

# Restorative DC Annual Report

August 2015 to June 2016

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Restorative DC,  
A project by SchoolTalk, Inc

## **I. Introduction**

Restorative Justice is a philosophy, and an attendant set of dialogue-based practices and principles, that center a community around equitable and inclusive relationships of trust, understanding, and collaboration. It has its roots in indigenous approaches to living in right relationship with one another, including traditions of storytelling in circle and re-integration of those who have harmed other members of the community. Restorative Justice is emerging as a national and international movement to transform society at various levels, from individual families and schools to larger structures of power and systems of oppression.

In alignment with this larger movement, Restorative DC is a local initiative to support DC schools, agencies, and communities in integrating Restorative Justice philosophy and practice. SY2015-16 was Restorative DC's inaugural year, building on years of work by the DC Alliance for Restorative Practices, Youth and Families in Crisis, Access Youth, the Latin American Youth Center, Critical Exposure, Every Student Every Day Coalition, the Community Conferencing Center, and other efforts by members and partners.

Our team comprises practitioners – many intentionally local to the District and/or people of color – with expertise in Restorative Justice and related fields and close familiarity with our local community. Additional local capacity is being built through the Borntue Fellowship program. Reflecting the spirit of restorative justice, the following principles guide our work:

- Trauma, disability, and cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- The centrality of relationships and partnerships;
- Accountability and understanding for all involved;
- Empowering youth and promoting local, equitable leadership in the project;
- Embracing change and growth; and
- Working through challenges collaboratively.

In SY2016-17, Restorative DC primarily focused its efforts on schools, with a cohort of five schools in particular (Ballou HS, Hart MS, Columbia Heights Educational Campus, Luke C. Moore HS, and Maya Angelou PCS), selected in partnership with DCPS and OSSE to receive intensive technical assistance in addition to training. This support was based on a whole-school approach that signifies more than a set of interventions targeted at students; rather it is a way of being that touches all members of the school community and their relationships with each other. Deep inter-agency collaboration, deliberative school and core team selection, school-driven planning, and individualized implementation also characterize our work in this domain.

In SY2016-17, Restorative DC also coordinated and trained staff in the DC Office of Attorney General (OAG), the agency responsible for prosecuting DC youth, to offer schools and the juvenile justice system with Restorative Justice Conferencing as an alternative to arrest, prosecution, suspension, or expulsion. Finally, Restorative DC has partnered with the DC Special Education Cooperative and Eastern Mennonite University to explore the intersections of restorative practices and special education.

This document reports on the data collected from Restorative DC's efforts in SY2015-16 and the conclusions that can be drawn from it. It aims to be frank, self-reflective, and growth-oriented, while also acknowledging with humility the difficulty (and inherent subjectivity) of ascribing causal relationships to complex phenomena like school culture change, whether deemed positive or negative. Data on inputs, outputs, and outcomes has been collected through sign-up sheets, evaluation surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, technical assistance logs, and climate surveys tracked by Restorative DC, as well as climate and school discipline data provided by our school and agency partners.

## II. Executive Summary

In SY2015-16, Restorative DC's major inputs comprised Community of Practice and training opportunities open to all DC schools and supporting entities, as well as extensive on-site technical assistance to a select cohort of five schools and the Office of Attorney General through an adaptable, collaborative approach.

The open professional development offerings were attended by a broad cross-section of over 40 DC public and charter schools, agencies, and community organizations. In total, this represented over 4104 person hours worth of training. Participation was active, attendance was robust and consistent, survey feedback was largely positive, and over a dozen of the participating schools applied for technical assistance in SY2016-17.

In terms of its extensive school-specific support, Restorative DC provided 1898 hours of customized technical assistance and conducted 279 discrete restorative processes. Initial school assessments, affirmed by subsequent monitoring and evaluation, affirmed that the selected schools' needs were real; be they challenges with student behavior, staff relations, and/or school climate and culture generally. Restorative Justice implementation and the nature of accompanying technical assistance for each school varied widely, although some combination of interpersonal relationship-building, staff circles, exposure workshops, classroom circles, and some disciplinary diversions was a strategy common to all four of the actively-implementing schools.

Qualitative data such as testimonials and focus group comments from staff and students, alongside observations from the Restorative DC technical support team, suggest that those whom these efforts touched either demonstrated or perceived a change in behavior, attitudes, relationships, or culture at the school. For example, disruptive student disruptive behavior was addressed and turned around. Staff expressed greater satisfaction. Members of the school seemed more connected. Quantitative suspension data showed that suspensions were significantly reduced in at least three of the target schools.

However compelling or intuitive, any conclusions about the impact of Restorative DC inputs must be considered in light of the fact that these efforts were complemented by others and that the data was largely non-random, incomplete, and non-causal. Better data gathering - including standardized use of widespread school climate surveys and larger, random focus groups - could improve future assessment, but are costly and still subject to the limitations of real world complexity. Furthermore, it is commonly accepted in the field that it takes three to five years to implement, and see the full results of, a whole school Restorative Justice approach. This is the pace of institutional culture change.

Evidence from the field shows that as whole school implementation matures, schools see reductions in the number of incidents of disruptive behavior and in the number of suspensions. Schools have found racial inequities in suspensions disappear and observed a greater sense of safety in the school, supported positive relationships between students and adults, and improved academic performance. The data from Restorative DC cohort schools shows promising signs of these longer-term trends.

## Key Accomplishments

- Seven Community of Practice sessions held with on average 26 attendees, representing a total of 33 different DC schools and related agencies and organizations.
- 203 hours of professional development provided, totaling 4104 person hours of training, touching over 40 different DC schools and related agencies and organizations
- Five cohort schools selected and supported with professional development, technical assistance, and restorative interventions in close collaboration with the Office of State Superintendent for Education and DC Public Schools central office.
- 1898 hours of customized onsite technical assistance provided to the five cohort schools and two criminal justice agencies
- 279 restorative processes conducted in the five cohort schools and 3 pilot Restorative Justice Conferencing interventions undertaken in partnership with the DC Office of Attorney General to begin diverting arrested or suspended youth
- Demonstrable and significant reductions in suspension rates in three of the five cohort schools, as compared to similarly-situated schools.

### III. Core Activities Data

For the purpose of this section of the report, Restorative DC’s work is aggregated into four core activities: Community of Practice, Training and Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Restorative Processes.

#### A. Community of Practice

The Community of Practice is an experiential and peer-sharing space centered on restorative practices. OSSE initiated the Community of Practice in SY2014-15 in partnership with the Community Conferencing Center of Baltimore and the DC Alliance for Restorative Practices with participation limited to representatives of OSSE and five select schools. In SY215-16, Restorative DC took over convening the monthly OSSE-sponsored Community of Practice, now open to all DC public and charter schools, as well as support agencies or organizations. The Community of Practice sessions were facilitated in circle by Restorative DC members and/or guests and hosted by different schools or agencies every month, which provided a presentation and tour of their restorative practice efforts at the end of each session. Participants received breakfast, relevant handouts, and a follow-up email containing information, resources, and reference materials.

Themes were selected with input from educators during the first Community of Practice and a subsequent online survey (yielding nine responses). Available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-P9P7YM6C/>. The Community of Practice consistently drew close to (or above) the cap of 35 attendees, and touched approximately 18 schools, 7 agencies, and 8 community organizations.\* Nineteen entities had representatives at 2 or more sessions, and seven at over half of the Community of Practice sessions, which signifies an important source of consistency across sessions.

Community of Practice Themes and Individual Attendance		
Date	Theme	No. of Participants*
11/10/15	Coming Together: A Start-of-the-Year Circle	21
12/08/15	Developing a Restorative Discipline Policy	36
1/12/16	Generating Whole School “Believe-In”	26
2/09/16	Trauma and Attachment	14
3/08/16	Mindfulness	26
4/12/16	Special Education and Restorative Practices	25
5/10/16	Grieving and Celebration: A Year-End Circle of Sharing	26

Organizational Representation at Community of Practice and OSSE Daylong Trainings		
Schools	No. (& dates) of CoPs attended by at least one representative*	No. (& dates) of OSSE training attended by at least one representative*
Academy of Hope PCS	2 (4/12/16, 5/10/16)	1 (6/7/16)

\* Data on the number of individual, school, agency, and community organization attendance is based on sign-in sheets and underestimates actual attendance because not all participants signed in. Registration lists, on the other hand, show higher attendance and overestimate attendance because not all registered participants show up.

Aiton ES	-	1 (6/7/16)
Ballou HS	1 (4/12/16)	1 (6/7/16)
BASIS PCS	1 (4/12/16)	1 (2/26/16)
Briya PCS	2 (11/10/15, 12/8/15)	-
Cardozo HS	5 (12/8/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, 4/12/16)	-
Cesar Chavez PCS	7 (11/10/15, 12/8/15 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, 4/12/16, 5/10/16)	2 (2/26/16, 6/7/16)
Center City PCS	1 (3/8/16)	1 (2/26/16)
Children's Guild PCS	-	1 (2/26/16)
Columbia Heights Educational Campus (CHEC)	2 (3/8/16, 4/12/16)	3 (9/28/15, 9/30/15, 2/11/16, 4/26/16)
DC International PCS	2 (11/10/15, 12/8/15)	2 (2/26/16, 6/7/16)
Deal MS	-	1 (4/26/16)
Democracy Prep PCS	-	1 (2/26/16)
E.L. Haynes PCS	3 (11/10/15, 12/8/15, 1/12/16)	-
Episcopal Center for Children	-	2 (4/26/16, 6/7/16)
Friendship PCS	5 (11/10/15, 12/8/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 5/10/16)	2 (2/11/16, 2/26/16, 6/7/16)
Inspired Teaching School PCS	-	1 (4/26/16)
Kingsman Academy PCS	-	1 (2/11/16)
KIPP PCS	2 (12/8/15)	1 (2/11/16)
LaSalle-Backus EC	2 (11/10/15, 5/10/16)	-
Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS	1 (3/8/16)	-
Lee Montessori PCS	-	1 (6/7/16)
Luke C. Moore HS	3 (12/8/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16)	3 (9/28/15, 9/30/15, 2/11/16, 2/26/16)
Maya Angelou PCS (including at New Beginnings)	6 (11/10/15, 12/8/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, 4/12/16)	1 (2/11/16, 4/26/16)
Miner ES	-	1 (4/26/16)
Mundo Verde PCS	-	1 (2/11/16)
National Collegiate Prep PCHS	-	1 (6/7/16)
Nalle ES	-	2 (4/26/16, 6/7/16)
Next Step PCS	6 (11/10/15, 12/8/15, 1/12/16, 3/8/16, 4/12/16, 5/10/16)	1 (1/26/16, 6/7/16)
Rosemount Educational Center	-	2 (4/26/16, 6/7/16)
SEED School PCS	2 (11/10/15, 1/12/16)	-
Somerset Prep PCS	1 (3/8/16)	1 (2/26/16)
Stoddert ES	-	1 (2/11/16)
Stuart Hobson MS	-	1 (2/11/16)
Takoma EC	-	1 (4/26/16)
Thurgood Marshall PCS	1 (12/8/15)	-
Tubman ES	-	1 (6/7/16)
Washington Yu Ying	-	3 (2/26/16, 4/26/16, 6/7/16)
Wheatley EC	-	1 (6/7/16)
<b>Agencies</b>		
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	1 (5/10/16)	-
DC Public School (central	4 (11/10/15, 12/8/15, 3/8/16,	1 (4/26/16)

