

Honeywell Update- February 22, 2017

Good evening Highland Park, this is Dr. Taylor. I would like to take a few minutes to proudly share with you the slow launch of our restorative practice model.

I explained, in last November's Honeywell, that restorative practices are strategies teachers will use to build an even more positive and caring environment in their classrooms. Restorative practices will be used by school leaders as alternatives, in most cases, to more punitive disciplinary measures. The practices will help students who have done harm to others, whether it be to their teachers or their peers, truly understand the negative impact their actions have on those they've harmed.

The key to restorative practices is the "circle." Restorative circles give people an opportunity to speak and listen to one another in an atmosphere of safety, decorum and equality. The circle process allows people to tell their stories and offer their own perspectives.

Already, at least two middle school teachers have facilitated circles. One teacher facilitated a circle after getting a report that students were disrespectful to a substitute. The students were very expressive and open to sharing their own perspectives; they were able to articulate the negative impacts of their behavior and brainstorm ways that they could restore their teacher's trust as well as avoid such an incident in the future.

Students who have experienced restorative circles have already shared their thoughts and have made it clear they enjoyed the time being able to share their ideas and concerns while being genuinely heard by their peers.

Our district strategic plan has guided us in the direction of restorative practices. I hope you will take a moment to go to the strategic plan website and learn more about the new programs we will be initiating thanks to the collective input of our entire school community.

I will check in with another Honeywell on March 15. Good night.