growth:** Foster ongoing reflection and adaptation of practices to be responsive in order to meet the evolving needs of the members of the school community.
- b) **Prioritize Conflict Resolution:** Address conflicts by repairing harm rather than assigning blame. This approach involves all affected parties working together to find mutually acceptable solutions and restore relationships.