office)	4/12/16, 5/10/16)	
DC Office of Human Rights	1 (3/8/16)	-
DC Youth and Children's Trust	1 (3/8/16)	-
Dept. of Youth Rehabilitation Services	1 (12/8/15)	-
OSSE (central office)	7 (all)	6 (all)
OSSE Reengagement Center	2 (3/8/16, 5/10/16)	-
<b>Community Organizations</b>		
Boys Coming of Age	1 (12/8/15)	
City Year	-	1 (6/7/16)
Communities in Schools	1 (5/10/16)	-
Communities in Transition	-	1 (4/26/16)
DC Law Students in Court	-	1 (6/7/16)
Expectations Project	2 (2/9/16, 5/10/16)	1 (6/7/16)
For the Love of Children	2 (12/8/15, 5/10/16)	-
Jubilee Housing	-	1 (9/30/15)
Kennedy Institute	-	1 (4/26/16)
Mikva Challenge	2 (11/10/15, 5/10/16)	-
Minds Incorporated	-	2 (4/26/16, 6/7/16)
Paxen Learning	1 (4/12/16)	-
Springboard	1 (5/10/16)	-
Youth Escape Arena	1 (3/8/16)	1 (2/26/16)

In addition to the high repeated and overall attendance rate, the quality of engaged participation and discussion during the sessions suggested the Community of Practice was of value to participants. Those who had more experience with restorative practices often had their school host, offered advice and lessons learned, and shared inspiring personal stories. This seemed to impact and motivate their less experienced peers. In at least half a dozen cases, less experienced participants and their organizations requested individualized training and support or applied to be a part of the SY2016-17 cohorts.

## B. Training

Restorative DC provided a total of 203 hours of Restorative Justice capacity building opportunities. Customized on-site workshops for partner schools and agencies (OSSE, DCPS, and OAG) ranged from short 30-minute exposure workshops to multi-day skills trainings. Monthly OSSE-sponsored daylong trainings open to representatives of any DC public or charter school, as well as supporting agencies or community organizations, included Restorative Classrooms Overview workshops, as well as advanced topic workshops on trauma awareness and resilience and restorative conversations. The Restorative DC team designed these trainings to be highly participatory and experiential, largely using the Peacemaking Circle process along with a combination of exercises, roleplays, presentations, videos, work groups, hand-outs, and planning discussions, as well as a follow-up email of information, resources, and reference materials. Attendees also received six Professional Learning Units, if requested, and lunch.

As shown in the figure in the prior section, 32 schools, 2 agencies, and 8 community organizations were reached by the OSSE workshops.

<b>Training and Professional Development</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>No. of hours</b>	<b>No. of participants (if available)</b>

8/4-8/5/15	Ballou HS	DCPS-sponsored "Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools" (Day 1 & 2)	16	20
8/5/15	Webinar	Webinar: Introduction to Restorative Justice for Schools for the Special Education Coop	1	10
8/6/15	Ballou HS	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Student Orientation to Restorative Circles	7	54
8/9/15	Ballou HS	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the Classroom and Action Planning	7	21
8/20/16	Ballou HS	Restorative DC teacher orientation	1	
8/25/16	Ballou HS	Restorative DC teacher orientation	1	
9/14-9/15/15	CHEC	Peer Mediation for middle and high school students	14	50+
9/15	CHEC	Restorative Practices: Teacher and Staff Training	8	
9/15/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	3	15
9/23/15	Ballou HS	DCPS-sponsored "Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools" (Day 3)	7	25
9/28/15	Reeves Center	OSSE-sponsored "Introduction to Restorative Practices in the Classroom"	8	8
9/29/15	Shaw Library	"Introduction to RJ and Circle Processes" hosted by the Special Education Cooperative	4	10
9/30/15	Luke HS	OSSE-sponsored "Introduction to Restorative Practices in the classroom"	8	18
10/1/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	4	18
10/12/15	CHEC	Exposure to classroom circles (HS)	.5	25
10/12/15	CHEC	Exposure to classroom circles (MS)	.5	25
10/15/15	CHEC	Exposure to classroom circles (SPED)	.5	
10/15/15	Luke HS	Exposure to classroom circles	.5	50
10/24/15	Catholic University	Peacemaking Circles workshop (open to the public)	8	20
11/30/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	3	12
12/7/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	3.5	12
12/9/15	Maya PCS	Introduction to restorative practices	1	50
12/10/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	3.5	12
12/10/15	Hart MS	Exposure to classroom circles	.5	35
12/17/15	Hart MS	Exposure to restorative discipline	.5	25
12/17/15	OAG	RJ Conferencing training for OAG & OSSE	3.5	18
1/11/16	Hart	Staff introduction to circles	2	
1/19/16	MayaPCS	Circle facilitation teachers in-service training	2	60
1/27/16	Luke HS	Restorative practices in the classroom workshop	1	25
2/10/16	OAG	RJ Conferencing follow-up sessions	1	12
2/11/16	OSSE	OSSE-sponsored "Restorative Classrooms" training	7	22
2/11/16	Ballou HS	RJ practices training for behavior techs	1	
2/18/16	Ballou HS	RJ practices training for behavior techs	1	
2/26/16	OSSE	OSSE-sponsored "Restorative Conversations" training	7	37
2/29/16	Ballou HS	Yoga Nidra/mindfulness training for 9th graders	1	
3/4/16	SchoolTalk	RJ Workshop for Public Allies Fellows	3	18
3/9/16	Maya PCS	Restorative practices presentation	3	60
3/10/16	Ballou HS	RJ practices training for behavior techs	1	
3/24/16	Ballou HS	RJ practices training for behavior techs	1	
4/8/16	DLA Piper	Special Education and RJ work day	7	20

4/14/16	Ballou HS	Behavior tech staff development session	1	
4/26/16	OSSE	OSSE-sponsored "Restorative Classrooms" training	7	25
4/27/16	Luke HS	Self-care for secondary trauma	1	25
5/4/16	Maya PCS	Introduction to RJ workshop	1.5	
5/4/16	Hart MS	7th grade teachers "There is Power in the Circle Training" Part 1	1	
5/10/16	Hart MS	8th grade elective teachers relationship building workshop	1.5	
5/10/16	Reengagement Center	Staff circle and training	6	5
5/11/16	Reengagement Center	Staff circle and training	6	5
5/15/16	Ballou HS	Behavior tech staff development session	1	
5/18/16	Hart MS	7th grade teachers "There is Power in the Circle Training" Part II	1	
5/18/16	Ballou HS	Behavior tech staff development session	1	
5/19/16	Ballou HS	10th grade teachers "Teaching Restorative Justice in Schools with Circles" workshop	1	
5/20/16	Washington Convention Center	Restorative Schools Showcase Session at OSSE-sponsored LEA Institute	1	30
5/20/16	Washington Convention Center	Introduction to Restorative Practices at OSSE-sponsored LEA Institute	1	25
5/20/16	Washington Convention Center	Introduction to Positive Discipline	1	25
5/20/16	Washington Convention Center	Introduction to Restorative Practices at OSSE-sponsored LEA Institute	1	12
5/26/16	Ballou HS	Behavior tech staff development session	1	
6/1/16	Hart MS	7th grade teachers workshop	1	
6/7/16	Ballou HS	10th grade teachers "Restorative Justice in Schools Training Session"	1.5	
6/7/16	Hart MS	"Introduction to Circle Process" for 8th Grade Teachers Part I	1	
6/7/16	OSSE	OSSE-sponsored Trauma Awareness and Resilience training	7	29
6/9/16	Hart MS	"Introduction to Circle Process for 8th Grade Teachers" Part II	1	
6/21/16	Ballou MS	"Final Circle Facilitation Training Practicum Assessment and Exam"	5	
<b>Total:</b>			<b>203</b>	<b>992</b>

The number of person hours of training is defined as the product of the number of hours a training lasts and the number of participants in that training. Assuming that trainings with unreported participant numbers had at least one participant, a conservative estimate of the total number of person hours over all trainings provided in SY2015-16 is thus 4104.



OSSE administered post-workshop online evaluation surveys to participants of the following daylong training workshops as a condition of receiving professional learning units (PLUs).

