

Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee (S-DAC)
March 17, 2017 Meeting
Approved Unanimously on March 17, 2017

The following paragraphs are being considered for addition to Board Policies: 3207 (HIB); 3210 (Nondiscrimination) and 3241 (Student Discipline).

Restorative Justice Process in lieu of discipline

Upon mutual agreement by the parties (i.e. the students, parents/guardians, and the District), the restorative justice process may provide appropriate alternative options to disciplinary action by providing a safe and confidential opportunity for students to learn empathy through accountability and the act of apology.

As part of the discipline determination process, a school principal or designee may request a staff member(s) or counselor(s) trained in dispute resolution (e.g., Mercer Island Youth and Family Services staff) to facilitate a restorative justice conference with the alleged initiator(s) of the action and/or the affected individual(s) along with their parents as agreed to and as appropriate. A restorative justice meeting could be in lieu of discipline or in conjunction with other disciplinary action (e.g., in and/or out-of school suspension). Each situation will be handled in a case specific manner as determined by the principal or designee.

As a learning institution, we believe restorative justice conferences permit students to acknowledge their mistakes, grow emotionally from such experiences, and improve their behavior while avoiding the stigmatizing labels that often follow such behaviors. Such conferences will assume to be held in strict confidence unless participants in the conference mutually agree to share certain content or outcomes of the conference with a broader audience.

Upon mutual agreement, the intent of the restorative justice conference is to allow the student(s) who initiated the action: to reflect on how his/her behavior affected others; to apologize to those affected; and to explore and to consider alternative methods to repair the unresolved student-to-student relationship. Such methods may include levels or tiers of interventions and include community service as recommended by the affected individual and/or parents.