Date	Topic	No. of participants	No. of schools/agencies reached	Average overall satisfaction**	Response Rate	Link
2/11/16	Restorative Classrooms	22	NA	4.8	62%	<a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-7BRPS25Q/">https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-7BRPS25Q/</a>
2/26/16	Restorative Conversations	37	NA	4.7	57%	<a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-LQF3S6CW/">https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-LQF3S6CW/</a>
4/26/16	Restorative Classrooms	25	13	5	50%	<a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-LLQQ23LR/">https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-LLQQ23LR/</a>
6/7/16	Trauma Awareness	29	20	4.7	50%	<a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-L8Z37DDT/">https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-L8Z37DDT/</a>

\*\*1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = somewhat dissatisfied; 3 = satisfied; 4 = somewhat satisfied; 5 = very satisfied

### Selection of longer participant comments:

*As always, super inspiring to be in a room full of people who are trying to practice this change in mindset. Thank you! 2/26*

*It's hard to identify one moment [when I was most engaged], it was extremely engaging and interactive the entire day. I'd probably have to say when we were up and about moving and doing an activity. 2/26*

*The extent to which so many schools are implementing this across the city. I feel every student could benefit. The few times I've used the strategies, they've worked well and diffused the situations. 2/26*

*Really, the whole workshop was all-engaging. There was virtually no down time and no moments when time lagged or anything seemed irrelevant. 2/26*

*During the afternoon session, it seemed not as structured and the message of restorative conversations got lost in my opinion. 2/26*

*It was a pretty good experience, I think all the participants were engaged in all the activities. I just want to say Bravo!!! for a job well done and courage to continue with the same spirit.. 2/26*

*Sharing out in terms of where we saw ourselves in defining certain behaviors helped to shape and bring a better understanding of how to handle certain behaviors. 2/26*

*I felt most engaged during the circle experiences. It gave me the opportunity to listen, receive feedback and think critically about next steps for my school and classroom. 4/26*

*All of it-- I found the circle safe and welcoming. This is important to me as I have anxiety issues with large groups of people. It was handled so sensitively and compassionately. 4/26*

*I don't think there was a moment I felt disengaged with what was happening. Every part of the day was intentional and vital to helping me improve my practice. 4/26*

*I felt the most disengaged when we were discussing the statistics and data points. I believe I would have been more engaged if I had a physical copy of the data or if we had small moments to discuss and predict the day at. 4/26*

*[Most helpful was] The complete morning activities leading up to the video of the students running their own circle. The elements of creating the community were very clear. 4/26*

*I felt that the discipline role play done by some of the participants at the end highlighted some of the reasons that teachers or staff might be resistant to restorative practices and I would love to see a more involved pd session around that. 4/26*

*The most puzzling piece was the next step part of the session. Next steps look different for each person and even in groups, I don't believe it was as solutions oriented as it could've been. From our group we gathered more questions than answers. 4/26*

*In the role-playing scenes (Last activity) two things struck me. 1. I felt a visceral response to the scene that we watched play out and it transported me back in time to when I was teaching extremely rude, loud and failure-driven students. 2. I was surprised that so many people left before the end of the workshop. I feel like I could have stayed there for hours more. 4/26*

*In small break out groups in response to the skit, one participant stated that a given reply wasn't her middle school experience so she didn't think it should apply to the scenario. It just affirmed to me that some people, although passionate or interested, will not be able to truly relate to circumstances different from their own experiences. This will be a challenge when implementing and training staff in different schools. 4/26*

*Experiential learning that was as impactful as it was within a short amount of time. I experienced restorative circles and I was reminded of their benefits. 4/26*

*I felt most engaged when we identified the types of trauma that we had experienced (i.e. individual and collective trauma) and the symptoms of trauma that we may observe in our students. 6/7*

*I had a hard time engaging in the exercise of writing my traumatic events on the sticky sheet for the board; not because I didn't want to but it would have been too emotional provoking. 6/7*

*I wanted to be supportive of people using the session for processing their personal traumas, but felt that was not what I attended the session for. I wanted more specific examples of supports for students and ways to convince administrators to support trauma-informed policies. 6/7*

*The interactive activity with the brain titled "flipping your lid" was the most helpful. It was helpful to learn the differences between the rational, emotional and instinctual parts of the brain. Understanding how trauma affects the brain and gets trapped in the body has deepened my insight on trauma. 6/7*

*[Most valuable was] being able to reflect on the types of trauma we as adults have faced in addition to those our students face and how it manifests in both our lives. 6/7*

*The explanation of the autonomic nervous system was a bit technical and confusing at first, but the "flipping your lid" activity and the stress response graphs provided the clarity that I needed. 6/7*

*The sense of comfort that I felt in the group surprised me the most. I felt comfortable sharing my thoughts and feelings, and I learned a lot from the other members of the group. 6/7*

*I enjoyed the exercise of using objects to hold as we spoke. I was most surprised that I connected to the training as a whole as completely as I did. I would have preferred to offer my responses closer to the event, next day at the latest due to my short memory. 6/7*

### C. Technical Assistance

Through most of SY2015-16, Restorative DC offered from 5 to 25 hours of intensive weekly technical assistance to a cohort of five schools selected in partnership with DCPS and OSSE. Of these, Maya Angelou Public Charter School, did not take full advantage of available technical assistance hours on account of challenges discussed in its school specific section below. Restorative DC also provided technical assistance to the DC Office of Attorney General, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, and a variety of other schools or organizations on a more limited or one-time basis (not reported below).

Technical assistance may include facilitating or co-facilitating trainings, mediations, staff circles, parent circles, classrooms circles, responsive circles, or other restorative processes; providing demonstrations, observations, feedback, or emergency troubleshooting; offering consulting, apprenticeship, or mentorship; drafting, reviewing, or providing input to plans, policies, reference materials, or other documents; and providing in-person or remote coaching. The actual nature of this technical assistance is the result of both collaborative planning and adaptation, always undertaken in close partnership with each school and responsive to each school’s particular context. As part of their technical assistance package, beneficiaries also received reference materials free of charge, which may have included:

- *Circle Forward* by Carolyn Boyd-Watson and Kay Pranis
- *The Little Book of Circle Processes* by Kay Pranis
- *The Little Book of Restorative Discipline* by Lorraine Amstutz-Stutzman
- *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* by Howard Zehr
- Peacemaking Circles Overview hand-out
- Responding to Objections hand-out
- Sample circle outlines and restorative disciplinary policies

Because technical assistance includes the provision of on-site training and restorative interventions, note that the total actual hours of technical assistance listed below also includes hours reported for training and restorative processes in other sections of this report.

<b>Restorative DC Technical Assistance</b>				
<b>School/ agency</b>	<b>Lead technical assistant(s)</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>Budgeted TA hours per week</b>	<b>Total actual hours of support</b>
<b>Ballou HS</b>	Ivy and Saleem Hylton	August 2015	Up to 25 hours	462
<b>Hart MS</b>	Mutima Imani	November 2015	Up to 5 hours	265
<b>CHEC (MS/HS)</b>	Mali Parke	September 2015	Up to 15 hours	591
<b>Luke HS</b>	Jane Connor	September	Up to 15 hours	585
<b>Maya PCS (HS)</b>	Dwanna Nicole	September 2015	Up to 5 hours	86
<b>OAG</b>	Tarek Maassarani	August 2015	NA	18
<b>CJCC</b>	Tarek Maassarani	February 2016	NA	8
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,989</b>

Signaling the growing interest in technical assistance, the following schools and their respective points of contact – many of them participants of Restorative DC trainings and Community of Practice sessions – pro-actively applied for continued or first-time extensive technical assistance for SY2016-17: CHEC, Ballou STAY

(Otis Grandson), Kelley Miller (Davis Benjamin), Neval Thomas (Haroon Rashed), Eastern HS (Lucas Cooke), Center City PCS (Kimberley Cooper), LAMB (Cristina Encinas), Seed (Liza Ochsendorf), Friendship (Rachelle Roberts), BASIS (Alexander Rose-Henig), Academy of Hope (Lindsey Anderson), Chavez (Marla Dean), Inspired Teaching (Latisha Coleman), Maya Angelou (Jay Walker and Steven Foster), Monument Academy (Jason Miles), and Howard University Middle School (Corbet Houston).

#### D. Restorative Interventions

As part of its technical assistance to schools, Restorative DC employed and tracked the use of five key types of restorative practices, or specially-facilitated processes that are structured to build community and/or repair harm.

**Responsive Circles/Conferencing:** Two different facilitated dialogue processes used to repair incidents of harm. Participants include those involved and affected by the incident(s). They provide a safe and structured space for participants to understand what happened, express how they have been affected, and agree on how to repair the harm and prevent the incident from happening again. Written agreements are monitored through compliance and the process is most often used as an alternative to exclusionary discipline.

**Reintegration Circles:** When youth have been excluded from the school community on account of suspension or arrest, a Reintegration Circle provides an opportunity for the student’s guardians, personal support network, and school to welcome them back and reaffirm their importance. The conversation revolves around what supports the student will be offered and what commitments the student and all included will make to ensure the youth’s success.

**Proactive Circles:** Dialogue processes in the Peacemaking Circle tradition that are facilitated by a circle keeper and incorporate the use of a talking and centerpiece, opening and closing ceremonies, discussion of values, and sharing in rounds, especially of personal stories. They are not used in response to a particular incident of harm; they may be one-time, recurring, and/or focused on a particular group or topic. **Staff Circles** and **Classroom Circles** are two subsets of Proactive Circles that can be used for community building, social emotional learning, content instruction, collective problem solving, or conflict resolution amongst adults or youth.

Number of Restorative Processes Conducted at Schools						
Type of Intervention	Ballou	CHEC	Luke	Maya	Hart	TOTAL
Responsive Circles/Conferences	13	41	39	-	1	94
Reintegration Circles	4	-	5	-	-	9
Staff Circles	31	6	11	-	4	52
Classroom Circles	42	14	25	-	8	89
Proactive Circles (other)	10	13	9	-	3	35
<b>Total:</b>	100	74	89	-	16	<b>279</b>

#### **IV. Restorative Schools Data**

The crosscutting features of Restorative DC's support of the five selected school partners included:

- Selection of target schools and core school implementation teams carried out through an assessment process in consultation with DCPS and OSSE.
- On-site and centralized OSSE-sponsored Restorative Justice training, exposure, and professional development opportunities for school implementation teams.
- Dedication of one or more experienced restorative practitioners to provide weekly on-site technical assistance responsive to each school's needs and capacity.
- A Memorandum of Understanding with each school around collaborative implementation and the collection of quantitative and qualitative data.
- Collaborative action planning with core school teams based on results of a readiness assessment and ongoing reflection.
- Cooperation with DCPS, OSSE, OAG, and other identified agencies and community partners to support schools.

Beyond this, school implementation varied widely from school to school, as detailed in the following school-specific reports. It should be noted that Ballou, Hart, and Luke were also part of DCPS' School Climate Initiative, which provided assessment and guidance related to school climate. The impact of these and other efforts that complement Restorative Justice has not been considered in this report. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the reductions in suspension rates detailed below suggest, but do not in of themselves prove proper implementation of restorative alternatives and a change of school culture.

<b>Ballou High School</b>				
<i>Lead technical support: Ivy Hylton (with assistance from Saleem Hylton)</i>				
<b>Technical Assistance Hours – up to 25 hours per week</b>				
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
148	107	120	87	<b>462</b>
<b>Training and Professional Development</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>No. of hours</b>		
8/04 - 8/05/15	Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools (DCPS-sponsored)	16		
8/06/15	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the Classroom	8		
8/09/15	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Student Orientation to Restorative Circles	2		
9/23/15	Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools (DCPS-sponsored)	8		
1/14/16	School Violence Reduction Meeting	1.5		
2/11/16	Restorative Practices for Ballou Behavior Techs.	1		
2/18/16	Restorative Practices for Ballou Behavior Techs.	1		
2/29/16	Yoga Nidra/Mindfulness	1		
3/10/16	Restorative Practices for Ballou Behavior Techs.	1		
3/24/16	Restorative Practices for Ballou Behavior Techs.	1		
4/11/16	AERA International Conference Symposium	4		
4/14/16	Ballou Behavior Tech Staff Development Session	1		
5/15/16	Ballou Behavior Tech Staff Development Session	1		
5/18/16	Ballou Behavior Tech Staff Development Session	1		
5/19/16	10th Grade Teachers Teaching Restorative Justice in Schools with Circles	1		
5/26/16	Ballou Behavior Tech Staff Development Session	1		
6/07/16	10th Grade Teachers Restorative Justice in Schools Training Session	1.5		
6/21/16	Final Circle Facilitation Training Practicum Assessment and Exam	5		
<b>Total</b>		<b>108</b>		
<b>Restorative Interventions</b>				
Responsive Circles/Conferences				13
Reintegration Circles				4
Staff Circles				31
Classroom Circles				42
Proactive Circles (other)				10
<b>Total:</b>				<b>100</b>
<b>Notes</b>				
<p><b>Quarter 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ H. Maassarani and J. Turner facilitated a three-hour community building circle for staff during the summer.</li> <li>➤ Meetings with school leadership and school implementation team.</li> <li>➤ Completed Phase I Assessment and Developed MOU.</li> <li>➤ Assigned Restorative DC technical support lead.</li> <li>➤ Coordinated with Access Youth and Office of the Attorney General to develop referral protocol for Responsive Circles and Conferences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ I. Hylton held a yoga session after school for the 9th grade teachers</li> <li>➤ The restorative Wellness room is being utilized by teachers and students, mostly used for breathing exercises, aromatherapy, and self restoring</li> <li>➤ A total of 15 Classroom Circles were completed during this report period (approx. 450 students participated) based on an average of 30 students per class (some students were repeats in other</li> </ul>				

classrooms)

- The Peer Mediation Class has begun conducting circles in the class and established a school identity logo for the school Peer Mediator uniform.
- L. Peterson begins convening biweekly Care Team meetings of relevant school staff, DBH social workers, and Access Youth and Restorative DC coordinators.

### **Quarter 3**

- Two Peacemaking Circles were completed during this quarter with a total of 12 participating students addressing a history of 3 years of fighting in the school and community and a gang fight over two females.
- The Peer Mediation Class served as peacemakers during the all-school assembly viewing of the Interrupters film. They were all given "I am a Peace Maker" Badges designed and made by Restorative DC to wear during assembly. This was the first official appearance as peer mediators in the school.
- Restorative Alternative Learning Environment for a total of 7 students included Restorative Mindfulness training for students. Conducted by Ivy Hylton
- Restorative Justice Practice Sessions started with Ballou Behavioral Tech Team
- 9th Grade Academy teachers demonstrated performing circle openings and closings. The sessions were videotaped.
- 9th Grade Academy teachers began facilitating Community Building circles in the classroom independently.

### **Quarter 4**

- 9th grade teachers began to perform classroom community building circles independently.
- Presented the first proposed quick restorative crisis response protocol for classrooms, adults, and students.
- Conducted a series of peer mediation practice model sessions with Ballou students.
- Conducted peer mediation planning session for next year referral process for peer mediation.
- Administered the final circle facilitation training practicum circle skills assessment and exam.
- Planning for next school year with the Dean of Students and Behavioral Tech team.

## **Commentary and Testimonials**

In SY2015-16, Ballou Senior High School teachers were equipped to bring classroom circles throughout the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, youth were engaged as peacemakers, staff regularly met in circle, and Restorative Justice Conferencing and responsive circles were routinely used to address major incidents or issues. For example, around May, administrators convened a circle to deal with a student on the verge of expulsion. Teachers shared vulnerably how they had been impacted by his behavior. The student volunteered to clean the cafeteria for several months and has since graduated.

Just a couple years earlier, Ballou's 1200 students saw 2000 suspensions, 250 arrests per year, and a 50% graduation rate. In SY2015-1, suspensions were down 60% and there were less than 10 arrests. Attendance and test scores were up. One administrator noted, "initially the students were resistant [to the restorative practices], but now it is a part of our culture...." The Principal Dr. Yetunde Reeves explained how you can feel the difference walking down the halls just "in the way students say good morning... It is a breath of fresh air."

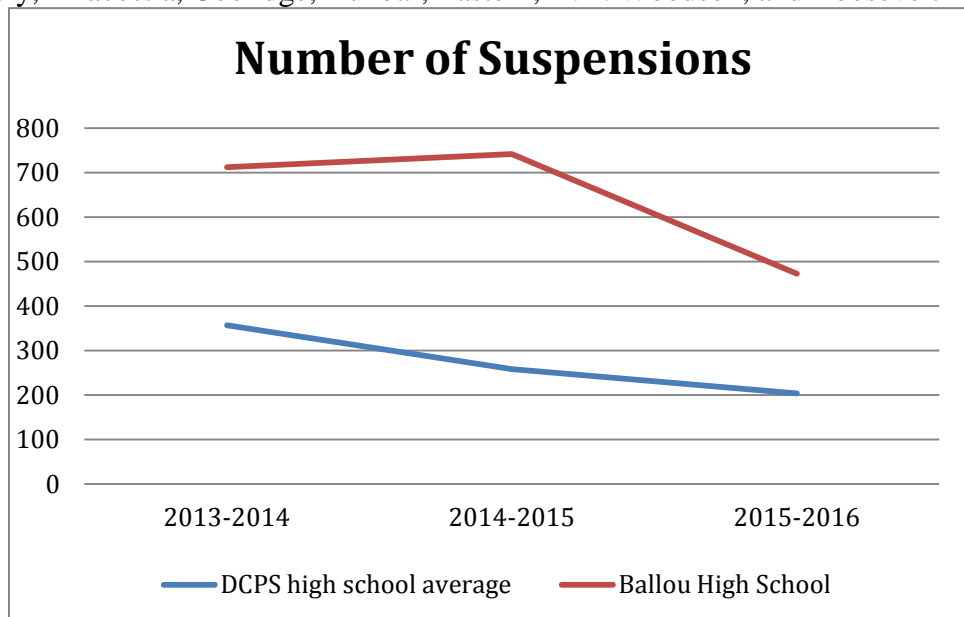
In April, the school was selected to host the 2016 American Education Research Association annual symposium. There one of its behavioral technicians testified, "We now have a tool that we can actually use in the school and classroom that is making a difference with suspensions in a way we have never experienced." One student remarked, "After many years of family problems, fighting, arguing, and mental health challenges with my sister, I decided to take the talking piece home and now we use the circle to communicate and work things out." The school's football coach, shared, "The generation of today just wants to be heard. I use this with the football team. The football is the talking piece. They now have a clear understanding of the method to the madness."

Ballou’s Restorative Justice efforts also drew the attention of the media. On August 23, 2016, the Washington Post featured Ballou in an article entitled “When suspensions weren’t working this high school opted for a new approach.” Available at <http://tinyurl.com/when-suspensions-werent-workin>. Earlier, on May 5, 2015, Fox 5 referenced Ballou’s new approach in a video showing a high school student threatening a substitute teacher. See <http://www.fox5dc.com/news/137478837-story>. Incidentally, Fox 5 ran a story of a large fight at Ballou on October 7, 2015, that painted the school as particularly unsafe and out of control (see <http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/30999064-story>), but was subsequently addressed through the Ballou’s first Restorative Justice two weeks later.

Amongst other contributing factors, Ballou has benefited from the strong leadership of Principal Reeves – who came to Ballou in 2014 with 10 years work experience in the RJ-oriented public school system of Oakland – and Dean of Students Regina Nadir; a full-time on-site Restorative Justice Coordinator provided by Access Youth; on-site support from the Office of Attorney General and other agencies; strong connections to DCPS central office; and significant technical assistance from Restorative DC’s most veteran restorative practitioners.

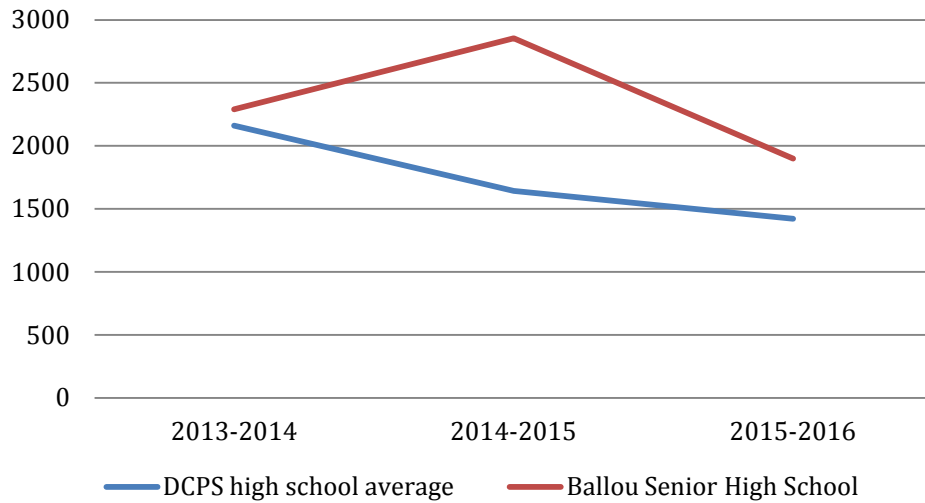
### Suspension Data

Ballou witnessed significant drops in their suspension rates from 712 suspensions, 2289 total suspension days, and 315 suspension days per 100 students in SY2013-14 and 742 suspensions, 2854 total suspension days, and 345 suspension days per 100 students in SY2014-15 to 473 suspensions, 1900 total suspension days, and 204 suspension days per 100 students when Restorative DC began providing support in SY2015-16, including for restorative alternatives to suspension. These numbers are shown in the figures below compared to the average suspension rates of similarly-situated DC high schools that did not implement restorative practices in SY2015-16 or prior (namely, Anacostia, Coolidge, Dunbar, Eastern, H.D. Woodson, and Roosevelt high schools).

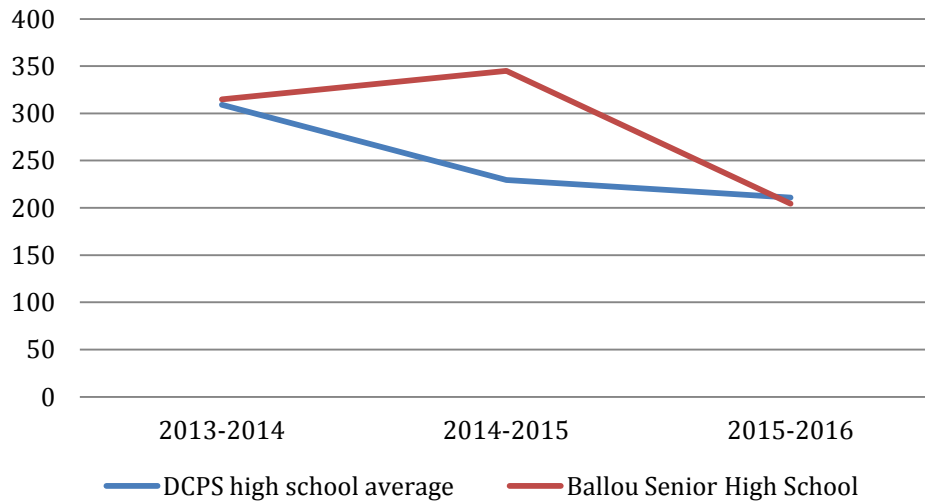




## Total Suspension Days



## Suspension Days per 100 Students



<b>Columbia Heights Education Campus (MS &amp; HS)</b>				
<i>Lead technical support: Mali Parke (with assistance from Hasaani Hylton and Melina Mora)</i>				
<b>Technical Assistance Hours – up to 15 hours per week</b>				
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
60	115	230.5	185.5	<b>591</b>
<b>Training and Professional Development</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>No. of hours</b>		
9/14-9/15/15	Peer Mediation for Middle and High School	16		
9/15	Restorative Practices: Teacher and Staff Training	8		
9/28/15	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the classroom (OSSE – sponsored)	8		
9/30/15	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the classroom (OSSE – sponsored)	8		
10/12/15	Intro to Classroom Circles	.5		
10/12/15	Intro to Classroom Circles	.5		
10/15/15	Intro to Classroom Circles	.5		
<b>Total:</b>		<b>25.5</b>		
<b>Restorative Interventions</b>				
Responsive Circles/Conferences		41		
Reintegration Circles		-		
Staff Circles		6		
Classroom Circles		14		
Proactive Circles (other)		13		
<b>Total:</b>		<b>74</b>		
<b>Notes</b>				
<b>Quarter 1</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meetings with school leadership and school implementation team.</li> <li>➤ Completed Phase I Assessment.</li> <li>➤ Assigned Restorative DC lead technical support.</li> <li>➤ Developed MOU with school.</li> <li>➤ Conducted peer mediation training for a total of 50 youth between the 6th and 12th grades.</li> </ul>				
<b>Quarter 2</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Worked with school leadership to prioritize and plan for specific restorative justice technical assistance at CHEC.</li> <li>➤ Meeting with Social Worker in charge of trauma youth circle. Consulting/coaching on how to integrate circle principles and ideas for supporting behaviors/engagement.</li> <li>➤ Meeting with social worker in charge of pregnancy prevention and an advisory on healthy relationships. Consulted on ideas and questions for all teachers.</li> <li>➤ Meeting with two social workers planning on advisory on bullying. Planning of advisory with them, offering outline of a circle process/questions.</li> <li>➤ Mali co-wrote bullying advisory that was provided to all teachers, social workers, and students.</li> </ul>				
<b>Quarter 3</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Advisories are now all going through our consult/coaching to learn how to use circle rounds/process. Two planned and co-written this month: Substance Use (will be run in March or April, due to snow) and Tolerance (will be run in Feb).</li> <li>➤ A core CHEC restorative team is starting with Ms. Weiss as the main point of contact, and Ms. Crivelli, who both attended the two daylong professional development trainings this month on Classroom Circles and Restorative Conversations.</li> <li>➤ Offered an introduction to restorative practices/circles to families, staff and youths. Some 40 people</li> </ul>				

attended.

#### Quarter 4

- Launched weekly Teachers Care Circle (low attendance).
- Empowering Men of Color (EMOC) planning/integration of circles in Advisories for next year.
- Yoga Classroom Circle, Parent Circle and new cases.
- Completed many restorative dialogue/cases (students to students, staff to staff, staff to students, etc.) including a case with the Principal.
- EMOC Luncheon in circle.
- Completed focus groups, lessons learned, and some next year planning

#### Commentary and Testimonials

The Columbia Heights Educational Campus is a joint middle and high school with a high number of both Latinx and African American students. As one of five participating schools in OSSE's SY2014-15 Community of Practice, CHEC joined the restorative schools cohort for SY2015-16 despite limited familiarity and support from the principal and a saturation of existing workload/initiatives hampering key administrators. Through participation in exposure workshops and trainings, collaboration with technical support, and observation of restorative practices, a team of committed staff and supportive administrators emerged and restorative practices grew in small pockets throughout the school in the form of classroom circles, parent engagement circles, special education circles, Empowering Men of Color circles, and responsive interventions.

Two focus groups of 7 and 12 staff, respectively, held on June 8, 2016, revealed both the impact of these restorative practices and some of their ongoing challenges. Students (10 through 12th grade) commented:

- "I love it because we can have our feelings heard."
- "Mine was based off of trauma, it didn't necessarily help me, but it got me out of class, but it was all trauma based in 9th and 10th grade."
- "I'm interested in running circles in college."
- "I liked it, a lot of people complained a lot, but it was fun when they asked me questions about my future."
- "I liked it, I got to express my feelings, and be heard."
- "[I want] more circles, small to medium sized."

In the school more generally, most students in the focus group generally felt safe, but not cared for as a part of a community. They described their school experience as demanding, frustrating, and discouraging, noting a lack of connection, trust, respect, and choice; of realistic, consistent expectations, rules, and discipline; and of needed academic support in most of their relationships with staff, as well as the absence of honest and genuine relationships with most peers.

Staff, including teachers and administrators who had different levels of involvement with restorative practices at CHEC, commented:

- "[Circles] are positive when the students are with students that match their maturity level."
- "Circles are very resourceful."
- "Teacher care circles were very helpful, informative, and connective."
- "Better able to understand each other's frustrations."
- "Parents enjoyed the parent circles and appreciated having the opportunity to talk and be listened to."
- "Circles work well with social work values however a cultural competency piece is missing."
- "RJ is perceived as softness and students do not want to participate because it's vulnerable."
- "If there was a different way to package circles and RJ practices so that new comers won't be turned off by the "touchy-feelyness."

More generally, the staff in the focus group described the school environment as intense, rigid, top-down, and bureaucratic with a low sense of community and pressure to do too much with not enough time and resources.

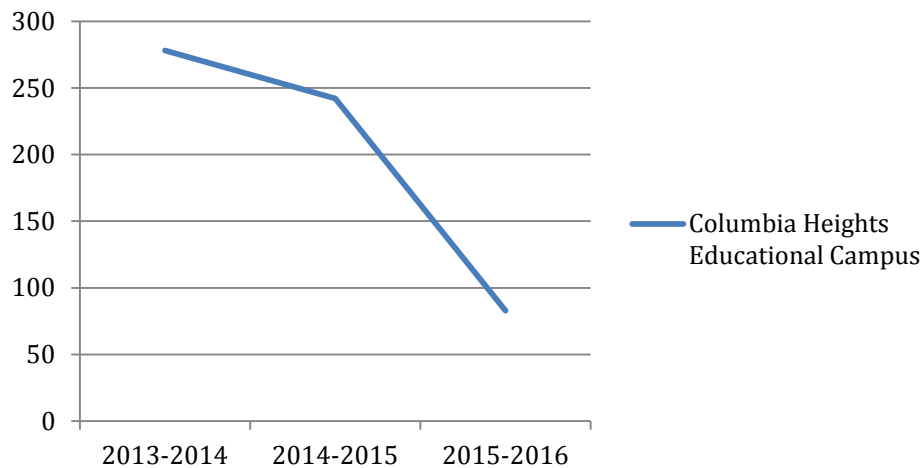
While there were strong relationships on an individual level and in some of the “small learning communities”, they were strained, exclusive, siloed, and marked by strong, but covert racial/cultural tensions, on intergroup levels. Teachers lacked voice and full support from supervisors, and students in turn lacked full support from teachers. Focus group participants also pointed to negative power dynamics with students, inconsistency in discipline, and a lack of follow-through on school initiatives.

This picture strongly suggests, as a matter of priority, both the great potential and need for infusing restorative practices strategically, consistently, and comprehensively throughout the school community (i.e. a whole school approach meaningfully supported by leadership) so as to strengthen relationships and satisfaction amongst staff and students.

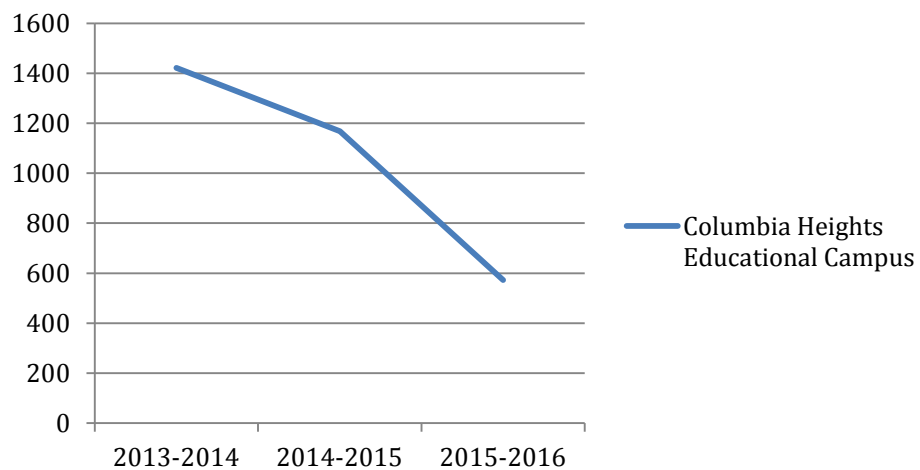
### Suspension Data

CHEC witnessed substantial drops in their suspension rates from 278 suspensions, 1422 total suspension days, and 109 suspension days per 100 students in SY2013-14 and 242 suspensions, 1168 total suspension days, and 86 suspension days per 100 students in SY2014-15 to 83 suspensions, 573 total suspension days, and 42 suspension days per 100 students when Restorative DC began providing support in SY2015-16. These numbers are shown in the figures below. As an educational campus spanning middle and high school, CHEC does not have a significant number of counterpart schools to use for comparison purposes.

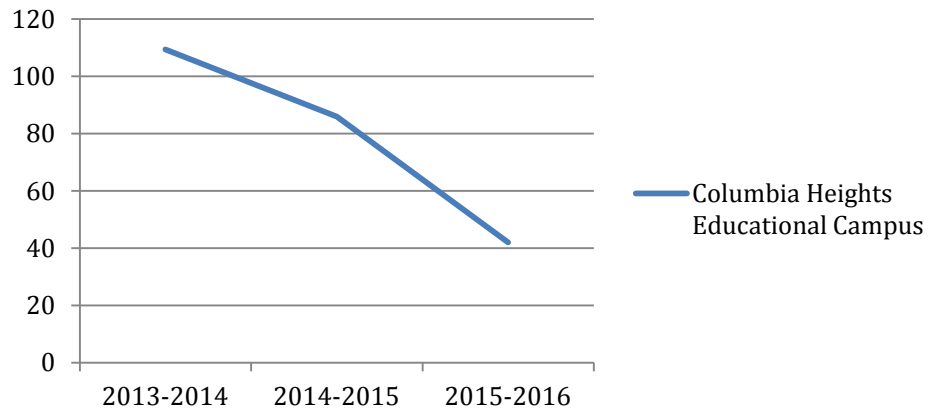
### Number of Suspensions



### Total Suspension Days



## Suspension Days per 100 Students



<b>Hart Middle School</b>				
<i>Lead technical support: Mutima Imani (with assistance from SheReigns BornTrue and Ivy Hylton)</i>				
<b>Technical Assistance Hours – up to 15 hours per week</b>				
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
0	11	121.5	112.5	<b>245</b>
<b>Training and Professional Development</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>No. of hours</b>		
8/4 -8/5/15	Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools (DCPS-sponsored)	16		
9/23/15	Train-the-trainers: Restorative Justice in Schools (DCPS-sponsored)	8		
12/10/15	Exposure workshop	.5		
12/17/15	Exposure workshop	.5		
1/11/16	RDC intro to Hart	2		
5/04/16	7th Grade Teachers There is Power in the Circle Training Part I	1		
5/10/16	8th Grade Elective Teachers Relationship Building	1.5		
5/18/16	7th Grade Teachers There is Power in the Circle Training Part II	1		
6/1/16	7th Grade Teachers Training	1		
6/07/16	Introduction to Circle Process for 8th Grade Teachers Part II	1		
6/09/16	Introduction to Circle Process for 8th Grade Teachers Part II	1		
<b>Total:</b>		<b>9.5</b>		
<b>Restorative Interventions</b>				
Responsive Circles/Conferences				1
Reintegration Circles				-
Staff Circles				4
Classroom Circles				8
Proactive Circles (other)				3
<b>Total:</b>				<b>16</b>
<b>Notes</b>				
<p><b>Quarter 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meeting with school leadership and implementation team.</li> <li>➤ Completed Phase I Assessment.</li> <li>➤ Staff participated 3-day summer training.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activity at Hart was mostly planning meetings with their staff and exposure workshops.</li> <li>➤ Hart staff conducted about 40 responsive circles since receiving summer training.</li> <li>➤ S. Borntrue and T. Maassarani facilitated a 95-minute circle for about a dozen 7th grade teachers; Ms. Broussard, and Mr. Kennedy to introduce them to circles in greater depth and plan for implementation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Met with principal to align goals and plan implementation for Hart.</li> <li>➤ Conducted relationship-building circles for teachers.</li> <li>➤ Meeting with students selected to be in the future leaders club.</li> <li>➤ Planning meetings to organize staff trainings, classroom circles, and future leader meetings.</li> <li>➤ School climate and lunchtime observations.</li> <li>➤ Providing coaching and support on restorative practices to teachers and staff concerning specific issues.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ School wide climate reset observation and coaching.</li> <li>➤ Training for 7th grade teachers "There is power in the circle" series.</li> <li>➤ S. BornTrue held classroom circles and mindfulness exercises in Mr. Williams' class.</li> <li>➤ Introduction to circles for rising 6th graders.</li> </ul>				

- Introduction to circles for 8th grade teachers.
- Evaluation with Ms. Broussard and Hart Leadership team.
- Focus group with 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and students.

### Commentary and Testimonials

Charles Hart Middle School’s disciplinary team attended the three-day Restorative Justice training in August and September 2015, on the basis of which, they immediately began to implement responsive circles in lieu of suspension. According to their records, 89 restorative circles took place keeping 55 students across all three grade levels in school between the beginning of school in August through November 2015. In the end of November, Hart began to take advantage of technical assistance with a focus on introducing restorative practices to the seventh grade, both in the classroom and amongst staff.

Two focus groups of student and staff, respectively, held on June 13, 2016, revealed both the impact of these restorative practices and some of their ongoing challenges. Students (7<sup>th</sup> grade) shared that they enjoyed the talking stick and storytelling in circles, that circles are better at preventing future fights than suspensions and still helpful even if the problem is not solved – though confidentiality and gossiping by students and adults remained a concern. One student recounted how they had a peace circle after a fight with another student, and though they are no longer friends, they are able to ignore each other and avoid fighting.

- “By expressing myself, it keeps me from getting frustrated and fighting.”
- “Circles should be required before getting suspended.”

Though the focus group participants had seen some of the circles go out of control, they recommended circles continue to be practiced from every day or twice a week to every month or three months.

More generally, students described their school as fun, scary, challenging, comfortable, exciting, and different. They held mixed opinions about school rules, which they said would be improved if students were more involved in creating them, better understood the rules’ purpose, and were not automatically wrong when conflicts or disagreements with teachers arose. They valued stronger, more caring relationships and one-on-one time with teachers, with each student counting around 2-5 teachers who understand them as people, whom they can depend on as a friend or mentor, and who teach them life skills above and beyond class work.

Amongst the ten staff, primarily 7th teachers and counselors, in the focus group, one teacher found circles were ineffective because students were constantly passing the talking piece and not participating. Another found it particularly effective when one of the co-teachers left the school, “it gave the students a place to voice their hurt and frustration.” Comments noted that circles gave teachers a starting point for the students who are more reserved but needed to have questions that students are better able to relate to or understand.

- “[Peace circles] provide the platform and safe place for students to open up and share with staff.”
- “For students, even if they did not actively participate their reactions to what other students shared spoke volumes.”
- “Students are hesitant when they first participate and will pass the talking piece, but after seeing the teachers participate they become more convinced and will participate the next time.”
- “The 7th grade team has been most engaged because it was forced on them and was not well received by the team at first, but with the constant peace circles people grew to appreciate it and recognize it as a valuable tool.”
- “The least engaged were the disciplinarians that were not on the 7th grade team, they would immediately resort to suspension if no one from the 7th grade team was involved.”

Staff used the following terms to describe the school: active, unpredictable, improving, room for growth, prayers answered, changing slowly, in process, in the works, under construction, and mind shifting. Further comments reveal some of the deeper thinking behind this and its relationship to restorative practices.

- “Peace circles helped deter bad behavior from the students who would do it to just go home.... For some students no one cares at home, so by suspending them we are re-traumatizing them by sending

them home to nothing.... Keeping them in the building translates to "we do care, and we won't give up on you."

- “[Restorative Justice] works better in the proactive sense in the classroom and with staff, however it is hard to implement them in disciplinary situations.”
- “[Restorative Justice] is a unique approach to correct behavior and is more holistic than the more traditional approaches that are strictly punitive.”
- “Positive reinforcement has a significant positive impact than just issuing out punishments.”
- “It is a shift in mindset [that has] helped us as the adults look past the immediate behavior and recognize the root causes.”
- “The child that is exuberant at school is usually the same child that has no one at home to ask them how there day was.”

What stood out in the lively two-hour staff focus group was the strong sense of community, shared accountability, professionalism, mutual support, and like-mindedness held by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade team, and extended out to their students. In part, this was attributed to weekly peace circles and an all-grade hiking trip at the beginning of the school year.

- “Peace circle's were a nuisance at first, however it made a positive impact on the cohesiveness of the 7th grade team.”
- “Peace circles help keep lines of communication at all times.”
- “The 7th grade team will support each other by reminding each other of deadlines or addressing conflicts where a team member dropped the ball, but in a constructive manner.”
- “The 7th grade team has been labeled as the "lovey dovey team.... Blowing bubbles in the hallway, hugs, allowing students to have their lunch in their classrooms, allowing students to stay in the class after school.”
- “In the 7th grade staff treat students as their own children... buying uniforms, giving students supplies, sponsoring students, providing support for personal conflict....”

This sense of community stands in contrast to relationships across and within other grade level teams, and related to recommendations the focus group participants made for more staff and student circles, both proactive and reactive, for all grade levels, and an activity that is school wide.

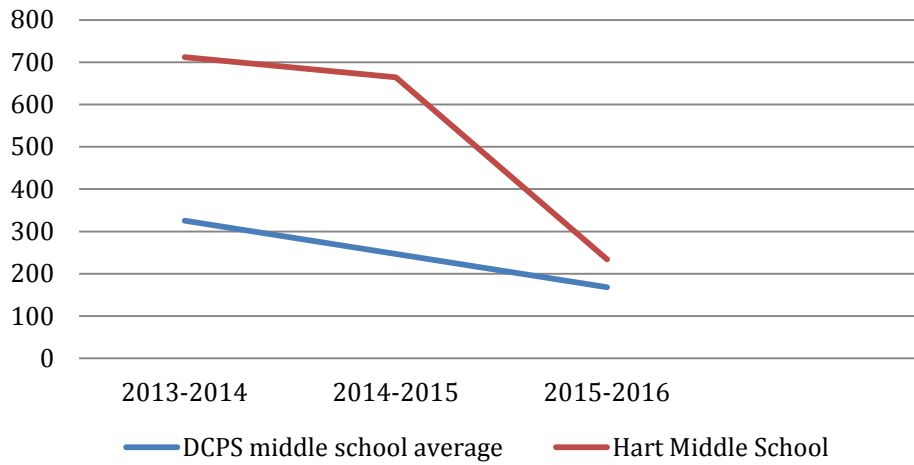
- "Middle school is a war and we need to have a closeness and connection...the competition between floors needs to stop."

### **Suspension Data**

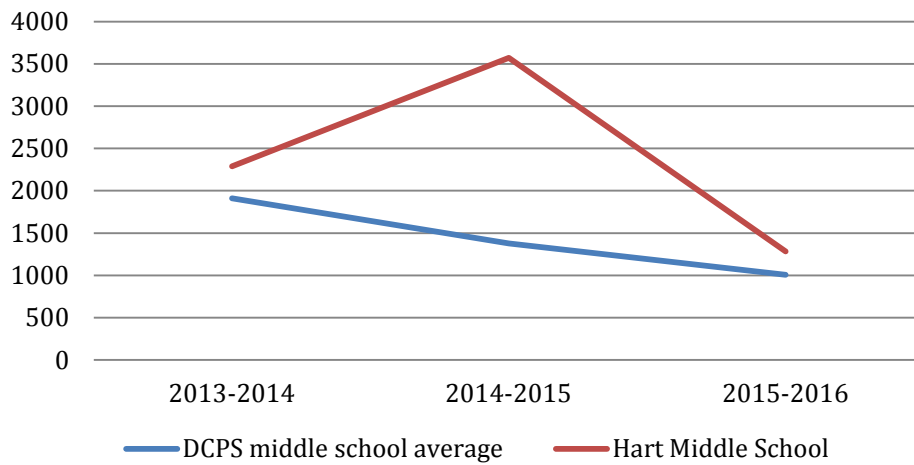
Hart witnessed major drops in their suspension rates from 775 suspensions, 5467 total suspension days, and 405 suspension days per 100 students in SY2013-14 and 664 suspensions, 3572 total suspension days, and 761 suspension days per 100 students in SY2014-15 to 234 suspensions, 1284 total suspension days, and 327 suspension days per 100 students when Restorative DC began providing support in SY2015-16, including for restorative alternatives to suspension. These numbers are shown in the figures below compared to the average suspension rates of similarly-situated DC middle schools that did not implement restorative practices in SY2015-16 or prior (namely, Elliot Hines, Jefferson, Johnson, Kelly Miller, Kramer, McKinley, Sousa, and Stuart Hobson middle schools).



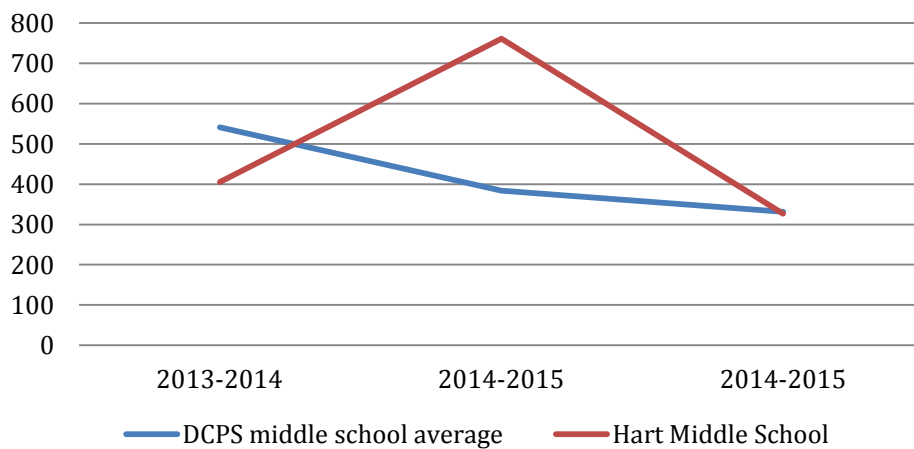
## Number of Suspensions



## Total Suspension Days



## Suspension Days Per 100 Students



<b>Luke C. Moore High School</b>				
<i>Lead technical support: Jane Connor (with assistance from SheReigns Borntrue)</i>				
<b>Technical Assistance Hours</b> – up to 5 hours per week				
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Quarter 2</b>	<b>Quarter 3</b>	<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>Total</b>
20	193	203	169	<b>585</b>
<b>Training and Professional Development</b>				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>No. of hours</b>		
9/28/15	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the classroom (OSSE-sponsored)	8		
9/30/15	Introduction to Restorative Practices in the classroom (OSSE-sponsored)	8		
10/15/15	Experiential exposure to circles	.5		
12/11/15	Experiential exposure to circles	1		
1/27/16	Restorative Justice in the Classroom	1		
<b>Total</b>		<b>18.5</b>		
<b>Restorative Interventions</b>				
Responsive Circles/Conferences				39
Reintegration Circles				5
Staff Circles				11
Classroom Circles				25
Proactive Circles (other)				9
<b>Total:</b>				<b>89</b>
<b>Notes</b>				
<p><b>Quarter 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meetings with school leadership and implementation team.</li> <li>➤ Completed Phase I Assessment.</li> <li>➤ Assigned Restorative DC lead technical support.</li> <li>➤ Beginning in October, Luke C. Moore will have up to 15 technical assistance hours per week.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There was a shoplifting incident at CVS and the store manager agreed to participating in a community circle with the students instead of banning them.</li> <li>➤ Implemented school-wide reflection circles following a major fight that resulted in eight students being hospitalized or arrested.</li> <li>➤ Frequent challenges with scheduling conferences/circles, actual meetings do not take place, however the preparations are still helpful</li> <li>➤ J. Connor began working with the school's basketball team. This will be a major step to start to spread a restorative culture across the student body. The men's basketball team has not completed a season in the 45 years; Jane's goal is, through restorative practices, to have them complete this coming season.</li> <li>➤ A RJ Circle was held with the 8 members of the Dance Team, the principal, the AP, and the Athletic Director after a serious incident at the Basketball game the previous evening. The AP was extremely moved by the way the students were able to participate and engage in the process. He has become a very firm supporter of RJ and refers back to this incident in his conversations.</li> <li>➤ The head of In School Suspension (ISS) is beginning to incorporate restorative type questions in the material assigned to students in ISS.</li> </ul> <p><b>Quarter 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dr. Kant, head of counseling services, and Jane will work on a draft for policy on how to handle disciplinary incidents using restorative principles.</li> <li>➤ The Luke C Moore HS Basketball Team completed its season for the first season in over 40 years! Support for Team Building and Nonviolent Communication were a part of the services provided by the RP team. In the past aggressive behavior on the court (towards umpires and other players) as well as off</li> </ul>				

the court (with other team, fans etc.) has led to severe difficulties and canceling of the season. Also, satisfactory attendance and participation has been a problem. This year such problems were lessened, the team completed its season and a celebration dinner was held.

- Jane will begin dialogues Mondays and Wednesdays at lunch with students and members of the community, to give opportunity to discuss concerns and suggestions about an open lunch and build relationships.

#### **Quarter 4**

- Meeting of LCM students with local African-American entrepreneur to be continued in next year's activities.
- Recruiting of students to contribute to school climate assessment and intervention; they did research and contributed to first meeting of committee.
- Staff training on secondary trauma.
- Formation of RP team for next year, planning for next year, student input accepted as vital.
- Experiential training in Appreciative Inquiry received by Restorative Practices team.
- Meeting of Restorative Practices team for planning for next year.
- Approval of proposal of hybrid system for combining traditional and restorative discipline practices next year, hiring of new Dean of students.
- Development of space in next year's school schedule for Personal Responsibility Program twice every week.
- School culture and climate recommendations finalized by school team and submitted to DCPS.
- Focus group conducted for staff and students.

#### **Commentary and Testimonials**

Luke C. Moore is an alternative high school for older students who have not succeeded in the traditional school setting. As such, the school has a smaller, more mature, emancipated, trauma-affected student population with high psychosocial support needs; greater student turn over and truancy; and relative flexibility in terms of curriculum and academic standards. From the beginning of SY2015-16, school leadership and support staff demonstrated a great deal of commitment to and alignment with a whole-school Restorative Justice approach. A designated Restorative Justice coordinator and team emerged early, participating in (and hosting) a number of training and Community of Practice professional development opportunities, and embracing Restorative DC's lead technical support person with open access and close cooperation. Throughout the year, the technical assistant and school team undertook a wide variety of activities, including exposure, mindfulness, and other workshops; classroom circles; lunchtime, staff, and tardy circles; dialogue with members of the community and law enforcement; responsive circles/conferences; mediations; as well as developing more restorative policies and procedures.

For the first time in 40 years, Luke's basketball team completed a season after introducing circles and Nonviolent Communication to the team. In a focus group of five students, held on June 8, 2016, students commented that the team would not have been able to complete the season without circles and that the players would remind each other during the day to be mindful as a way to deter negative behavior. Indeed, they found circles and mindfulness to be helpful in students' life in and outside of the school.

More generally, the focus group students described their experience at Luke as cool, wonderful, excellent, fantastic, and extravagant, and the staff as caring and patient. They emphasized several times how staff treats them like adults in empowering them to make their own decisions and like family in going out of their way to support them beyond academics. They preferred the way Luke did not resort to suspensions, and genuinely wanted to know about the students' life, even when issuing warnings or study hall for being tardy. "It is a great community."

A focus group of several Luke staff, held on June 13, 2016, revealed that some found them to be a valuable tool for dialogue around hot button issues, would continue to use circles, and thought students enjoyed circles them. Others showed more cautious support and surfaced a number of recommendations for moving forward. One

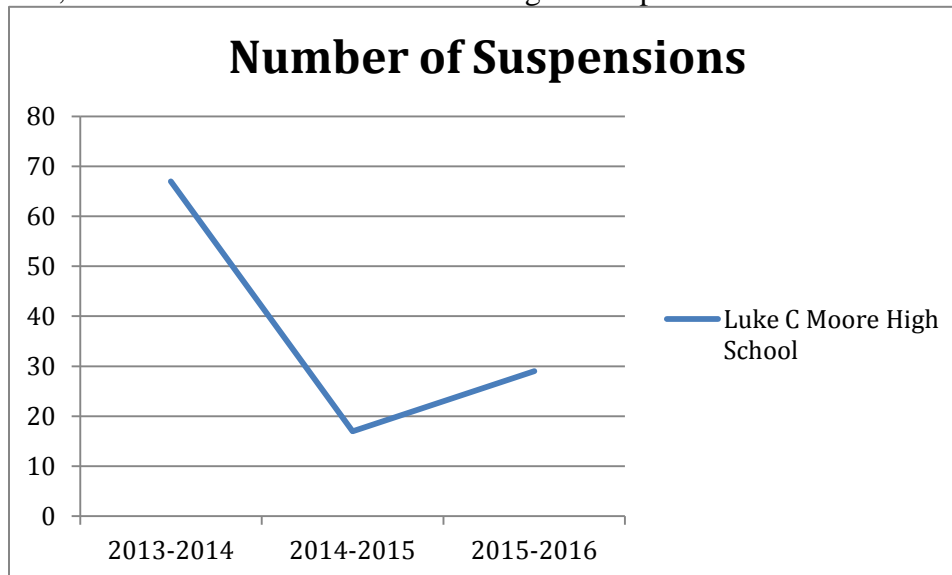
teacher did not support circles believing students were being penalized for what they would say in the school. Other comments similarly expressed support for restorative practices if done appropriately: the facilitator will be more effective if there is a connection to the students and the community; there should be more emphasis on proactive practices in order for responsive ones to work; the school should provide more training and incorporate different teams.

More generally, staff in the focus group echoed the genuine, caring relationships and family-oriented school community experienced by youth. They described their school culture with the terms: overworked, overwhelmed, not enough time, unique, work in progress, and relaxed. When it comes to discipline, policies seemed inconsistent, were restrictive on the part of DCPS, and should allow for individual discretion. Their transient, nontraditional student population posed unique challenges when it came to teaching, dealing with central offices, and addressing special education needs.

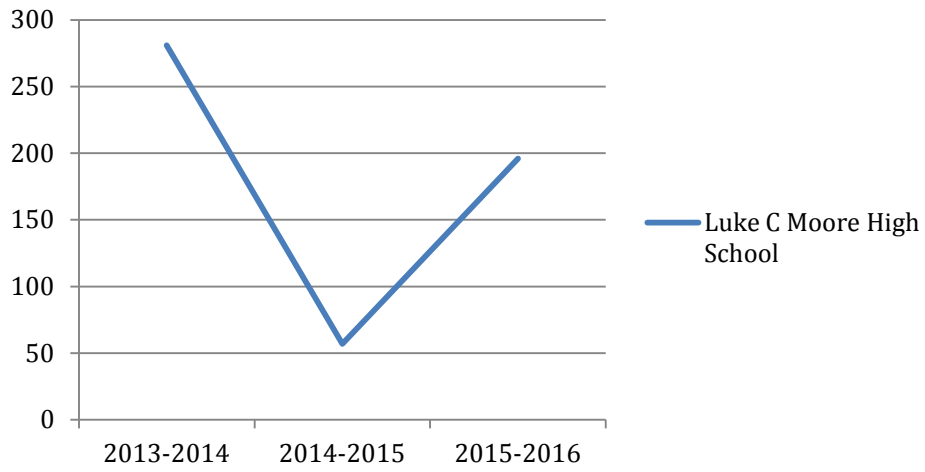
While the lead technical assistant was valued by both students and staff, it was recommended that faster and deeper gains could be made in building trust and buy-in by also bringing in someone that was more representative of and familiar with the school community.

### Suspension Data

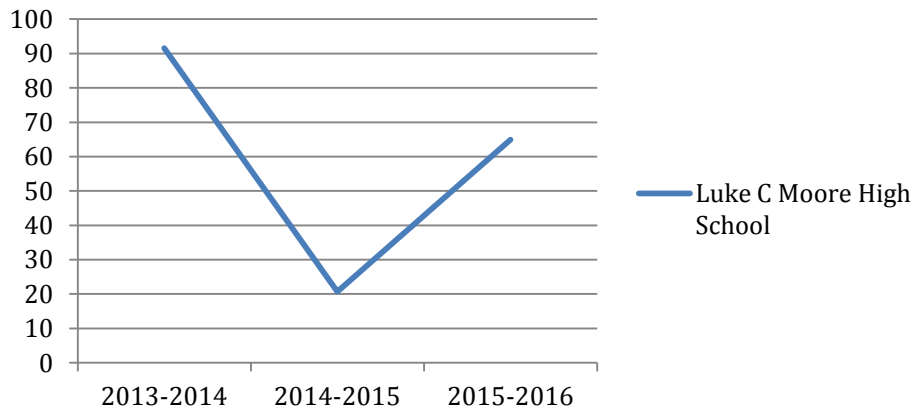
Luke demonstrated variable trends in their suspension rates, which went from 67 suspensions, 281 total suspension days, and 92 suspension days per 100 students in SY2013-14 and 17 suspensions, 57 total suspension days, and 21 suspension days per 100 students in SY2014-15 to 29 suspensions, 196 total suspension days, and 65 suspension days per 100 students when Restorative DC began providing support in SY2015-16. It was discovered that there were inconsistencies in the way suspensions had been recorded over the three years, which inflated suspension rates in the past year compared to the year prior. Further, as a non-traditional high school, Luke does not lend itself to meaningful comparison with other DC high schools.



## Total Suspension Days



## Suspension Days per 100 Students



**Maya Angelou Public Charter School (HS)***Lead technical support: Dwanna Nicole (with assistance from Ivy and Saleem Hylton)***Technical Assistance Hours** – up to 5 hours per week

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
6	25.5	41.25	15	<b>87.75</b>

**Training and Professional Development**

Date	Description	No. of hours
December	Introduction to Restorative Practices	1
1/19/16	RJ Circle Facilitation for Teachers	2
2/24/16	School Climate Surveys	3
3/09/16	Restorative Practices Presentation- small circles	3
5/4/16	Restorative Justice Training by Saleem and Ivy Hylton	1.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>10.5</b>

**Restorative Interventions**

Responsive Circles/Conferences	-
Reintegration Circles	-
Staff Circles	-
Classroom Circles	-
Proactive Circles (other)	-
<b>Total:</b>	-

**Notes****Quarter 1**

- Meetings with school leadership and school implementation team.
- Completed Phase I Assessment.
- Assigned Restorative DC lead technical support.
- Met with the principal and key staff to assess what they needed and their objectives for working with Restorative DC.
- Principal was out due to a medical emergency, which prevented MOU from being finalized.

**Quarter 2**

- Began conversations around revising the Student and Parent Handbook for SY 2016-17 to make it more restorative.
- Staff wants to increase student and family engagement; plan to edit the student handbook for next school year to encompass a more restorative theme.
- Held workshop with the entire staff.
- Developed plan to administer school climate surveys.
- Principal returned to school.
- Staff concerns with addressing insubordination of students.

**Quarter 3**

- Administered staff, family, and student school climate surveys.
- Held circle with all staff.
- Began revisions on parent and student handbook.
- Held workshop where all staff reviewed school climate survey results and analyzed data.
- RJ presentation with all staff to prepare them for smaller circles.

**Quarter 4**

- Meeting with administrative team.
- Code of conduct review.
- Saleem and Ivy Hylton led a restorative Justice training for teachers.
- Planning for next school year.

**Commentary and Testimonials**

Maya Angelou Public Charter School enjoyed enthusiastic support from amongst leadership and staff, but faced a number of institutional challenges early on – including the Principal’s extended leave and first-year application of a new teaching model – that limited the available time and resources for restorative practices and resulted in a greater focus on planning than implementation. To assist in this, a climate survey was administered revealing widespread areas of concern and opportunities for improvement around a number of school climate indicators, and stimulating healthy reflection and conversation amongst staff. In addition to this, Maya also began Restorative Justice-informed revisions to its Parent and Student Handbook and held a few trainings and circles for staff.

**Suspension Data**

Due to limited implementation, suspension data was not tracked for this report.

## **V. Restorative OAG Data**

In August 2016, Restorative DC, the DC Office of Attorney General, Ballou Senior High School, and Access Youth entered into an informal partnership to provide restorative diversion services to Ballou students facing suspension in order to reduce their entry into the juvenile justice system. As referenced above, the first Restorative Justice Conference referral was made on October 19, 2015, with regard to three students who instigated a fight at Ballou that brought Fox 5 news attention to the whole school. The issue was resolved in a moving conference that Restorative DC facilitated on October 23. One other Restorative Justice Conference and couple of responsive circles were conducted pursuant to more referrals from Ballou towards the end of 2015.

From September to December 2015, Restorative DC provided 20.5 hours of Restorative Justice Conferencing training over six days to Seema Gajwani, Special Counsel for Juvenile Justice, three Neighborhood Victims Services specialists, and approximately six other OAG staff, as well as Jessica Dulay, Restorative DC's primary point of contact at OSSE, and SheReigns BornTrue, Restorative DC fellow. The training included a Restorative Justice overview and hands-on roleplays wherein participants practiced conference prep and facilitation of simulated cases with instructor observation, coaching, and assessment, and peer feedback. Participants that were deemed ready and available also observed and debriefed two live conferences.

On December 15, Restorative DC received its first referral of several arrested youth from the Office of Attorney General. Since the conference was successfully completed in close collaboration with OAG trainees on February 3, 2016, OAG prosecutors (and Ballou staff) have been referring a stream of 2-3 cases per month to be facilitated by OAG trainees. Since August 2015, Restorative DC has provided OAG with 18 hours of technical assistance in the development of its own protocols and capacity, as well as in ongoing case support and mentoring.